



## Holmes Chapel Primary School

### Minutes of Parents' Forum meeting: 13th June 2016

**Present:** H Scott, H Parkinson-Sykes, F Fernando, S Taylor, L Ellis, S Haigh, A Chapman, L Schwartz, N Thompson, J Madden, F Chipperfield, C Barratt, S Williams, L Pemberton, L Ecclestone

#### 1. School lunches

The question of whether there is enough variety of puddings on the school lunch menu was raised. However, this seemed to have been resolved with the introduction of the new 3-weekly menu. Cheshire East Council (CEC) set the menu and school have very little input, although the cook can make minor adjustments. An additional question related to the availability of sandwiches/packed lunch for children in KS1 (receiving free school meals) who don't like the other lunch options on the menu. Mrs Scott will clarify the options for ordering a packed lunch across the school. It was noted that on poling days, when lunches are served in individual bags, some children leave their fruit, which is then thrown away. Options to reduce this waste were discussed, including adding the fruit to the fruit baskets in the KS1 classrooms.

#### 2. Selecting lead roles for school performances

Some parents queried if all children are given the chance to take on a lead role in plays/productions within school. Children naturally excel in different areas of the curriculum, but the teachers encourage all children to get involved, even those who initially appear reluctant. All children take part in their class assemblies and the teachers work hard to give children the opportunity to take on larger roles when possible (e.g. in music or singing concerts or the Y6 production). In addition, teachers will often write in extra lines for children who wanted to play a bigger part. Please follow-up with your class teacher if your child seems disappointed with their role.

#### 3. Streamlining drop-off by the Year 3 doors: have things improved?

Congestion near the Year 3 doors is still a problem, with parents trying to exit the playground as the children are trying to enter school. This issue has persisted despite Mrs Scott and Mr Bosman placing a noticeboard near the doors and also standing by the doors each morning for a while, which is very time-consuming. Mrs Scott will send out further reminders to ensure a smoother transition for children using the Year 3 doors and will also explain the situation to new parents joining the school in September.

#### 4. Piano lessons in school

There is a relatively long waiting list for piano lessons in school, in both KS1 and KS2. However, children are not allowed to miss academic lessons for music lessons, therefore all piano lessons must be scheduled during break or lunch. Furthermore, there is only one piano in school. Many parents opt to pay for private lessons outside of school to overcome this issue.

#### 5. Recruiting new PTA members

The PTA urgently needs new committee members as many of the current members will soon be leaving the school. Some parents were surprised by this, as they believed PTA events to be well attended and profitable, and presumed no further help was required. Ideas to recruit new members or secure help from parents for events were discussed as follows:

- ♦ Include a tick box on each event flyer asking if parents are able to help
- ♦ Email parents before every event asking if they can help at that specific event
- ♦ Specify for each event exactly what help is needed and how long it will take, e.g. for the summer fair, break down each stall into timeslots and specify the role and the time needed from parents; have a copy of the stalls and timeslots in the playground and ask people to sign up for them
- ♦ Introduce the PTA at meet-the-teacher night and encourage new members to join

- ♦ Hold a PTA stall at the summer fair to explain to people what is involved
- ♦ List out the roles of each PTA member and estimate how much time would be required for that role throughout the school year
- ♦ Consider holding events on days other than Fri/Sat to allow more people to help.

## **6. Electing chair and secretary for the Parents' Forum 2016-17**

If you would like to take on the role of Chair or Secretary for the Forum then please let Mrs Scott know. Fiona Fernando has been the secretary for the past four years and only has one year left at the school, so we need to find a replacement for her. Meetings are generally only held once a term, so it's not too big a task to prepare the agenda and draft the minutes. Fiona is more than happy to shadow a new secretary for the next academic year if that would help with the transition.

## **7. Feedback from the previous meeting**

### *Plans for new playground equipment*

Some new playground equipment has arrived and more will soon be purchased. Further plans are to create a trim trail to link the different play areas and to add seating near the reading chair for children to use. Allowing the children access to different play equipment on a rota basis seems to work well.

### *School Crossing Patrol*

A petition containing 450 parent signatures was handed in to CEC regarding the lack of school crossing patrol on Middlewich Road. CEC are happy to fund a replacement for the post, but the vacancy is proving hard to fill. CEC are therefore considering putting in a permanent crossing at an estimated cost of £50K-£60K. It was suggested that parents contact CEC individually to add further weight to the argument that a permanent crossing is needed. A template letter is currently being drafted for this purpose. Local residents have also expressed concerns about the lack of a crossing, so hopefully we can generate enough support for this as a community.

### *Optimising feedback to the Parents' Forum*

Many parents email Mrs Scott directly with queries rather than attending the Forum meetings. Mrs Scott agreed to include feedback from these discussions in her newsletters, but nothing of relevance to all children/parents has arisen since the last meeting.

### *'Next week' pages on the VLE*

Some of the 'Next week' pages are still out of date; Mrs Scott will remind teachers to update them.

## **8. Any other business**

### *Will the school be involved in the Tour of Britain?*

Stage 3 of the Tour of Britain (Congleton to Tatton Park, Knutsford) is scheduled for Tuesday 6 September. Mrs Scott is currently in discussion with the Parish Council regarding the school's involvement in the day and will update parents once a decision has been made.

### *Do the children get to see musicals or shows?*

Yes, each year group goes to the theatre, usually around Christmas time.

### *What has happened to the bike shelter?*

Quotes obtained for the proposed bike shelter were very expensive. Mr Bosman kindly designed a shelter that he could make himself, but he needed around 4-6 people to help construct the shelter. Despite asking for volunteers over the Easter holidays, not enough people came forward to help. Mr Bosman will try again to recruit some willing volunteers over the summer holidays.