



Parent Council Minutes

Date of Meeting: Friday 14th October 2022

Clerk: Liz Johnson

Attendance

Name	Class	Present/Apologies
Jennifer Gilmore	Ladybird Woodpecker	Present
Amos Amiegbe	Ladybird	Present
Jade Whitehouse	Deer	Present
Jennifer Brickhill	Butterflies	Present
Sinead Whelan	Owl	Present
Heidi Williams	Frog	Present
Holly Rigby	Owl	Apologies
Natalie Muir	Squirrel	Apologies
Paul Miller	Fox	Present
Liz Johnson	FLO	Present
Pat Myles	Hedgehog	Present
Melanie Runnett	Deer Squirrel	Present
James Danforth	Hedgehog	Present
Anne-Marie Maguire	Caterpillars	Present
Jess Vong	Rabbit	Present
Robert Addison	Badger Ladybird	Present

Issues discussed;

1. Minutes of the last meeting / Matters Arising

- A volunteer information session has been arranged for 11th November.

2. Main Discussion Item – Pupil Attendance

LJ went through a presentation showing the New Government Strategy on Attendance and the picture at Delamere. LJ confirmed that the governments places the same expectations on special schools as on mainstream schools.

We explored the reasons pupils are absent from school. Suggestions included:

- Medical / hospital appointments (it was noted that it is positive that Dr Manohar's clinics are held here and so child does not need to miss school for these appointments, similarly that height and weight can be taken by the school nurse.)
- Poor health
- Bad night's sleep
- Parent not being well, how do they bring them in, not a local school
- Family circumstances e.g. relationship breakdown, mental health again may not be able to get them here
- If child not well, they might not cope, may pass it to others or staff
- Family events and then difficulties with childcare.

Next we looked at a step 1 letter and how you may respond should you receive one

- Angry / annoyed / rip it up
- What's more important a day off school or medical appointment?
- They are not helpful
- Would prefer a phone call asking us why they were off
- If I had rung to school to inform you I would then think why am I getting the letter
- Already stressed if child been ill and this could be the final straw
- Could it be personalised to recognise individual circumstances
- Could the letter offer a place to comment?
- Letter starts firm, ends nicer, this is the right level, important to strike a balance

We then discussed what we could do to support pupil attendance

- Personalised letters, stating the facts about child attendance
- Raise profile of attendance across the school. For example, a termly standard letter to whole school / class newsletter to show class attendance
- Phone calls offering support

- Refer to government policy to explain why writing letters
- Treat everyone the same in terms of reach a certain level and get a letter rather than considering whether to send one. Letter can be adapted based on the reasons but all to receive one.
- Parent buddy – to bring child to school of a sibling or parent is ill?
Recognise this might not be straight forward but is it suggesting to parents?

3. Your Views

LJ explained the purpose of this standing agenda item.

It was raised that parents / carers hadn't realised the year groups were mixed in classes, some parents noted they didn't know which year group their child was in. Suggestion made to add year group to the end of year letter informing of new class.

Decisions and recommendations made:

- Question asked, answer to be sought: What are the consequences for the school if there is poor attendance?
- See attendance notes above.
- Consider ideas around improving attendance, LJ to discuss with SJ.

Date of next meeting: Friday 9th December 2022