

Parent Voice 15th October 2019 9am-10am – Pastoral Centre

Attendees:

GJ (Head teacher), AH (Pastoral Leader), MC (Assistant Head), Parents - RD, NM, LT, JF, NMa, DS, JH, NMi & GE

The meeting was opened by AH, parents welcomed and everyone introduced themselves.

Minutes of the previous meeting on 4th July were agreed by all.

Actions from the previous meeting were discussed:

1. The passage way/path and gate leading into the school is too narrow and busy and in the winter it is muddy making it very difficult to pass on.
 - Removal of the trees – LT knows a tree surgeon but we would likely need council approval, could the Head confirm.
 - Concreting the muddy areas to make the path wider, money was an issue but could something be done in the meantime or could we fundraise to get this done asap?

Concerns were also raised regarding the slopes leading down to the classrooms which are dangerous for children.

GJ said that the cheapest quote to have the path changed was £7,500 which the school could not currently afford. One suggestion was gravel being placed both sides of the path over the mud but this was dismissed due to issues with pushchairs. NMi will speak to someone at B&Q to see if we can have any of the materials donated. This will also be advertised in the Newsletter to see if any parents may be able to supply the materials or help do the work. NMi will also speak to GJ about having our school details passed onto Harrods as they do a corporate responsibility scheme.

2. The purchasing of a defibrillator for the school (LHS & CTS both have one).
 - There is a charity which would part fund this £1,600 – JH will confirm
 - The school could fundraise for the other £1,500 for the purchase of this – non uniform days more often, charity bake sales; parents would be informed in advance so they know exactly where their money is going to, therefore, everyone is invested in this. Could we approach the local children's centre or businesses and ask for donations?
 - The new Pastoral Centre could have a fundraising board that is visible so parents can see how the fund raising is going – Leanne keen to create this.

GJ has contacted a charity who have our school on a list to receive a free defib. This is how CTS obtained theirs. If we get one, then we could perhaps raise some money for the charity in return.

3. More equipment/things for children to use at break times as pupils are 'bored'
 - There was an awareness that currently the equipment is not well cared for by the pupils and is often damaged or broken
 - Parents were keen to be able to come into school and offer their help at lunch times – could we have a pool of parent volunteers to come in and play games with children, mini craft clubs etc so that there is more choice for pupils at lunch time? DBS issues will need to be discussed with the Head – could one DBS parent be paired with a non DBS parent as a form of 'buddy' system?
 - Parents could come in and see the lunchtimes and therefore come up with ideas and solutions which could be implemented.

Some of the parents are keen to volunteer at lunchtime (JH, LT, JF plus RD already does a lot of the gardening around the school and the children have been very keen to help in the break times). NMa will see if she can get a list of volunteers together and school will arrange the DBS checks. GJ has asked that all volunteers would attend a session on child protection and to give advice to volunteers about how games/clubs should be run. Ideas were games/crafts outside and also making use of the Y4 classrooms.

4. Use of the Pastoral Centre/Raising Awareness on safety
 - As well as coffee mornings parents wanted training to be provided in some of the following areas – first aid, safety of children (seatbelts being worn in cars, what children should eat and drink, how and when to use the 999 system etc). This could also be curriculum based or assemblies for the children.
 - The Centre could have displays to educate parents on sugars in foods etc.
 - Could we have an Awareness Day where parents and children are invited in with the 999 services to learn about basic first aid, when to call 999, when to call 101, when to go to A&E or see the GP or pharmacist? Encouraging parental involvement and TEAM ethos. People felt parents needed to be educated about dangers as much as their children.
 - Do all classrooms have strip thermometers? How are temperatures taken? AH to find out from the Head, could we fundraise to buy more for the classrooms.

Open House parental coffee mornings would commence on a Wednesday after half term from 9am until 10am in the Pastoral Centre. These would be advertised in the weekly Newsletter and detailed on the dates section. In conjunction with this there are 3 parental notice boards in the Pastoral Centre and AH explained about Families Feeling Safe offering free protective behaviours sessions in the Spring Term. LT said she had attended this and it was an excellent course. RD & JF were both keen to attend, details to be advertised in the Newsletter nearer the time.

There are no strip thermometers in classrooms but there are 3 ear thermometers around the school for use if there is a concern that a child may have a temperature.

Nurture UK Award:

GJ & AH spoke about the 6 principles of nurture and what they mean for the children at the school and how this underpins our whole school ethos, core values and curriculum. Also, how the job of a school is no longer to teach reading, writing and maths but to focus on the whole child, preparing them for adulthood:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom is a safe base
- The importance of nurture for the development
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transitions in children's lives

All class rooms have a safe space now where children can go whenever needed, the Pastoral Centre is also a safe place for many children during the day and is used for lunchtime provision for those children who may find being on the playground difficult. The school are working on helping children to articulate their feelings with protective behaviours work, 5 ways to wellbeing, attachment awareness and Zones of Regulation. These were explained and parents felt there was a lot of very positive work being done by the school to help their children which they would like communicated to all parents. It was felt that there could be a parent wellbeing assembly/workshop where the school explain all of this excellent work to parents and speak to parents about how they can help their children and how mobile phones are possibly having a negative effect on families as a whole not interacting and talking. AH/GJ spoke about a video they had seen which can be shown to parents to demonstrate this. RD commented on a recent 'Aspirational' Assembly which had got a lot of children very excited about the future and jobs. RD mentioned 'Maddy do you know' from CBBC which showcases different jobs and LT spoke about SBSK which is about disabilities and how to treat people. GJ will look into showing these. Parents and staff also recognised that there were a number of languages spoken in the school by parents – the top 4 in addition to English were Polish, Romanian, Twi and Urdu. This workshop would also be communicated in these languages with the use of staff acting as translators so the workshop would be fully inclusive.

It was also felt that children at the school need to know what the Pastoral Centre is for so they know where to come when they need help. This will be added to as Assembly on Monday.

Ideas were shared in relation to the Parent and Carers Standards for the Nurture UK Award – including all the above work the school are doing – parent workshops to take place this academic year – regular parent information in the Newsletters – possible changes to parent evenings/reports to include more information to reflect pupils strengths and weaknesses and areas of need – for teachers to ensure parents have their email addresses to promote contact between the parent/carer and teacher (Newsletter to direct parents to the school website which has all email contacts listed).

A Parent Voice email address has been set up – parentvoice@beechfield.herts.sch.uk – this can be used by all parents not just those in today's meeting – this will be put on Newsletters for all to see as well as AH's email address.

Actions:

NMi to liaise with B&Q and Harrods

NMa to identify parent volunteers for the next meeting

AH to advertise the parental coffee mornings and parent courses as necessary in the Newsletter

AH to ensure our Newsletter directs parents to our website for contact email addresses of teachers

AH/GJ to talk about the Pastoral Centre to children in assembly

GJ to look into videos to show the children re jobs and disabilities

AH/GJ to create a workshop for parents on all the wellbeing work being done by the school including Nurture UK, 5 ways to Wellbeing, Zones of Regulation, Protective Behaviours and Attachment Awareness (all these all interlink and underpin all that the school does for the children)

Date of next meeting to be confirmed before the end of Autumn Term to feedback on progress.