

Minutes for PFG meeting 8/12/23

In attendance

Head teacher Emma Fenn (EF)

School Business Manager Amanda Bowran (AB)

Chair of Governors Cara Brazier (CB)

Chair and Hazel class rep Jo Medcraft (JM)

Class reps Marie McGrath(MM) for Nursery, Kelly Searle(KS) for Lime and Fir, Charlotte Watson(CW) for Willow, Rick Wilson(RW) for Beech, Laura Molloy(LM) for Oak, Alex Colville(AC) for Year 2, Pam Tolchard(PT) for Year 4, Emma Carion(EC) for Cedar, Lilly Sieve(LS) for Year 6.

Apologies

Sarah Wilkinson for Elm

1. Welcome

All members introduced themselves. EF explained the importance of the PFG and how invaluable the SLT, Phase Leaders and Governors find it.

2. Reading/phonics scheme

Overwhelmingly positive response. With regard to Lower school phonics EF confirmed that Mrs Scourfield (Phase Leader Nursery/Reception) is going to arrange parent meetings to provide more information. EF - PTA has invested in more books. EF - parents should go to teacher in first instance with any concerns or questions about how to best support their child. KS - some comments regarding how much reading is being done. EF - Mrs Scourfield explained that the children are reading all the time and it's not just books. EF - more parent readers would be beneficial. PT - does not helping in your own

child's class put people off? And what's the rationale behind that decision? General consensus around the table was that it does deter some parents. Could the parent sit outside the classroom and read nearby? EF - need to be in classroom for safeguarding purposes. CB - Practices have had to change, not because staff are worried about things happening, but because they have happened. MM suggested maybe changing the start time for reading by 10mins to 8.50 in order to give parents the time to drop off children if have more than one to drop.

3. Sporting opportunities

AC had had comments about the same children always being picked for teams, specifically football and dodgeball. Surely at primary school level it sound be about taking part. EF - at sporting fixtures with other schools it would be demoralising to be continually soundly beaten. CW - she is head of PE at a local school and agreed that you need to field the best team to make your school look good. EF - not always same people automatically chosen, children have to earn a place not just through skill but also general behaviour in school. We need to show the wider community that we are a good school to get more pupils in and one way of doing that is through sport. The bottom line is that without a fully subscribed school fulltime PE teachers and music/french teachers might need to be reconsidered due to funding. EC - could all children be encouraged to try out for teams, then it seems fairer if not chosen. RW - possibility of more than one team? EF - more friendlies to be organised to give more opportunities. Teams are rotated through the match so that reserves get to play. CW - feels there is a good balance at Redbourn Primary and that there will always be some disappointed people. Happy to liaise with EF re PE.

4. Non-sporting clubs

EF - currently year 3 have recorder lessons for free with the option to sign up for lessons in year 4, there is a chess club in advance of any competitions and in warmer months there is gardening club. EF - need to remember that we are currently an RI school so the focus has had to be on safeguarding and curriculum. Going forward what would people like to see? MM - Lego club, JM - art club? Shout out for parents with skills.

5. Attendance letters/attendance/ illness/giving of medicine

JM - the tone of the attendance letters has improved. Pass on thanks to Mrs Couch for her work on that. EF - keeping children in school more is a government/OFSTED requirement. More children in with coughs/colds results in more staff illness but we need to have great attendance if we want to get out of RI. CB - school are trying to target families who just can't be bothered and reiterated that it is a government requirement. OFSTED have suggested surprise home visits. The SLT and governors welcome suggestions as to how to tackle attendance issues, apart from meetings and fines. AB - as an aside, school does not get the money from fines.

LS - antibiotics currently only administered if they are needed 4 times daily. If needed 3 times hard for parents to get 3 regularly spaced doses in if children attend afterschool club and don't get home until 6pm. EF - school does not have sufficient support staff to facilitate this. Will liaise with Carole Clarke at afterschool club to see if they have the capacity to administer.

6. School lunches

Comments on portion size (too small) and variety. EF and CB regularly eat with the children and are amazed at how much gets thrown away. Salad bar and bread are always available to top up chosen meal. Following a parent survey on what foods

parents would like to see on the menu changes were made. KS - children just want to eat quickly and get out to play with their friends so often don't think that they might be hungry in a while!

7. School comms/payment and consent platforms

WhatsApp - certain year groups get bombarded with messages which are unnecessary if people read emails/flyers/messages properly. EF - look at Comms guide and send out again as a reminder to parents.

JM - why Arbor and Gateway and Google forms for different things? Surely one platform more efficient? AB - transferring to wider use of Arbor . Previously Gateway had more functionality but now an add-on to Arbor has been purchased to allow it to do more.

8. AOB

Book Look: change of days. EF - more than most schools offer. Tricky to change. AB - parent can always request to go in at a time convenient to them to have a look.

Bikeability: AC/EC - any chance of a different week going forward? EF - very little flexibility on dates available.

Twitter/X: sporadic for some classes still. EF - looking to move away from it and provide photos in the Sway newsletter.

Currently two year groups a week are showcased on there.

Medical Tracker: generally well-received. Better to receive an email rather than find a crumpled up note in a book bag days after the event.

Teaching and support staff: MM - support staff are well-matched to the children. LS - lots of positive comments about quality of staff and teaching. JM/EC/LS - this is the first meeting in a long time where this has happened.

Date of next meeting 15th March 2024

