



St Gilbert's R.C. Primary School
Parents Forum – Meeting Minutes – 7th December 2016

Meeting time: 5:00pm

Location: Staff room, St. Gilbert's RC Primary School

Present:

Jennifer Tumelty (JT)	Head of School (Chair)
Sam Thompson (ST)	Parent Forum Representative – Nursery
Katrina Foster (KF)	Parent Forum Representative – Reception
Pauline Griffin (PG)	Parent Forum Representative – Year 1
Sam Glynn-Atkins (SGA)	Parent Forum Representative – Year 2
Jaime Bradborn (JB)	Parent Forum Representative – Year 3
Michelle Keogh (MK)	Parent Forum Representative – Year 4

Apologies:

Victoria Neville (VN)	Assistant Headteacher (Chair)
Kim Donaghy (KD)	Governor / Parent Forum Representative – Year 5
Faye Breen (FB)	Governor

Item	Description	Action
1.	<p>Apologies, welcome & prayer:</p> <p><u>Apologies</u> - were noted as above.</p> <p><u>Welcome</u> – JT welcomed the group.</p>	
2.	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Introductions were made by the parent representative for each year group. It was noted that Year 6 does not yet have a parent representative.</p>	
3.	<p>Constitution of the Forum</p> <p>The group reviewed the document which had been circulated by post prior to the meeting. SGA suggested amendments or asked for clarity on a number of points within the document as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2b) SGA noted that current representatives had not been nominated – JT confirmed that this process would be triggered should there be a number of parents interested in the role • 4c) It was queried whether the group was a decision making group and SGA requested clarity on the delegated rights of this group within the wider school governance arrangements • 5c) SGA queried whether 'emergency' was the correct word to use to describe all matters falling within Any Other Business. MK clarified that the intention is to plan the agenda as far as is foreseeable however there may be the occasion when a discussion is needed without having first appeared on the planned agenda • 5e) It was suggested that this clause would sit better in a more prominent position, for example under the Objectives section • 9a) i) Confidentiality – it was queried when this would be appropriate given the prime aim of the parent representative is to discuss with, and seek opinion from, other 	



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	<p>parents. MK suggested that this may apply only to where personal examples were given during discussions</p>	
4.	<p>Designation of roles</p> <p><u>Chair</u> – VN was noted as being the Chair of the meeting as determined by the Constitution. JT acted as Chair in the absence of VN.</p> <p><u>Secretary</u> – SGA offered to assume the role of Secretary for the purposes of note taking.</p>	
5.	<p>Bike shed</p> <p>JT informed the group that there had been an ongoing appetite for a school bike shed, and asked for opinion from the group. The group considered various issues in relation to this topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location of a bike shed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • space regulations dictate that there is no option to include a bike shed on the playground. To locate a bike shed on the playground would also be considered a hazard during playtimes, as there is the potential for children to injure themselves • the area immediately adjacent to the pedestrian entrance on Campbell has also been discounted due to this being a fire exit and the congestion that is already present at drop off and pick up times • a Health & Safety Inspector has already visited 3 – 4 years ago, the outcome being that there was no safe place on site to install a bike shed • there is potential to use a portion of the school field however a path to enable this would be very costly • It was suggested that the grassy area immediately outside the school gates could potentially offer a suitable alternative, but this would need to be risk assessed • Traffic – concerns were raised about the risks to students travelling to school on bikes due to heavy motor traffic during drop off and pick up times • Traffic – concerns were raised about the risks to pedestrian traffic, particularly with reference to toddlers and prams, if cyclists were to cycle on the pavements • Competence – concerns were raised that students may not be suitably educated in relation to traffic awareness. JT informed that the school had not been approached in relation to running Cycling Proficiency courses <p>The group considered the potential to get funding as this would contribute to the encouragement of student healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>JT informed the group that Urban Vision will be undertaking a site visit to refresh the Travel Plan, and she agreed to communicate the outcome of those discussions to group members for further consideration.</p> <p>Action: JT to communicate the outcome of the Urban Vision site visit to group members, in relation to the potential for a school bike shed</p>	<p>JT</p>



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6.	<p>School dinners</p> <p>JT informed the group that the school kitchen was privatised 2 years ago, and this had enabled the school to source better quality food. A consultation was held at that time, in relation to the menu, and it was noted that this continues to be undertaken on an opportunistic basis. JT invited opinion from the group.</p> <p>The group noted that sandwiches and jacket potatoes are particularly popular, as is chicken curry and cowboy casserole.</p> <p>MK highlighted that there is sometimes no dessert left if students have been participating in sports activities prior to their lunch slot. JT informed that the band system was employed in an attempt to reduce waste, however this did not work as well as anticipated, despite adding a buffer of 10 portions on each menu choice, because children change their minds when they see the other food on offer. JT informed that it had been helpful when parents had been invited in to school to eat lunch with the students, and suggested that this be repeated.</p> <p>Action: JT to arrange another opportunity for parents to come in to sample the school food</p> <p>JB/PG requested that a wider selection of fruits be made available, particularly if there is not a sufficient amount of cake for each student.</p> <p>Action: JT to ask Tina to increase the selection of different fruits available, if possible due to seasonal availability, and further increase the portions of the cake option</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JT</p>
7.	<p>Second hand uniform</p> <p>JT informed the group that there used to be a small group of parents who would collect any items of uniform that had become too small as children grew, launder this and make it available to sell for a relatively low price. JT informed that this had been welcomed, particularly by parents who wished to keep a 'reserve' set.</p> <p>JB felt that there had been less opportunity to try on the new uniform than had been provided the previous year. The group wondered whether there is the opportunity to combine some 'try-on' sessions along with a 'pre-loved' section.</p> <p>There was some interest in collecting and laundering the second hand uniform, however there were concerns about where this could be stored as this would need to fall with the launderer due to lack of storage space in school.</p> <p>Action: All to speak to parents to seek any volunteers to restart the second hand uniform service</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">All</p>
8.	<p>Any other business</p> <p><u>Communication</u></p> <p>The group expressed concern about the sometimes poor communication from the school, in terms of inaccuracy, confusion as a result of different messages between paper copies and the website, variation in details available on the website, and late changes to dates.</p> <p>It was noted that whilst communication had improved on previous years, there remains room for improvement.</p> <p>JT apologised for the times where communication hasn't been of a good standard and explained that the staff are incredibly busy and unfortunately some errors are made, despite proof reading by other members of staff. She clarified that there is no one dedicated member of staff to update the school website but that this is maintained as a team with each staff member responsible for uploading details of their own events/communications.</p> <p>PG noted that whilst the website is generally helpful, it is not possible to check it every day. It was noted that there are now 127 Twitter followers and JT would like this to increase, as it enables the school to reach a wider audience without the associated cost of a text</p>	



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	<p>messaging service. A text messaging service will be launched in January however this will be used sparingly due to the high cost of this service. Action: All to encourage other parents to follow the school Twitter account</p> <p>JT suggested that the website should be the first resource that parents/carers consult, but that a monthly newsletter containing a variety of messages be trialled. Action: JT to trial a monthly newsletter containing a variety of messages</p> <p>Action: JT to continue to provide as much advance notice as possible for events that parents are likely to wish to attend</p> <p>The group highlighted that not all parents/carers who drop off or pick up the children are technically adept and they would appreciate a paper based solution. It was suggested that the school could make more use of the notice board.</p> <p><u>Parent Pay</u></p> <p>ST enquired whether Parent Pay could be used for School Fund and Aftercare. JT informed that she was unsure whether this would cause a problem for accounting purposes but would check with Mrs Darcy. Action: JT to check with Mrs Darcy whether the use of Parent Pay could be expanded to include School Fund and Aftercare payments</p> <p><u>Holidays</u></p> <p>It was highlighted that the school holidays for St Patrick's R C High School are different from those of St Gilbert's and this could cause some difficulties for parents who have children at both schools. JT informed that the school are aware of this and it will be discussed at the Governor's meeting.</p> <p>The group expressed their appreciation for the advanced release of school holiday dates, for parent planning purposes.</p> <p>There being no other business the meeting was closed.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>JT</p> <p>JT</p>
9.	<p>Date & Time of next meeting:</p> <p>To be advised (at the suggestion of VN) 5.00pm Staff room, St Gilbert's R C Primary School</p>	