



## **Fern Hill School Parent Council Meeting 8/10/2021 - Minutes**

### **Attendees**

Sam Stephenson (Deputy Head)  
Caroline McDonald (Chair)  
Alan Waterman (Parent Governor)  
Secretary and Y6, Willow  
Daisy pm  
R, Sunflower  
Y2, Heather  
Y3, Rowan  
Y3, Elm  
Y4, Larch  
Y4, Yew  
Y5, Ash

Y5, Lime

Y6, Elder

Y6, Oak

### **Apologies**

Y1 Foxglove

Y1 Lavender

Y1 Cornflower

Y2 Clover

Y2 Bracken

Y3 Beech

Y5 Sycamore

Rob Terry (Parent Governor)

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Caroline McDonald (CM) thanked everyone for coming and welcomed two new Parent Council (PC) members for Sunflower – Jennifer Stanzl and Nikolina Chatzidamianou. She thanked Natalie and Clare for taking on the PC role for Daisy am and pm respectively, in addition to their current class roles.

### **Parent Council Terms of Reference and Summary of Last Year's Achievements**

CM talked through the Parent Council Infographic put together by the previous Chair and summarised its scope and remit. The Parent Council is a forum for gathering, discussing and conveying views to the School. Meetings are conducted in a positive spirit, are constructive and solution focused. We are not decision makers, that falls to the Governing Body, but we do play a critical role in ensuring the dissemination of information to parents, regarding the School's activities. LS to circulate the Infographic, in addition to the updated Terms of Reference to PC members.

CM asked if anyone wanted to take on the role of Chair or Secretary. No one stepped forward so CM and LS will continue in their respective roles.

AW asked if the attendance rule of '50% plus one' should apply to the Parent Council, in the same way that it does to the Governor Committee. Sam Stephenson (SS) said that this rule should not apply to the Parent Council but it was agreed that we should aim for a quorate of 10 class representatives.

CM summarised last year's achievements as such:

- The Parent Council continued during the Covid pandemic, despite the many challenges of engaging with parents to get feedback and meeting remotely, with fewer meetings than normal due to lockdowns. The Council was a particularly important channel of communication between parents and School, at a time when parents were so distanced from school life and matters.
- The Council helped communicate the new Behaviour System to parents and gathered parents' feedback on how they felt behaviour is managed at School. Findings could not be fully implemented during the pandemic, but there will be a dedicated session on behaviour at the Curriculum Evening on 1st December 2021.
- Council members acted as a consultation group, giving views and feedback on the School's new Relationships and Sex Education Policy.
- The Council gathered feedback from parents on the lessons learnt during Remote Learning and as a result the new Home Learning area of Google Classroom has been created. The aim is to streamline the different communication channels and create an area where a range of different home learning resources are available, which parents and children can access at any time.

### **Use of Google Forms for Gathering Feedback**

Lumia Kenyon (LK) explained the rationale behind Google Forms, which will be replacing Survey Monkey this academic year.

- GDPR secure - in order to be GDPR compliant, the School need us to move away from Survey Monkey to Google Forms. Using Google Forms to collect parents' responses means that responses are entirely anonymous (although we will be asking parents to indicate their child's class and year group).
- Ability to reach the whole School community - another advantage of moving to Google Forms is that it can be administered centrally.
- PC members do not have to send questions out to parent in their class – they will still have a role in actively encouraging parents to provide feedback, but they will be directing them to complete the survey via a central Google Forms link.
- Streamline communication – data will be stored securely on the Marketing drive. LS and CM will be able to access it through a link that LK will forward to them. LS will be able to download the data as an Excel sheet, split by class and share with individual PC members. This will enable members to see their class responses, without knowing the identity of the parent. PC members will be asked to view the file and then delete it so that confidential data is not stored on their PC. The PC email address can still be used by parents who do not want to complete the survey via Google Forms.

- Reduced workload (Admin) – LK will create the Google Forms survey from the questions agreed by LS, SS and CM. LK will then send out the latest Minutes and a link to the survey via Parent Pay. LS will use the downloaded data to create a thematic summary for the School.

## Parent Survey Results

SS presented the results from the 2020/21 Parent Survey which took place last summer. The response rate was very low, just 250 and more work is needed to increase engagement.

Year	% response	Number
Nursery	3.5	9
Reception	16.3	42
Y1	12.8	33
Y2	14.4	37
Y3	11.3	29
Y4	15.6	40
Y5	16.3	42
Y6	9.7	25

Compared to the 2019 Parent Survey there has been a fall in the percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree with the following statements:

- Fern Hill communicates my child's progress well (down from 79% to 54%)
- Fern Hill deals with cases of bullying effectively (down from 57% to 41% and amongst respondents who did not select 'not applicable' 86% to 74%)
- The senior leadership team are approachable and respond effectively to any concerns I have (down from 84% to 67% and amongst those who did not select 'undecided' down from 95% to 79%)
- I would recommend Fern Hill to another family (down from 92% to 83%)

The 2020/21 Parent Survey reflects a moment in time and the School have already moved forward in terms of face to face communication, school trips and visitors. Last year was difficult for KS1 parents who had no familiarity with our school. Despite the fact that restrictions in place last year were mandatory, some parents were frustrated by the lack of face to face communication.

Strengths that emerged from the survey:

- Children enjoy attending Fern Hill
- Children are safe
- Office staff respond effectively

Areas of focus emerging from the survey that the School need to address:

- Parent communication on how their children are progressing
- Continue developing behaviour systems and wellbeing (bullying)

## School Development Plan

SS shared with PC members the School Development Plan, which identifies the five-year strategic priorities and key priorities for this academic year, identified through self-evaluation against the Ofsted Framework. These are not the only areas the School is focussing on but are their main priorities. Impact is reviewed termly and will be reported on in the termly Headteacher's Report. The plan has been split into the following overarching areas, which link back directly to the School's 5-year strategic plan:

- High quality teaching
- Exceptional experience for all pupils
- Financially stable, high performing school

Quality of education – high quality teaching and learning

- To ensure progress for all in writing by identifying and addressing specific gaps to accelerate progress and raise attainment in KS1 and KS2. A particular focus on disadvantaged pupils, closing the gender gap for boys (KS1) to accelerate progress and improve attainment at KS1 in reading and phonics, particularly outcomes for SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- To accelerate progress and raise attainment in KS1 maths for disadvantaged pupils.

Personal development – exceptional experiences

- To provide rich experiences that broaden and cater for interests and talents in and out of school for our disadvantaged children, in order to increase their equity in cultural capital.

Leadership and Management – high quality learning and exceptional experiences

- To continue to embed Fern Hill Teaching and Learning Principles, to ensure consistency of practice, to enhance the teaching of the curriculum.
- To provide effective CPD support for staff to equip them with relevant skills to continue to identify and address gaps in learning to support pupil catch-up.
- To improve parental engagement of disadvantaged families.
- To develop, communicate and implement a clear strategic vision and action plan to improve the wider educational offer for children. Increase the opportunities for staff development, as a result of academization with Kingston Educational Trust.
- To continue to improve the quality of leadership in non-core subjects to support the development and embedding of a broad and balanced curriculum that inspires excellence.

Finance – high performing school

- To establish greater income generation streams e.g. lettings, after school provision, clubs, voluntary contribution, PSA fundraising.
- To implement further cost management strategies to reduce the deficit budget.
- We need to improve our performance amongst disadvantaged families (12% of the School's intake). Over the last 18 months there has been a lot of movement, with some families moving out of the area, others moving their

children across to the private sector and 26 new pupils joining from Hong Kong alone. The School is adjusting to the ongoing change in School membership.

### **Parent Council Topics**

CM shared the results from the topic vote. Homework was the outright winner and this is the first topic we will address this academic year. The votes were as follows:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Total Votes</b>
Homework	54
School lunch food	28
Re-set after Covid	28
Communication	22
Wellbeing	21
Extra-curricular subjects	20
Sports teaching	20
PSHE Sex and Relationship Education	17
After school clubs	14
Payment for school trips	14
SEN (Special Educational Needs)	12
Playground	10
Gender wellbeing	5

### **Homework topic for next session**

CM asked PC members if they had any initial views on what to ask and how to frame the questions. Inevitably there needs to be a balance between what parents ask for and what the School Development Plan sets out. SS pointed out that the school are not keen on setting worksheets which support rote learning. They want to provide enrichment activities that foster a love of learning.

LS, CM and SS will put together three questions.

### **AOB**

- CM asked LS to share future meeting dates with PC members and to email LK the Parent Council Infographic and the summary she put together about the PC's achievements last year.
- PC meeting dates for this academic year will take place at 9.00am in the Hawthorn classroom and are as follows:
  - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021
  - Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2022
  - Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2022
  - Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022
  - Friday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2022