



**MINUTES OF MEETING FROM PARENTS FOCUS GROUP FRIDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023 1800-2000**

Present: Rebecca Braunton, Kate Stanton, Becky Coombes and Doug Gubbins.

Apologies Jonathan Carre

<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>Review of minutes of previous meeting on 26.01.23. Have key actions been completed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School reports to be reassessed and sent to PFG for feedback – COMPLETED</li> <li>2. Whoops stickers to be revised – COMPLETED</li> <li>3. Achievement Assemblies to be arranged for each class: Time to Shine (TTS) – COMPLETED</li> <li>4. PFG to continue to seek parents feedback and direct parents to resources such as websites and newsletters – COMPLETED/ONGOING</li> <li>5. Future information evenings to be recorded and/or slideshows put on website/emails for parents (who cannot attend) to access – UPCOMING (HAD NO SUCH EVENTS SINCE LAST MEETING).</li> </ol>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>Parent feedback from previous actions to date</b></p> <p><b>Time to shine</b>          Although we still have two assemblies scheduled for next week, feedback to date has been REALLY positive. Parents are enjoying coming into school, looking at work, enjoying the singing and interacting with the children. One concern had been raised about putting additional stresses on the children and we discussed how this could be addressed before the next round of TTS. We talked about next time, rather than a presentation as such, we would have a practical task to complete together. This would also engage the children where a parent could not make the TTS session. Drinks/biscuits and reflection time to look through books would stay. Parents also enjoyed the singing aspect and the ‘class community’ feel. Action: Doug to circulate next dates for TTS – going to try and get them all across 1 week.</p> <p><b>Class emails</b>          These have now been launched and appear to be working well. Responses are being turned around in less than 48 hours and only non-urgent issues are being addressed.</p> <p><b>Whoops stickers</b>          These have now been replaced with ‘gentle reading reminder’ stickers. There has been no additional feedback received on these.</p> <p><b>Year 1 home learning</b>          The general feeling is that parents now feel less pressured to complete the home learning and do not panic as much if the children choose not to do it. It has been made clear that nobody will be penalised if the task is not completed and everyone generally understands the most important thing to focus on is the home reading – which most people feel comfortable doing. Due to the fact that Y1 have their first ever statutory test in June (Phonic screening), Doug talked about how he wanted to make phonics a sole focus for the Easter holidays for our Y1 children – this is to keep knowledge fresh and prevent any lost learning during the 2+ week holiday. He has put together a covering letter and phonic pack that ask that children decode 5 words a day and read them to their parents. Extension is also in place with more resources being on hand for children who want to read more than 5 words. Action: Kate to feedback on Doug’s letter and resource pack by early next week. This is in order for a final version to be sent out in good time.</p>

	<p><b>Communications: key dates document vs letters vs newsletter</b></p> <p>The key dates document (that is updated on a monthly basis) is working well. People are sticking these on fridges and are much more aware of events taking place in the school. The busy-ness of the newsletter has been actioned by changing this to termly now and having single letters with a sole focus e.g. health week, World book day, TTS. This has made locating information much easier.</p> <p>It was felt that it would be good to utilise the notices boards at the front of the school and also outside the Nursery, displaying the key dates documents. We also need to get one installed on the back playground for Y1 and Y2 parents who don't use the Green road entrance.</p> <p>Emails and texts continue to be the most effective ways of communication and appear to be working, however some parents are still having issues opening PDF documents on their phones. It was suggested that we include website hyperlinks when we send out letters/emails as this would solve the problem with PDF technical issues.</p> <p>Action: 1. Doug to speak to Netty about placing key dates info on external display boards and to also purchase a new one for the back playground. 2. Doug to also speak to Miss Wrixon about ensuring letters are uploaded on to the website and hyperlinks (to those letters) are also included on the email/texts.</p> <p><b>School reports</b></p> <p>Very early days – as reports only went out yesterday. Already the feel is that they are better/more informative than last year, but there have still been a couple of suggestions as to how they could be even better e.g. maths and literacy subject box. School has sent out a formal feedback form and some parents are feeding back directly to the PFG. This will be an agenda item for our next meeting. Action: School reports to be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.</p>
3	<p><b>Coronation Celebrations</b></p> <p>Concerns were raised that with previous celebrations, there was a delay in some of the resources going out. Jubilee books went out nearly half a term after the event and world book day vouchers, in some classes, went out late. It is important that we build on the excitement of the moment and try to get the resources out on the same day (or as close as). Doug explained that the Jubilee books went to every child across the country from the DFE (not just Old Town), as the delivery was late, we sent them out as soon as they arrived, however there was a noticeable gap between the event and the delivery. We are expecting something similar for the Coronation, however if nothing comes to fruition, or we expect a delivery delay, Doug will ensure a communication goes out to update everyone.</p> <p>There were a lot of positive ideas for how we celebrate the Coronation here at Old Town (without standing on the toes of the Summer Fete). A lengthy discussion took place and we decided on an Old Town picnic (with some entertainment and arts and crafts), that we would open up to all of our families. This will take place on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023 from 1200-1400. More info will follow next week.</p> <p>Action: 1. Doug to ensure that 'event' resources go out on the same day across the whole school. 2. Doug to write to families informing them of the Coronation celebration before the Easter holidays.</p>
4	<p><b>World book day</b></p> <p>On the whole positive feedback. It was felt that Old Town's offer is in line with other local and National schools. This year we had an author in, but not many people knew about it, so the school could raise the profile (with things like this) next year.</p> <p>Some parents really liked the whole school colour approach, others would have preferred to allow the children to wear their own costumes (based on a book) in to school.</p> <p>We discussed the best route forward and Doug is keen that on days such as this, nothing is 'enforced'. Next year we will embrace 3 offers: 1. favourite character (individual choice), 2. Offer a whole school alternative (such as a crayon colour), 3. School uniform – some children do not enjoy dressing up and this option will avoid putting any pressure on those children.</p>

	<p>It was also suggested that perhaps next year children can bring the book in which they have dressed up as, into school. The book could then be shown/shared with the rest of the class (although it is recognised that the class teachers would not be able to get through 30 books on the same day).</p>
5	<p><b>Balance of fundraising- Children in need, Christmas Chocolate, Easter Eggs, Comic Relief, World book day: are we asking too much of our parents.</b></p> <p>On the whole families did not feel overwhelmed with the amount of fundraising/donations that we do. Not everyone has small change and it was asked if parents could have the option to donate online using Arbor or Scopay.</p> <p>Not all families attend the PTA events and some already support Children and Need and Comic Relief elsewhere and it seems unfair if they also feel obliged to also donate at school. Doug stressed that he would make this clear in future correspondence about these events – again, nobody will be penalised if they do not make a donation.</p> <p>It was also recognised that these events tend to pop up at Easter and Christmas – but it was also recognised that we have no control over national fundraising schemes such as CIN and CR. We also discussed the possibility of stepping back from the national fundraisers and instead, supporting a local charity – or one that is already affiliated with a family of the school.</p> <p>Action: Doug to speak to the office about fundraising donations coming in via the online portal. At our next big fundraiser, Doug to also write to parents stressing that donations are optional and are not enforced by the school.</p>
6	<p><b>Bagels: Stay or go?</b> On the whole bagel feedback is really successful. Doug explained how the scheme runs until July and will then be reviewed – as this is a DFE run incentive, we need to await further information.</p> <p>Some parents felt that as a result of bagels, some children are now having 3 breakfasts! There was also some confusion about how many pieces a child can have. Doug to ensure that Reception have access to the recommended <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> bagel per day and KS1 <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> bagel a day. Every child in school also receives a piece of fruit each day as part of snacktime. Whilst some people have suggested also introducing fruit as part of the free breakfasts. We need to ensure that we have enough fruit for everyone in school and therefore cannot just dip into the snack time fruit as an option – without running the risk of not having enough fruit at snacktime.</p> <p>Therefore Old Town offers: a bagel for breakfast, fruit for snack time and a hot meal and dessert on a daily basis. This scheme also comes at a cost to the school – each day we cook 70+ bagels.</p> <p>Action: Doug to clarify with staff and parents about how many bagels can be accessed each day.</p>
7	<p><b>Birthdays: Sweets being sent in to go home/given out by parents at the end of the day. Thoughts.</b> This was a relatively quick discussion and we were able to quickly agree that <b>it</b> is up to parents if they wish to bring in sweets, and give them out in the playground at the end of the day. It is therefore up to individual families to decide whether they take the sweets or whether there are diet restrictions/allergies that would prevent their children from taking the sweets. End of day/managed by parents = parents own discretion.</p> <p>Doug also talked about some schools ask for families to send in a book on their child's birthday and that this is then shared with the class at the end of the day (by the class teacher). It was felt that our children liked the special excitement of the sweets.</p> <p>Action: Doug to formally clarify in letter.</p>
8	<p><b>Beginning to evaluate the Curriculum: Long Term overviews. SCIENCE FOCUS</b></p> <p>We had a lengthy discussion about this and Doug stressed that while he is happy to make changes, tighten up the website and ensure curriculum information is much easier to locate, this will not be a quick fix, like some of our other agenda items, as he wants to get it write and not keep repeating the same information. It was decided that this would be an ongoing agenda item and that we would keep revisiting this.</p>

	We spent time talking about how we choose the key knowledge that we want the children to remember with our curriculum (foundation subjects) and also looked through an end of unit history quiz – looking at how it links to the long term history plan. It was generally recognised that this is a big piece of work and one that we will keep collection feedback for.
9	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>After school clubs – not all children want to access a sports club. Can we bring back arts and crafts and cooking club. Doug to explore whether this can be re-integrated back into Seashells again – as children love cooking and arts based clubs We are also going to see if there is an interest in a Chinese arts and crafts club.</p> <p>A lot of our families are having problems with Chartwells – ordering, communication and customer service. Doug has asked for any feedback to be emailed in to the school office and we will then pass this on to the Coastal Learning.</p> <p>We also discussed the school uniform/colour/how it is hard to wash. Becky queried if children can wear a navy t- shirt on P.E days and the white ones highlight every black marker pen, and lunchtime spillage. Doug said that he does not have a problem with this.</p> <p>Action: Doug to clarify in a whole school PFG summary letter.</p> <p>Action: A text/email to be sent out to Nursery/Reception/Year1 parents inviting them to join the PFG. Now they have seen our impact, perhaps they will be more excited to join ☺</p>

### Agreed Actions

1. Doug to circulate next TTS dates and get these added to the dates for the diary document.
2. Kate to feedback on Doug's letter and resource pack by early next week. This is in order for a final version to be sent out in good time.
3. Doug to speak to Netty about placing key dates info on external display boards and to also purchase a new one for the back playground.
4. Doug to also speak to Miss Wrixon about ensuring letters are uploaded on to the website and hyperlinks (to those letters) are also included on the email/texts – this will prevent any PDF issues.
5. School report feedback to go on the agenda of the next meeting.
6. Doug to ensure that 'event' resources ideally go out on the same day across the school.
7. Doug to write to all families about the Coronation Celebration event before the Easter holidays.
8. Doug to speak to the office about fundraising donations coming in via the online portal. At our next big fundraiser, Doug to also write to parents stressing that donations are optional and are not enforced by the school.
9. Doug to clarify with staff and parents about how many bagels can be accessed each day.
10. Doug to formally clarify birthday/sweets arrangements in a letter.
11. Doug to clarify in a whole school PFG summary letter.
12. A text/email to be sent out to Nursery/Reception/Year1 parents inviting them to join the PFG. Now they have seen our impact, perhaps they will be more excited to join.

**Meeting ended at 2000**