

Minutes of Spittal Parent Forum Committee held on Monday 17th June at 8pm

In attendance:

Alison Botarelli (AB), Caroline Evans (CE), Heather Hannah (HH), Rebecca Bojanowski (RB), Anna-Marie Butterfield (AMB), Karen John (KJ), Victoria Evans (VE), Joanne E Griffiths (JEG), James Gwilt (JG).

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Kelly John, Samantha Bradbury, Nicola Miles-Bevan, Liz Hamlet and Jo Rees-Wigmore.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes were signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising - election of Governor Chair

Samantha Bradbury was elected as parent governor chair.

4. Annual school calendar

The forum were asked to provide input into the preparation of an annual school calendar, which the school hopes to be able to send out to all parents before the end of this school term. A draft list of events was reviewed and the forum suggested additional events to be included in the calendar, these included cross country, year 5 and 6 athletics, the local and national rounds of Urdd Eisteddfod, Urdd sporting events and the date of the visit to Swansea pantomime. It was also suggested that the school consider bringing back the Christmas performance for key stage 2, as a lot of parents missed this.

There was a general feeling that the children currently miss out on a lot of extracurricular activities that were previously offered by the school and were very successful at. It was accepted that it is difficult for a small school to be able to do all the sporting events offered and that to increase the amount of events possible parental support would be needed. All parents present were very enthusiastic at the prospect of supporting the school to re-establish some of these activities.

If the school could consider some of the ideas discussed below, and decide on some to start with, the forum would assign some members to each activity to help support their introduction.

Some of the ideas discussed were:

- **Gymnastics club** – This was previously run in the school hall by a grandparent. She has offered her services to re-start again. Could the school look into the possibility of re-starting? It wouldn't necessarily have to involve a teacher if the correct liability insurance is in place and at least one other parent to be available to support the club on a regular basis
- **School Eisteddfod** - Parents would like to see a school eisteddfod where pupils would have the opportunity to perform and compete at a school level before moving onto the next round. It would perhaps encourage participation in more competitions.
- **School performances** - parents of children in the middle of the school would like to see them have the opportunity to be more actively involved in a play or production each year. Would it be possible to reintroduce each class doing their own small production at Christmas? Or two separate performances for foundation phase and key stage 2? Or the summer production to include all of key stage 2 having active roles? AB noted that there are ways that practicing for these productions can be built into the curriculum and involve all children and this would have to be a consideration for the school.
- **Urdd** – partially links to a school Eisteddfod, but maybe something like an 'Urdd club' would ensure the children have the opportunity to participate in a variety of Urdd competitions, especially the sports. There are parents that would be willing to help support/run these clubs and it was noted that Seimon Morris is usually very enthusiastic about the music competitions.
- **Sports** – parents are concerned about the level of PE that will be included in the new curriculum. It would be great to see sport being made a high priority in the school day, with perhaps participation in a 'mile a day' or 'wake and shake' in every class. Again, there are parents who would be willing to help support this.
- **Outdoor area** – parents are keen to help re-establish the early years outdoor area that is currently overgrown and un-used. If we could be given a plan to follow, it could be started over the summer holidays.

It was recognised that the above is a long list of ideas, but to begin with, the biggest priority would ideally be in improving involvement in sport and the Urdd and particularly music. The Forum understand that this cannot be achieved by one teacher on their own and noted that it could involve the whole of the school community including parents, governors and teachers with appropriate delegation from the school. The forum suggested that the school might consider sending out a letter to parents asking if they have any skills that they could offer to help support any extracurricular activities. On receipt of this feedback, the list of events could be added too with a three tier approach to ownership of the activity (teacher, governor and parent).

AB advised that any parent wanting to become actively involved within the school would need to undergo a DBS check and it was acknowledged that a lot of parents have these and would only need to pay a small fee to upgrade their DBS to a transferable DBS

5. Dojo and communication

Class dojo

KJ had sent an email to all teaching staff asking for their feedback on class dojo – only 2 email responses were received. In general, staff feel dojo is quick and easy to use and reaches a large audience with only one action. The children love the dojo points.

Parents feel that the communication put up under the 'stories section' is very effective, useful and has improved vastly in recent months. Parents like the newsletter being posted, as well as the poster reminders. They also like the individual teacher messaging, and many feel that this could completely replace the red books used.

All parents present and those they have spoken to place little value on dojo points – parents feel that this is inconsistently used across the classes, and time consuming for staff. All present said that they wouldn't mind if this aspect was discontinued.

Red books

Currently, the red books of children in class one are signed and dated every day, to say they have been checked, even if there is no message. The parent forum agreed that this is a waste of valuable teacher's time, and would be perfectly happy to return to the previous system where books are only signed if a message has been written.

6. Arrival and dismissal from school

It was noted that the end of the school day is extremely busy', with all children coming out of only 2 doors at the same time. There is little opportunity chance for a parent to have a quick few words with a teacher, which we would value sometimes. As the majority of the classes have an outside door, the parent forum suggested that the school might want to consider pupils being dismissed from their own outside door. This would help to improve any perceived barriers between the school and parents and open up the communication. Similarly, in the mornings, if the children could be brought to their individual classes with the teacher on each door rather than only through two entrances parents would be able to see who is teaching their child that day and if an urgent message needed to be given to the teacher this could be done. A suggestion was that, time permitting the head teacher could be in the playground patrolling the playground gates. Being greeted by the classroom teacher would help all children settle into the school day better, especially those in the foundation phase. AB noted that this approach is used in many schools, with some schools building into their ethos that children have to say good morning and shake their teachers' hand at the door every day. However, any changes to the start and the end of the school day would need to be carefully considered by the school to ensure that it is safe. AB said that she would discuss this with the school to see if there was a way to make it work.

7. Mission statement

Governors and staff have come up with the new mission statement '*Believe, Achieve, Learn together*'. The forum were asked for feedback – everyone present was happy with the new motto. It was discussed that it could be displayed in bright lettering on the fence at the front of the school, at the school gates, in the hall and classrooms. It needs to be visible. CE suggested holding a competition next term for the children to design a new logo to include the new mission statement, which could then be used throughout the school, or each class could design one for use in their own classes.

8. The following draft agenda was agreed:

- Apologies
- Minutes of the last meeting
- Matters Arising
- Review of e-learning policy
- Review of behaviour policy

- Any other business
- Date of the next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed on **Monday 8th July at 8pm.**

Action Points

| Number | Action Point | Owner |
|---------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | School Calendar: Feedback the suggested additions to the school, with the aim of the calendar of dates being distributed to parents if possible before the end of this term or (subject to action point 2/3) at the beginning of Sept 2019. | AB |
| 2 | School Calendar: Teachers/governors to review our list of suggested extracurricular activities, and feedback on any that we may be able to support, so Parent council can get support in place to enable some started next term. | AB, & School |
| 3 | School Calendar: Ask for the school send a letter to parents asking for volunteers for various extra-curricular events/activities. | AB, school and Forum |
| 4 | School Calendar: Prepare calendar of activities with 3 tier support structure | Governors, school and Forum |
| 5 | Feedback our response on class dojo – great for communication, little value put on points by parents. | AB |
| 6 | Consider the option of the children entering and leaving the school through their own outside classroom doors, being greeted/dismissed by the class teacher. | AB, School and Governors |

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