



## Parent Council Minutes 08.03.23

### **Apologies**

Apologies were sent from Fiona Walls and Simon Taylor.

### **Air-Up Bottles – clarification on whether they have been banned**

Air-Up Bottles have not been banned but are sent in at parents' own risk – we cannot take responsibility for these expensive items. When assembled correctly they may not leak but children take them apart in school. We did have a leak that caused lots of problems on a recent trip so do ask that they are not sent on trips.

### **Weekly maths targets**

There will be a letter coming shortly that contains useful tips for supporting your child at home with their maths as well as a very useful website. The letter will also explain the introduction of 'KIRFs' (Key Instant Recall Facts), which children will be working towards.

### **Emptying rubbish from lunchboxes**

The reason we send rubbish in lunchboxes home is twofold – firstly, we just do not have the room for all of the rubbish that this would produce on a daily basis! Secondly, it is very important that parents are able to see what their child has/has not eaten – as shown by the recent incident where a child was throwing away their whole lunch, which we were able to track and inform parents. If yoghurt or drinks are leaking, we suggest providing a sandwich bag to put these in.

### **Request for a regular athletics club**

At present we do not have the staff available to man this, so we will look into an external provider if this would be popular.

### **Club Bookings/Extra-Curricular Activities**

Unfortunately our clubs are extremely popular and they do sell out within minutes, especially if there are only a small number of places available due to space. There was a communication error regarding the 5pm timing for sending out club bookings, but this has now been rectified.

We do monitor the attendance and uptake of the clubs we run in school and rotate the places on a termly/half-termly basis to try and ensure access for as many children as possible. We are unable to do this for clubs provided by external providers – they are not run by the school and have their own booking systems.

The club timetable is on the website and this is regularly updated.

Clubs run by staff are done so through their own goodwill – lately there have been many complaints regarding clubs and places available. Please try to bear in mind that we are doing our best to provide a wide variety of clubs and that this will not be able to continue if there continues to be so much hassle whenever club bookings are released.

### **Quality of hot dinners**

Please direct all comments and complaints regarding hot dinners to Mrs Sayer – we have no influence over the hot dinners. Bigger portions are offered to the junior children.

### **Access to drinking water**

Children have access to their water bottles during the day as well as the water fountains on the playground. We do not stop them from drinking.

### **5pm booking deadline for Breakfast Club/pre-booking change**

The booking process for Breakfast Club will now be smooth! Bookings can be made until 6am on the day that the club is required and we will not turn children away – the pre-booking just makes it much easier in terms of managing the accounts and payments. It is still a flexible system.

### **Time taken to process and allocate childcare vouchers**

Parents must state which club or activity it is allocated to, or else it waits in a queue. Every Friday the account is reconciled so there should no longer be a delay. There was a lag in January when new office staff started but this has all now been sorted and will run smoothly. If parents have any problems, please just call the office.

### **Lunchtime Arrangements**

Lunchtime continues to work on a rotational basis and we have now added in one year group eating packed lunches in class every day. Children are never rushed to eat in the dining hall and have plenty of time to eat. All children are in the hall by 12.45 and lunch finishes at 1.10pm – but even then we would always allow children to finish eating if there has been a delay.

### **Advance notice for trips/volunteers**

Wherever possible we give as much notice as we can. With school trips lots of notice is given. It was noted that parents are not always given confirmation about helping on trips – we will ensure that this now happens.

### **Earlier opening of school gates**

This is not possible as staff are preparing lessons. Breakfast Club is available if required.

**‘Safeguarding’ Please can the school confirm why this term was used when no spectators were allowed at Garons. Parent feels it is used too frequently for many situations and used as a generic excuse.**

This did not come from the school – the event was run by a different organisation and we have to follow their rules.

### **Book Look**

More ‘book look’ dates have been added to the newsletter, including an additional late night on the 13<sup>th</sup> June. We try to give as much notice as possible.

### **Snack alternatives to fresh fruit/veg**

Mrs London is working with Mrs Rodger to send out a letter - we recognise that just fresh fruit and vegetables is restrictive. Previously we have had problems where ‘rule’ are bent but we will be very clear about what is/is not allowed to be brought in – we have to follow government guidance regarding what we allow children to bring in. We will trial this for the summer term.

### **Diversity**

Mrs Woolf asks anyone with specific questions regarding diversity within the curriculum to make an appointment to see her. All of the information about our curriculum can be found on our website.

## **Reading**

Children read in a variety of ways across the curriculum – whether that be one to one with their teacher or an LSA, with a Reading Ambassador, in a Layered Reading lesson – and many more! Reading is high on our agenda and teachers are given regular release time to allow them to hear their class read. The ranges have changed in some year groups to give children more freedom with their choice – whether that be by author or genre. The books the children choose are still carefully monitored by the teacher but we are giving them more independence and encouraging a love of reading. It was shared that children are enjoying this new freedom.

Reading targets are given to the children, which they should know – these are recorded in their communication books.

## **Homework on Showbie**

If it is not labelled as homework – it is not homework! Homework tasks will be clearly signposted within the communication book and the newsletter. Everything else on Showbie is for use in class.

## **Newsletter Link – not working**

All past newsletters can be found on the website. The website needs to be the 'go-to' for parents for information – please let us know if there is anything more we can add or if anything is incorrect on the website.

## **Recorders – A rush to buy, mixed messages**

Mrs Woolf has noted this point and will address for the future.

## **121 Music Lessons – no communication details provided**

This will be added to the website. **Follow up: This is on the website under 'Music'.**

## **Lost Property**

Named items are returned to classes by our monitors.

Please remind your classes that if you sell uniform, to remove the child's name! They sometimes then get returned to the original owner.

There will be a pre-loved sale during learning conferences.

## **Minibus**

We are looking at getting a minibus as part of the trust – they are hard to source. We do have to use coaches for larger events due to the number of children that we take. Minibuses are only useful for small events.

## **Positive Feedback**

1. Team Days – These are a great idea - children come home raving about them.
2. Young Voices – Amazing experience – the children involved loved it. Thank you to Mrs Bemister and everyone who helped to make it happen.

## **Uniform**

A questionnaire was sent from the infants about uniform and the results were shared with Mrs Woolf. There are concerns from the Infant School that it is too expensive. Mrs Sayer and Ms Froydenlund are in the process of making changes quickly in readiness for the new reception places.

The overarching message from the survey was that the material for the girls' skirt/pinafore is nice and parents do not wish to change this.

The proposed changes are:

- no logo t-shirt needed when wearing a pinafore. A plain gold polo from M&S can be worn underneath instead, which is significantly cheaper at around £3. A logo polo will still be needed with skirts/trousers/shorts.
- Only M&S summer dresses will be allowed, but the M&S playsuit will now be introduced across both schools as part of the summer uniform. We will add the codes to the website.
- Following feedback that the jumpers fray at the elbows, the Infants have sourced a fleece/sweatshirt style cardigan which is approximately £10 cheaper. A sample of this was shared and Mrs Woolf has asked councillors to seek views from parents (with some urgency due to the meeting with suppliers taking place early next week). If we do keep the original style of jumper and the Infants change, we will allow a transition period as children grow out of their infant uniform.

Additional uniform feedback from parents:

- the PE zipped tops are too tight at the wrists.
- the PE t-shirts are very poor quality and snag/stain.

The date of our next meeting will be Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> June.