

Parents Forum

Friday 19th March 2010.

Attendees:

Mrs Whittington, Mr Garner, Heather Smith (Cedar), Kelly Clare (Ash), Nicky Hart (Holly), Elaine Prodger (Hawthorn), Carolyn McCall (Pine), Michelle Livett (Beech), Jane Crouch (Oak), Emma Thompson (Elm), Tracey Lowden (Cherry) and Emily Wright (Willow).

Apologies:

Vanessa Marston (Sycamore) and Mary Nash (Sequoia).

1. Playground Supervision.

Concern was raised that no member of staff had been present in the playground at 8.30am and therefore children had been left unsupervised. Mrs Whittington said a number of staff had been off sick and that it was possible it might have occurred, although after discussion with other staff it would seem that staff were present but could not be seen from the position the parents were waiting at the bottom of the slope.

2. Year 6 SATS Homework.

Some parents felt there was some variation in SATS homework that has been set for Year 6. Mrs Whittington will speak to Year 6 teachers to clarify the situation.

3. Drinking Water.

Could all children have drinking water on their desks as they need to be kept hydrated? Mrs Whittington stated that in some classes the drinking water bottles are kept to the side, but that all children are able to use them when required. The parent reps should clarify the situation in their classes, if there is concern.

4. Car Park Gate.

One parent had expressed concern that the gate into the playing field car park was open during school times. Mr Garner stated that the gate had been open one lunchtime because he had been on

the field with some pupils. It is unlikely that the gate is left open unless a member of staff is on the field, but Mr Garner will check with Paul Collinswood to ensure that the gate is locked, outside drop off and pick up times.

5. Potholes.

Concern was expressed regarding the large pothole in Marlow Bottom road, adjacent to the school crossing patrol. Mrs Whittington stated that the school has informed the Council of this hole on a number of occasions, but that the matter is outside of the school's control.

The issue of the potholes in the back lane by the playing field was also raised. However, it was pointed out that this lane is maintained by the Playing Field Committee, who has limited funds.

6. Paving Stones.

One or two of the paving stones near to the stamping shelter have become loose and are now raised. This could be dangerous. Mrs Whittington will ask Paul Collinswood to look into the matter.

7. Electronic Payment.

The question of electronic payment for school trips was raised. Mrs Whittington stated that the school would be in favour of such a process, in principle, however it would be extremely difficult to administer

8. End Of School Time.

Some classes appear to be late in letting the children leave each day. Mrs Whittington will speak to all the staff to ensure that the classes are let out promptly.

9. Literacy/Numeracy Advice to Parents.

One parent asked if the school could organise literacy and numeracy evenings for parents. Mrs Whittington stressed that the school does do this and such an evening had recently taken place. All of these events are announced in the school newsletter.

10. Entrance Pathway into School.

It was suggested that all parents should keep to the left hand side of the school's driveway, in order to allow for an easier flow of access for all. It is particularly difficult for parents with buggies and small children to walk up and down the driveway, at present, as it is often blocked with people.

11. Grassed Area Outside Library.

The small area outside the library is constantly muddy. Could this area be paved over? Mrs Whittington will look into this matter.

12. First Aid at Lunchtime.

One parent raised the question as what other children should be advised to do if another child was choking at lunchtime. Mrs Whittington stated that the hall was always well supervised at lunchtime and that children are encouraged to ask staff for help, when required. It was not considered a good idea to encourage children to perform first aid measures when another child was choking.

13. Young Writers Competition.

Concern had been expressed by a number of parents in Year 4 as to the validity of the Young Writers Competition. As so many of the Burford Children had had their work published, parents were concerned that this competition was merely a marketing exercise in order to sell the books. However, Mrs Whittington and Mr Garner assured the Forum that this was not the case. A number of Burford children had been published because of the high standard of their work. Other schools had not had as many published pieces of work.

14. School Crossing Patrol

Concern was expressed that parents had not been notified in time when the school crossing patrol was to be absent. Mrs Whittington stated that she does e-mail parents as soon as she knows if the crossing patrol will not be there. However, this information does not always reach her in time.

There is still a need for a Relief School Crossing Patrol and Class Reps should ask parents if any one is willing to undertake the training for this role. Unfortunately, staff are no longer permitted to act as a crossing patrol.

It was suggested that parents warn their children to wait for an adult to cross the road with them, if the patrol is not there.

15. Out of School Clubs.

Mr Garner is to re-organise those clubs which have been cancelled. However, the Gym Club will not be re-organised because the outside company running the club wanted the school to collect the money themselves. This is not possible.

Concern was also expressed that the organisers of some of the out of school clubs were late in arriving. This resulted in a number of children being left unsupervised for a length of time, which, in turn, gave some children the chance to misbehave. Mrs Whittington stated that club organisers have been requested to arrive before 3.15pm and that this request will be made again.

16. Guests at Parent Forum Meetings.

It was suggested that any guest slot should be kept to the end of the meeting so that the main discussion could take place first.

17. Sponsorship for School Events.

One parent had asked if a list could be provided for all the in-school sponsorship events that have taken place this year. It was considered that this was a time consuming and unproductive task. Many parents are keen to support these events and ALL parents are free to opt out of individual events if they wish. Mr Garner confirmed that no child will be prevented from taking part in an activity just because they do not have sponsorship.

18. Date of Next Meeting.

Friday 14th May 2010 at 2.15pm.