



Parent Council Minutes

01.02.19

Attending:

- Darren Webb – Executive Head
- Sarah Holman – Head of School
- Andy Lacey – School Business Manager
- Paige Cooper – Office Assistant (minute taking)
- Katherine Tunnicliffe – Leeds Class representative
- Lara Coombs – Hever Class representative
- Louise Smith – Rye Class representative
- Sandra Turner – Thurnham Class representative
- Catherine Cooper – Walmer Class representative
- Naomi Cleugh-Clarke – Bodiam Class representative
- Kelly Goodhew – Tonbridge Class representative
- Angela Maryon – Rochester Class representative
- Sam Butler – Pevensey Class representative
- Gemma Leadon – Herstmonceux Class representative

Not Attending:

- Aly Semanco – Dover Class representative
- Emma Willis – Allington Class representative
- Ashna Durham – Scotney Class representative
- Vicki Belton – Canterbury Class representative

School Improvement

School Dinners

- Mrs Holman introduced Mr Lacey, our School Business Manager. Mr Lacey has been looking into the schools' catering contracts as they are due for renewal.
- Mr Lacey explained that both Coxheath and Loose Primary Schools have different companies who provide cleaning and catering services, the schools are looking at making these providers the same so there is consistency over the trust, looking at catering first. Coxheath use the company Caterlink and Loose use The Contract Dining Company. The schools are looking at this to come into place from September 2019 onwards with existing companies and others being asked to quote for the contract.
- The school would like to get feedback from parents about school dinners: what they think is important, the price, and whether quality or quantity is important. Do parents think £2.10 per meal is good value or would they want to pay more or less? This information from parents will be gained over coming weeks.
- Mr Lacey will invite the current companies, as well as others, to tender for us and show what they have to offer the schools.
- The Parent Council think that it would be best to get feedback from children as they eat the meals, this could be through a questionnaire.
- Mr Webb adds that the Parent Council members might like to come in and try a school dinner, as parents do not get to try what the children eat. **Action – Parent Council to come in before half term on different days to try dinners, office to organise with kitchen and Parent Council members. Parent Council members to contact office to book a day to come in before Friday 15 February.**
- Some children have said that they don't always get dessert as there is not enough so they rush their mains as well as fruit not always being on offer, this is mainly found on second sitting. The chips can also be cold/ not as nice on second sitting. The school will look into this/mention to kitchen.
- The Council like that the kitchen always have jacket potatoes on offer as some children prefer plain food or not what is on the menu on particular days. The option of more variety may be better such as food without sauces or gravy.

- The Council overall think that quality of food is more important than the price. The food should also follow the current guidelines on reducing sugar and salt. Mrs Holman adds that the kitchen staff always stick to these guidelines and the desserts do not contain and unnecessary sugar but still have a good flavour.

Matters from last Meeting Discussed

Promoting Better Attendance

- The school currently have 100%, 99% and 98% certificates to promote good attendance. Have the Council had any further thoughts on promoting attendance? The school currently has an average of 96% attendance which is higher than the national average and we are always working with families who have low attendance.
- The Council add that it is hard for parents who have children that have a lot of time off ill rather than for no reason, as their attendance is still affected. Would the school ever consider grouping staff training days to have an extra week holiday in October like other schools so parents have holidays then? Mrs Holman explained that some parents take holiday in term time due to their own working patterns and children who have a week holiday can still have good attendance if they attend the rest of the year, compared to children who have multiple days of absence throughout the year. Mr Webb added that it could be something to consider in the future as an academy has more freedom.

Online Safety

- Mrs Holman explained that from the discussion at the previous meeting Year 6 have a set of rules about using their mobile phones as cameras at Swattenden this March.
- The Council have found most parents of older years being positive about the children taking them, some parents think it should not be used for Year 4 Swattenden as they are too young, it could also promote unkind behaviour with children competing who has the best phone.
- One representative asked their child how they would feel about taking a mobile to Swattenden, they were slightly unsure and worried about it as they would not want to lose it or know when they would have time to use it.
- Mrs Holman said that taking a digital camera may be a better option for some than a mobile phone.

Congestion and Safety

- A group of parents agreed to form a working party in the previous meeting regarding congestion. Catherine Cooper (Walmer representative) shared the thoughts from the party. The party spoke with the local Parish Council about a 20mph area outside the school. They are trialling something similar in Boughton Monchelsea so with this and the Parish Councils backing the Council will hopefully take note. Regarding parking the party have spoken with the Local Community Warden, Adam. Any idea for parking would only work if parents are willing to back it, so the Party would like to produce an anonymous questionnaire with questions about how parents currently travel and what they would be willing to do.
- A drive through style drop off was considered however this would be extremely unlikely to pass through Highways England and is very costly, although proven to work in other parts of the country where schools have more space/grounds.
- Mrs Holman explained that on paper Coxheath has been a school with 420 children for a while, as this our full capacity, but the school only has around 370 children currently (was 250 in 2017). As the school fills and gets more traffic the Council will not take that into consideration.
- The Parent Council also added that many families that are within walking distance choose not walk.
- **Questionnaires by working party to be given out at parent evenings next week.**

Feedback and Any Other Business

- Year R parents found that flash photography was being used at the nativity and other school events. One parent has a child with epilepsy so are asking if this can be stopped. **Action – the school to add to letters when promoting events.**
- Parents have found that the pathways around the KS1 building are still muddy/flooded even after jet wash. **Action – Mr Bird to barrier off areas when needed and divert onto playground as a walkway.**
- One representative asked about the schools plans regarding Brexit and staff getting to the school in possible tail backs and delays in Kent. Mr Webb assures the Council that nearly all staff are local to the school. Mrs Holman and himself attended a local Head Teacher meeting where they were advised of what Kent County Council has in place.
- Rochester, Thurnham and Rye class have found they are not getting many tweets. **Action – Mrs Holman to take more photographs and tweet these classes when on walk rounds.**
- Some parents in Rye class have found that home learning can be repetitive and hard for parents to fully understand. Mr Webb adds that all homework is at the expected level of that class, and this has increased. The year 2 to 6 reading comprehension can be repetitive and challenging. Some homework does not always get marked, and some classes get house points for homework which can be easier for teachers and still be encouraging for children.

Action - Mr Webb asks if Parent Council members can gather feedback about homework and reading for the next meeting.

- A Parent Council member raised a situation from the last day of term regarding a child finding a diabetic needle on the playground. Mr Webb explained that the needle (in its casing) was most likely dropped by a parent or other member of the public that uses the school site as part of a community group, for example the running club. It was added to the newsletter about bringing medication on site so that parents could support the school in remaining vigilant. All relevant lettings were also informed.
- Some parents have asked if there can be chairs put outside the classrooms when it is bad rain/snow so children can easily and quickly change into school shoes from wellies/boots. This can be done by classrooms when needed.

Next Meeting - Friday 22nd March, 2.15pm refreshments, 2.30pm meeting

Future meeting dates: Friday 17th May and Friday 5th July 2019