

**Parent Forum Minutes**

**Thursday 1st July 2021**

**10am on Zoom**

Present: Liz Webber (Parent Ambassador), Bradley Taylor (Headteacher), Wendy Taylor (Assistant Headteacher), Rhonda Gosney (Deputy Headteacher – Cressex Site), HL (JL, Deer), EH (DH, Buttercup), CA (SA, Buttercup), SB (AB, Bumblebee)

Apologies: SW (couldn’t get on the zoom call – EW, Daisy)

1. Welcome

Liz opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the Forum before covering housekeeping issues.

1. Update on the current situation

Bradley thanked parents for attending.

So far no groups have been sent home to isolate, which is brilliant so our children are not missing education. We’re still being careful as we’re not at the end of term yet. We have had confirmation from Public Health England today that if any staff member or child gets a positive test from a lateral flow test then immediately everyone in the bubble should isolate. This is different from before when this only happened following a PCR test. This is because the level of transmissibility of the Delta variant is so great.

EH asked about whether the isolation will be stopped from September following the news reports on this. Bradley said that it is likely that the bubble structure will be a thing of the past, but it’s a watch and wait situation.

1. Feedback from the Annual Review Focus Group

The purpose of the focus group was to get parents understanding of the Annual Review process and their views on the process and what could be improved.

The conclusion was to run training around the Annual Review process for parents. This will be done in age groups – new parents, Primary transition to Secondary, Post 16. The sessions will cover what you should expect, what you will receive from the school, how parents can be a part of it etc.

There is also new paperwork from the local authority, which will be sent out next term.

1. Parents Questionnaire

We have had very good uptake from the parents for our Parent questionnaire. One question we would like to ask your views on is receiving valuable info around your child’s progress. Parents currently receive their child’s PPP and parent’s evening feedback. Are these valuable? What can we change? Anything you like or prefer?

Bradley suggested that PPPs short term outcomes are quite accessible and meaningful as they break down the long term EHCP outcomes. They are RAG rated – green, amber, red. I imagine more difficult to understand is the curriculum process. We have in the past run workshops around how we assess and our assessment criteria. Is this the case?

CA feels that she has good communication with the school anyway on a daily basis. In PPP some of the info on Maths and English is not really relevant for her child. She would like to have more info on what it actually means and what they are doing.

EH shared an example, in writing – a child may have green indicating that they can write, however they know that their child cannot write. What standards are they measured against? What does it mean?

Bradley explained that there is an assessment criteria that is broken down that shows the stages from mark making to writing. If it is really important then it will be listed in the short term targets. We could share the type of assessment that we are working on with child. We are wary of this because the danger is information overload.

It can be difficult if parents have language difficulties. Parents’ evenings are easier for discussing this and being able to ask questions. Pick up/drop off times are good and dojo is helpful too. Several parents shared how they find the reports overwhelming. There is a noticeable difference between the child on paper and in reality. Parents receive reports regularly which is good, but don’t understand fully what it says.

Bradley summed up that we need to think about how targets are set and explained to parents.

The End of year reports sent home with photos are helpful. Parents like this as there is lots of information on it. Parents prefers this to the PPP.

HL added that it is easier when we come into school as we can see the child’s books and folders.

1. Parent Events/Training Update

Liz updated that we have had lots of event going on. Unfortunately we had to stop meeting in person and to return to online. We are hoping that in September we can meet in person again.

We have 3 events coming up:

* 7th July – Summer Self Care Workshop – keeping your calm, your kids calm, how to regulate emotions and places to go over the summer.
* 15th July – Puberty workshop run by Learning Disability Nurses – for children in year 5 and up.
* 13th July - Creative Recharge Session – on zoom

Looking ahead to next term, we will be scheduling the First aid course, potentially a behaviour course, Teen Life (Spring Term) and Early Birds Plus for parents with children with autism. When Dreams Change course in an evening for working parents.

Any particular courses or training would you like?

HL asked about manual handling courses like teachers get with Team Teach. She is concerned about how to move him when he lays down in the road in the middle of a meltdown. It would be good if we were taught this by the local authority.

Bradley said that Team Teach trainers cannot teach parents, however Team Teach do run their own behavior training for parents, but there is a cost for this. We could advertise the course for those who want to do it. The course teaches some holds.

Other parents have struggled with a lack of training in this.

If cost is a barrier then as a school we can investigate how we can get past this. The school does have pots of money, however we would like to explore further with the local authority.

Behaviour training would be good for those difficult situations, although ideally de-escalation is used to avoid these situations occurring.

Parents shared how their children hurt them and how they have hurt their children in the past because they do not know the correct way to hold their children.

Liz agreed to look into training on this.

If any parents have any ideas for training they would like then please do contact Liz on lwebber@chilternwood.bucks.sch.uk or via the Cressex office

1. Feedback on our practices

Liz asked for feedback from parents as to how well we are doing and what requires improvement.

HL raised the issue of pupils not coming into school because of lack of sleep when sleep is an issue that is part of her son’s medical condition. Lack of sleep has such a knock on effect on parents and families and mum is concerned about driving when tired. This was in relation to an e-mail from the school regarding children should attend even if tired.

Bradley explained that we cannot have is a blanket policy that if your child is tired then they don’t need to come to school. There have been a lot of attendance issues due to tiredness. We cannot discuss individual cases. The e-mail was not specifically directed at specific parents. Ideally we want all children in school receiving an education and giving parents the respite they need. We are aware that there are occasions where children have a good medical reason not to be in school. We do understand and we would not want you risking driving if you do not feel safe to do so.

HL concerned that her son’s behavior can disrupt the class when he is tired. HL would have liked more communication on the matter and how there are some cases in which it is ok, for example, if her son has a run of bad nights.

Bradley explained that Wendy monitors attendance and it is based on individuals. If we are concerned about attendance then we would liaise with parent to find out why and to help support whether it’s writing to Drs to get more sleep medication.

Wendy said that she looks at attendance every 3 weeks for every child. We would not be looking at issuing penalty notices until many conversations have been had to try and resolve the situation.

HL asked about holidays and authorization as she is aware that her son learns a lot when he travels. Bradley understands this, but there is a law about this that cannot be changed. There are some children that are taken away for months at a time and those are the children we are highly concerned about.

The absence penalty is £60 if you pay it straight away. If you delay payment, it increases.

Wendy explained that the government expects 95-98% attendance. We look for 85% as we know that our children have medical problems and appointments and this affects their attendance.

HL also mentioned about the taxi drivers driving. They often push out from the school onto the road and can be driving fast.

Rhonda fed back that she is communicating with the taxi drivers via letters on a regular basis as a reminder of the rules eg not arriving too early and blocking the road. Rhonda will make sure that the speed and looking carefully when they come out of school will be raised with them.

HL suggested give way signs could help.

HL also mentioned that she has struggled to move her car when the taxis are released. Rhonda suggested that parents in a hurry should mention this to the staff member on the radio as they can stop the stream of traffic to allow the parent to move their car.

CA said that it works both ways. Her son gets anxious waiting in the taxi before they can maneuver. There needs to be a bit of give and take.

Emma mentioned that DOJO is working really well. Please continue to use it to remind parents of things they need to do. It is so useful. Owl class are brilliant at doing it.

If there are further comments or feedback, please do send it over to Liz Webber.

HL requested that Liz’s details are on the contact details section of the website. Liz explained that her details were under the Parent Ambassador page, but she will look into seeing if it can be added to the contact page to make it easier for parents.

1. Closing thoughts on a difficult year

It has obviously been a highly disruptive year, however having read teachers reports, we are so pleased to see that so much progress has been made. Parents’ feedback is so helpful to us to be able to shape things for the future, Close working between the parents and the school is so beneficial to the children.

We have missed having parents coming in. We appreciate all the hard work parents have put into engaging with us.

1. AOB

There was no further business to discuss.

Liz thanked everyone for their contributions and their time before closing the meeting.