

Overdale Junior School Parents' Forum

Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday 7 May 2013, 9.10am

Present: Mrs K Cooper (KC, Teacher), Mrs K Askew (KA), Mrs V Ball (VB), Mrs Y Dassu (YD), Ms L Marsden (LM), Ms S Sturgess (SJS, Governor), Dr S Vallance (SV)

Apologies: Mrs C Cownley, Mrs U Hamzaoui, Mrs R Higgins-Jones, Mrs S Vaghela

Minutes from last meeting

The minutes from the last meeting (on 23.4.13) were approved. They are available on the Parents' Forum page on the school website, within the *Parents' & Pupils' Information* section.

Parental survey

Following on from the last meeting the draft parental survey was discussed. It had been proposed that the first questionnaire should focus on communication and participation issues, as they are felt to be key to improving parental engagement.

Query raised as to how the information gathered would be analysed and used – who would actually take responsibility for the survey, processing the data and taking things forward?

Is it too early to do a survey, given that a lot of work is taking place at the moment? Would it be better to delay the survey and ask people at a later date 'how are we doing?', once new initiatives have bedded in?

Communication matters

Discussion about communication and what parents actually want: *access to staff and information about their child.*

VB felt that working parents don't have the chance to see their child's teacher in the playground, so it's important to create opportunities for parents to speak to staff.

Q Would it be possible to email teachers directly? Some other schools make teachers' email addresses available to parents.

A KC explained that parents can email teachers via the school's general email address, admin@overdale-inf.leicester.sch.uk, which is monitored by the office. Also suggested that it may be more effective to send a note in to the teacher, as this will be read straight away, but teachers don't necessarily check their emails daily.

Some schools operate an online reporting system – would this be possible here?

Could the new style report cards be produced regularly – perhaps half-termly – as a way of feeding back to parents?

Query raised as to how/when parents are contacted by school if an incident arises. KC clarified that there is an incident reporting procedure within school, and that parents are contacted when necessary (serious or repeat offences).

Discussion around the change to the rewards system. Parents felt the old 'merit' system was preferable, and that the new system of 'smileys' is unclear and inconsistent. Neither parents nor pupils understand it, and feel that it isn't given sufficient priority/importance when reward 'milestones' are reached. SJS said she would raise this with the Governing Body.

Some discussion about the school website. SV advised those present that there was a plan to set up class pages which will be used to show samples of work, and provide information on work plans and homework etc. Discussion about who would be responsible for these class pages, and whether pupils could be involved in some way?

Parents felt that the curriculum flow charts that have been sent out recently were very useful, and that more information about what the children are learning would help parents provide appropriate support at home.

Would it be feasible to have elected parent representatives for each class on the Parents' Forum, to widen involvement? This would then mirror the School Council.

Food Routes and Healthy School matters

The school is aiming for a 'Healthy School Enhanced Award' and is attending a Health Schools event at the Leicester Tigers ground on 25 June – a small team of Year 6 children will be taking part in this event. Can it be publicised in the school newsletter?

KC reported that she checked with ESPO (school's usual supplier) re purchasing aprons for children to buy for use in Food Routes classes (c.f. school swimming caps) but that they had nothing appropriate available. It was suggested that the school's uniform supplier should be approached instead.

KC to circulate the Whole School Food Policy which is due for its annual review – responses should be returned to KC by 5 June. NB This policy will need to go before the Governing Body for final approval.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS ARISING:

- (i) SJS to raise the rewards scheme with the Governing Body.
- (ii) SJS to put the Whole School Food Policy on the agenda at the next meeting of the Behaviour, Wellbeing and Safety Committee.
- (iii) SV to publicise the Healthy Schools event in the June newsletter.
- (iv) KC to circulate the Whole School Food Policy for comment; SV to put it on the school website.

**Date and time of the next meeting:
Tuesday 18 June, 9.10am**