

Minutes of Parents in Partnership Meeting
Community Room, Sunnymede Junior School
Thursday 29th June 2015

Present:	Name	Role	Class
	Ronnie Branch	Headteacher	
	Gail Oliver	PA to Headteacher	
	Lucy Moffat	Parent Representative	4H
	Sheila Gibson	Parent Representative	6H
	Michelle Galley	Parent Representative	6L
	Jacki Whappington	Parent Representative	3S
	Leah Rogers	Parent Representative	4H
	Lisa Zeffie	Parent Representative	3H

1. Welcome and apologies

Mrs Branch opened the meeting. Apologies were received from Katherine Smith, Suzanne Kelly, Mrs Vickers and Sharon Wornham.

2. Notification of AOB

A question was raised regarding class and year group interaction. It had been noted at Sports Day that when the children were in their house groups, they did not necessarily know the other children very well and this had also been noted by a parent on a school trip. A parent asked whether there was any reason that the classes are not mixed. Mrs Branch stated that it would be a big undertaking to mix them and that when we do, some children and parents have not liked it. Mrs Branch advised that if it was needed we would consider it and this has been noted in this year's school prospectus that we reserve the right to do so if we think it would benefit the children.

A Year 6 parent raised the issue of homework post SATs and stated that there had not been any set aside form optional homework. Mrs Branch will speak to the Year 6 teachers to ensure this matter is resolved with immediate effect.

The forum questioned the portion sizes of our school meals, especially on pizza day. Mrs Branch assured parents that our portion sizes are carefully controlled in line with Essex County Council to ensure that a balanced meal is served every day. It was noted that children do tend to have 'whole' pizzas when they go to restaurants these days and tis may account for why the portions appear small to some children, thought the slices at school are actually quite large! However, Mrs Branch will check the portion sizes to ensure she is satisfied with them.

3. Review of Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes were agreed.

4. Feedback from Headteacher on previous issues raised

- Car park hedges

Mrs Branch advised that arrangements have been made to cut back the hedges.

- Mons Avenue entrance

Mrs Oliver has spoken to Councillor Hedley and been advised that the application is still in committee.

- Reception Bell

This has now been installed and has received a favourable response.

- Celebrating and promoting British Values

Mrs Branch advised that the SMSC policy and statement are on our website.

The children having been exercising their democratic rights by voting on issues within school and they appear to like this system and have enjoyed the process.

- Parent helpers on school trips

Mrs Branch advised that staff agree and felt quite strongly that parents should not be in a group with their child on a school trip with the exception of a child with severe special needs. It promotes independence and avoids any exclusivity.

- CCTV in Reception area

Quotes are being obtained and agreed before installation can take place.

Second Hand uniform sale

Mrs Whaplington will liaise with Mrs Lyon to display items at the Year 3 intake meeting. There will also be refreshments organised by Mrs Whaplington, Mrs Moffat and Mrs Rogers.

- Playground issues

Parents are still lingering on the playground after 8.50 a.m. It has been agreed, therefore, that Mr Evans will periodically encourage parents to exit at that time. Parents are approaching teachers and also their children when they are lining up and a Parentmail will be sent out reinforcing the school policy.

It was suggested that a member of staff be available each day as a point of contact before school each morning. Mrs Branch will consider this option but felt that parents can speak to office staff before school who will make appointments to see class teachers etc. Having a member of staff with a clipboard would involve a lot of additional work when they would need to be either teaching or supporting children in class.

It was further suggested that playground procedures should be addressed at the Year 3 intake meeting. Next year, Year 3 will go in first and for the first day Year 3 staff will wear high visibility vests so that new children and parents can recognise them easily.

Gates will be closed at 9 a.m. as our site is very open and Mrs Branch advised that quotes for controlled security gates are being obtained with a view to installation during the summer break.

5. Monthly Newsletter Content/Communication

Mrs Branch introduced a draft copy of the new layout for Sunnymede Snippets and invited comments and feedback. The forum liked the new style and suggested that perhaps a school councillor or child reporter could provide a "story" each month.

6. PIP email/protocols

Mrs Oliver has set up a new email address for the Parents in Partnership but before it is fully active administrators need to be agreed. The forum agreed that Lucy Moffat and Jacki Whaplington will fulfil the role. Mrs Oliver will set up email addresses for the administrators and advise them of their details.

Protocols were discussed and agreed and a copy will be sent out to all PiP members in September.

7. Homework Policy

Mrs Branch circulated copies of the new Homework Policy.

Parents requested that Mathematics homework is set on a Friday for the following Friday in line with other homework.

The forum stated that optional homework should be encouraged more instead of increasing the volume of "set" homework.

Mrs Branch stated that it is difficult to find a balance to suit all children and parents but that if parents are concerned, they should ask the class teacher for some guidance on the amount of time to be spent etc.

The volume of homework increases substantially in Year 6 therefore it was suggested that parents are reminded of this when they meet the teacher in September.

8. Behaviour Policy

Mrs Branch circulated copies of the new Behaviour Policy.

It was agreed that there is generally good behaviour throughout the school and that the Behaviour Log and sanctions work well. Persistent low level bad behaviour requires a "phase group" leader to meet with parents which also works very well and this has been added into the updated policy.

9. Dates for next year's meetings

It was generally agreed that existing parents remain as members of the forum and that parents not available for the meeting today will be contacted to see whether they wish to continue. New Year 3 parents will be canvassed and invited to join. Dates will be set for the whole year and it was agreed that a Friday morning suited the majority of members.

10. AOB

A parent raised the issue of outside school maintenance and in particular overgrown bushes and fences/walls in disrepair and outdated signage. Mrs Branch will speak to the grounds maintenance team regarding the overgrown bushes and make arrangements for the consortium notice board to be taken down.

There was also a concern raised about the ivy growing around the boiler house potentially causing carbon monoxide to accumulate. Mrs Branch agreed to speak with Mr Evans but assured the forum that safety checks are in place and monitored regularly.

It was noted that there was a lack of shade for children on Sports Day. Mrs Branch stated that children were encouraged to wear hats, apply sun cream and drink regularly. The children were also brought into school for a break from the sun and heat mid-morning. Unfortunately, there is little shade on the field and the only other option would have been to cancel sports day, which children and parents would no doubt be unhappy about. However, next year it is likely that we will reduce sports day to half a day next year, though this is to be confirmed.

Mrs Branch thanked all Parent in Partnership members for their help and valuable contributions throughout the year.

