

Parental Engagement Person Meeting

Wednesday 12th October 2016- 2:30pm-3:30pm

Attendees

Ellie Linton (EL)- Communications & Marketing Manager

Sarah Greenway (SGr)- Parental Links SIP Lead

Kerry Tevlin (KT)- Finance Officer

Mark Hobbs (MH)- Chair of PTA (FORS)

Tanya Burton (TB)- PEP for FS2LT

Toni Pemberton (TP)- PEP for 2JD

Gaynor Armstrong (MA)- PEP for 2KB

Christos Papageorgiou (CP)- PEP for 2SH

Shelley Garrett (SGa)- Invited to meeting by EL

Minutes

1. MH (PTA Chair) introduced himself and said a few words about upcoming PTA events (Xmas Fair- Saturday 26th November) and what the PTA is raising money for this year. Invited PEPs to share their ideas for fundraising and asked if anyone would like to volunteer to help out at events etc.
2. SGr explained that the school is recruiting parent reading volunteers to help with reading in class once a week on an afternoon. Training will be offered for all volunteers on Thursday 3rd November. SGa and GA have volunteered in the past and fed back their comments on the experience.
3. EL mentioned that the school is also looking for parents to volunteer to hold after school clubs (preferably indoor activities). PEPs asked to promote this to parents in the playground, particularly to those who they know have a skill that would lend itself well to an afterschool club.
4. Parent Facebook groups were discussed, and MH said that he was aware of a Year 1 group, and GH and SGa are members of Year 2 groups for their children's classes. PEPs to send links to any Facebook groups that they know of/are members of to EL so that the links can be sent out to all parents in that particular class.

5. It was suggested that a list of PEPs should be sent out to parents so that they know who the parent representatives are for their class. It was also suggested that parents get sent a letter to remind them of the PEP's role, so that they know to go for them for information about events rather than to pass on a concern or complaint to the school. CP suggested that PEPs could have a tick list of parents they see often, so that they can work out which parents are not as present among that class's parent community and may need reaching out to.
6. EL went through upcoming events for parents to be aware of this term:
 - Parents Evening- 23rd-24th November
 - Christmas Performances- Monday 12th December (Year 1-2 at 9:30am, Year 3-4 at 1:45pm), Tuesday 13th December (Nursery at 9:30am, Year 5-6 at 1:45pm), Friday 16th December (Reception at 9:30am), Monday 19th December (Year 3-4 at 9:30am, Year 1-2 at 1:45pm), Tuesday 20th December (Year 5-6 at 9:30am, EYFS at 1:45pm)
7. EL asked PEPs to feed back on school communications, noting that the Weekly Update email is only opened by 50% of parents each week. It was suggested that a reminder could be sent out on a Monday to encourage those who have not yet read the email to do so, but other PEPs felt that this would just put more people off rather than get them to read the email.
8. EL asked if it would be helpful if the letters were moved to the top of the Weekly Update email so that parents could access vital information if they were short on time, and skip the 'news' type articles. PEPs said that they thought this would be useful.
9. CP suggested asking parents to complete a feedback form about the Weekly Update, as this could indicate the reason for low readership. SGa suggested that the feedback form could be done as a homework activity, so the children ask the parents the questions as a homework task and record the answers in their homework books.
10. Another idea to increase readership was to have a kids section on the newsletter, such as a video interview done by the children. PEPs said that they would be more likely to read the email if they knew their child was featured.
11. TB commented that she does not read the Weekly Update every week, but does not feel as though she is missing out as she gets the information she needs elsewhere (website, letters, etc).
12. EL asked PEPs to give feedback on the 'Meet the Teacher' event. PEPs said that they had heard good feedback from other parents in the playground. SGa said that she thought Year 2's event was good, but she hated the fact that all of Foundation Stage were put in the Nursery classroom. The FS event was also poorly signposted, and SGa said she would have liked to have been in her child's actual classroom rather than in Nursery. She said that she also did not get a chance to speak to her child's teacher (Mrs Walker).

13. TP said that 5:30 was an awkward time as this is usually tea time for most children, although pointed out that this later time was good for parents who work. Also fed back that it was difficult for parents with more than one child as the event was only 1 hour long for all year groups. GA suggested that the sessions were a bit too long, and that it would be good to do two half hour sessions in future so that parents could go to two sessions in one evening for multiple year groups, or even two sessions across two nights.
14. CP said that he did not feel there was enough time to talk to the class teachers, and said that those who loved the event the most were the ones who had not met their child's class teacher before, as they did not come to the transition afternoon last term.
15. PEPs all agreed that the children really enjoyed it, and asked that EL pass on thanks to all the teachers.
16. MH commented that it was nice to see the children's classrooms, but that it was a shame that some parents used the event to latch onto teachers to vent issues they had with the school, as this stopped other parents speaking to the teachers. Suggested that next time parents should be made more aware of the context of the event to manage parents' expectations, so that they know that the event is not an opportunity to file a complaint.
17. TP mentioned the recent Reception Stay and Play, which was very poorly organised, and seemed to have no start and end. Parents felt as if they were confined to the playground and did not get a chance to speak to the teachers. EL to pass this information on to the senior leadership team.
18. EL asked for feedback on end of year reports, and showed examples to the PEPs. SGa said she was disappointed at the lack of parent/carer comments box, as she would like to be a partner in her children's education but felt that the report structure did not allow her to do this. CP added that a parent feedback section is more important than ever now that parents are now allowed into school in the mornings, as it means that they are not going into the classrooms.
19. SGa mentioned that she likes the fact that 'effort' is given equal weighting on the reports as attainment.