

Parents' Council

Minutes of Meeting held Monday 6 November 2017

Attendees: Mrs N Edwards
Dawn Bellis
Carol Turner
Sally Clargo
Veronica Silva
Laura Draper
Toni Meadows
Sarah Harris

Apologies: MayMay Sung
Dee Aldons

1.0 Welcome and apologies were made for today's meeting.

2.0 Previous Minutes

Veronica wanted clarification regarding the potential non-presence of Grandparents for the forth coming Grandparents day. Mrs Edwards advised that inclusion would be made for all children either by the Class Teaching Assistants or possibly even other members of the school community.

3.0 Care & Maintenance Fund

Mrs Edwards stated that the annual reminder for the St Andrews Care & Maintenance fund (issued by the Governors) is ready to be distributed within the school. Emphasis was made, and very much stressed that this is exactly what each pupils contribution goes towards: solely the care and maintenance of the school and the building itself.

The fees provided per pupil are paid direct into the Diocese Fund, so upon Diocese Inspection the school will have funding should any repairs be necessary. Mrs Edwards would very much like The Parents' Council to be a voice within the school advising that this is the purpose of the fund and how it operates. It would appear that most believed the fees were used to cover costs for school trips/transport which is very much not the case at all. Failure to cover costs with the Diocese Fund will result in the need to spend from the schools general funding, leading to the potential suffering and shortfalls with other aspects of St Andrews and the children's education. Sadly, due to the nature of Gift Aid, the Care & Maintenance Fund cannot be run through ParentPay; only cheque or standing order. The school also receives a charge for every transaction via ParentPay. Parents could be given the Care Fund bank details so that they can make donations online at their own convenience.

At present, there is no recording of which families have paid into the fund, or as to how much. This information is currently kept between the Diocese and Governing Body. A volunteer with accounts experience would very much be welcomed into looking at this information and gathering and auditing the monies paid by families

into the Care & Maintenance Fund. Anybody who would be interested in helping is invited to see Mrs Edwards to discuss further.

Suggestion was then made to name and thank those who have contributed and to encourage those who have not made any contribution at all by stating what we are saving for as a school and so far, we have raised "X" amount.

It was stressed that the Care & Maintenance Fund is very different, and very much separate from The Friends which is a charitable organisation fundraising for potential new school equipment.

There is to be an inspection of St Andrews made by the Buildings and Facilities Manager from the Diocese next week.

4.0 Jobs

Mrs Edwards has expressed a concern over a number of jobs which need to be carried out within the school, and would very much welcome help in any shape or form to assist with these. They include:

- Tidying out and organising the Costume Cupboard
- Tidying and organising the books in the library
- The scanning of library books in and out of the library for the children from 2.30pm-3.30pm
- Tidying of the reading scheme books
- Painting the goal posts
- Re-painting of the lines etc. within the Early Years playground
- Sweeping up of leaves within the Early Years playground
- Cleaning of the canopy in Early Years playground

Dawn will make a notice of the jobs for the bill-board at the front of the school to draw people's attention to the help required. She also suggested possibility of a compost bin for the leaf collections for the school gardening to use club which operates in the Spring/Summer Terms. She will check with Mrs Costick to see if it would be beneficial.

Acknowledgement was made again of the improved St Andrews web-site and the rate now at which it is being updated.

5.0 The Friends

Sally advised of a potential setback with regards to the woodland area in the Infants playground and the availability of those initially available to assist. Mrs Edwards said that there may be extra assistance in the shape of a grant through the Mayor of London, but in any case, to contact the Local Authorities for possible co-operation. The other alternative is to consider how else we could best use the space.

New laptops are still in the process of being quoted for by a recognised supplier through the Department for Education.

A new dishwasher is also on the agenda for The Friends' kitchen which is used for school events. Sally re-iterated that these are paid for through The Friends fundraising and that there is much help needed for the Christmas Fair Friday 24th November which includes: setting up on the day, running stalls, packing away, filling of jam jars and if anyone could spare anytime at all to please see her or any member of The Friends' Committee.

6.0 Collection of Children from School Clubs

The issue of collection of children, in particular Year 6 who with a letter are permitted to walk out of school on their own was raised after it was noted a Year 6 pupil waiting alone at the end of Nursery Way at 4.40pm in the dark after a school club had finished. Question was raised over whose responsibility it became ultimately should anything un-towards occur. The point was then raised in relation to the school newsletter dated 29th September 2017 which clearly states "Parents must wait outside the school or in the entrance area. Club leaders will bring the children to you and will always take the time to make sure they hand a child over to the right person".

Comments were also made about the parking down Nursery Way for after school club collection and that there was concern for the children's safety and welfare certainly with regards to speed and volume of traffic at 4.30pm. Dawn drew attention to the fact that the school parking permits (request forms available from the school office to be submitted to the local authorities at a fee of £20 for the year) are currently not valid at 4.30pm; only for morning/mid-morning/school drop off and pick-ups.

Mrs Edwards voiced concern and frustration with 3.30pm collections also with parents' punctuality, who is meant to be collecting their children and that it is unacceptable for Junior children to collect siblings from the Infants.

After school club releasing of children is to be monitored more closely. A letter went out to all parents the day after the meeting.

7.0 Assembly Etiquette

It has been noted that general etiquette during class assemblies can be improved by those in attendance and watching.

Both Mrs Edwards and Gerry are in agreement that pushchairs are to remain outside. Other requests are that mobile phones are to be on silent mode or turned off, pictures and videos are for personal use only and not social media and finally any parents with young siblings joining (which are of course very much welcome) are invited to show discretion where necessary, sitting ideally towards the end of the rows to enable parents to quietly exit should the younger children become fractious or unsettled to avoid disruption to the children both partaking in the assembly itself and those watching.

Veronica raised a point which had been brought to her attention: that any individuals who particularly excel during class assembly should have praise and acknowledgement. The Parents' Council are all in agreement that class assemblies are just that; class assemblies, whereby it is a group input as a whole and not just anyone individual.

8.0 Breakfast / After School Clubs Update

Mrs Edwards said that registration forms are now being done for these clubs. An external, independent organisation called "Schoolfriend Clubs" has been investigated as an option for operating the after-school club. It would operate as a separate business, with its own Ofsted registration.

The Schoolfriend Club offers outsourcing for support with potential of recruitment, working in partnership with and operating an online service for bookings/payments.

If

needed, the company could also recruit internally from the school.

Already in operation at St Marys they have advised of the following costs:

Breakfast Club	-	£ 4.25 per child per session
After School Club	-	£10 per child per session (1530-1745)
	-	£ 9 per sibling per session (1530-1745)

Discussion is to be made to see if they could accommodate the after-school club as 2 slots and price accordingly (i.e. 1530-1630 and 1630-1745). This is not something they operate at the moment and there is uncertainty as to whether this may even be a possibility for them. Concerns were raised over whether this may be more expensive than anticipated and so Dawn will draft a questionnaire/letter to be distributed within school gauging opinion.

The after-school club would have all its own resources, separate to those used for and belonging to the school. These are to be stored in the cupboard between Welfare and The Friends' kitchen. Mrs Edwards said we would need a separate fridge/freezer for provision of snack/light tea to be offered to those children in attendance at the after school club.

The consideration was suggested of then keeping breakfast club in house and having the Schoolfriend Club run the after-school club.

9.0 Any Other Business

Carol currently has nothing pressing to report back from The Governors. Question was raised over whether we are up to date with the sports funding, to which we are. As a school, we are continuing to move forwards with Mrs Edwards, who discussed results amongst other areas at the invitational meetings arranged at the start of last term by her.

There will be an open evening with the new caterers, scheduled for Wednesday 29th November at St Andrews. The new caterers contract comes into effect from January 2018. More information about timings and what exactly will be happening on the evening to follow in due course.

10.0 Next Meeting

Scheduled for 2.30pm, Monday 15th January 2018.