

Minutes – parents forum 22nd March 2019

1. Attendance and apologies

Current members	
Green Cygnets – Helen Venfield and Sara Bradley	Red Cygnets – Catherine Stott
Robins - Christine Leddy, Anna Clinch	Swans –Karen Norcutt
Kingfishers - Katherine Pritchard, Mell Morris	Woodpeckers - Kate Benson

Apologies – Katherine Pritchard, Karen Norcutt, Mell Morris & Helen Venfield

Present: Catherine Stott, Anna Clinch, Christine Leddy, Sara Bradley & Corrina Gillard

2. Review of last minutes

All items were clarified in the last meeting minutes or are on the current agenda.

3. Succession planning for Sept 2019 – do we have a volunteer to take the chair in 2019/20?

To roll over to the next meeting when more people present and discuss with the group by email.

New member request to go out.

4. Use of social media – reminder of the terms of reference and use of social media

Discussion re: applicable use of Facebook groups for discussions that should be had directly with the school & proposal to have an official Parent Forum Closed Facebook group which is across parents and schools, to allow a platform to raise questions via social media as well as the email address.

Action: CG to discuss with HB/school office team to set-up a Facebook group.

5. Emails received to forum –

- Alternative world book day celebrations (no dressing up as expensive/not all children want to but instead bring in favourite book to share during the week),
 - The consensus was that the majority of people would be disappointed if this went.
 - It's optional, the children love it and there is a buzz about the school on the day. Some of the children get into their book character & this isn't a school specific event, schools do it across the UK and also globally.
 - Dressing up doesn't have to be expensive, cheap options are available. Examples: coloured T-shirt inside out for a plain T-shirt for the base of a Mr Man/Little Miss; Many book characters wear normal clothes with a few homemade props/hair styling – e.g. Matilda, Horrid Henry; Witches costume left over from Halloween – Room on The Broom; Utilise any costumes that you may already have at home and you can normally find a book to match (library); some other ideas:-

<https://skintdad.co.uk/cheap-world-book-day-costumes/>

<https://www.madeformums.com/toddler-and-preschool/last-minute-easy-world-book-day-costumes/>

- Also a suggestion was made to raise with the school PTA – could we have a dressing up stall at the summer fair (donations from parents), sold for a small amount & the stall could have with information on what each year needs for dressing up. E.g. World Book Day, spotty for children in need – Infants; Egyptians – Yr3
Action: AC/CL to raise at a PTA meeting.
- Could actions in emails be made clearer in emails to parents (maybe in bold/action list at end of email),
 - Actions are generally clear, for the odd one that's come out CG to remind staff/office to check that actions are clear. **Action: CG, gentle reminder to staff on clear actions**
 - Comment to keep organised any dates/actions are put in their calendar as the emails come out.
- Set-up an Amazon wish list for resources within the school that parents can contribute to (same as Emmbrook Juniors do),
 - Good idea, works well at the Junior school
 - CG confirmed that set-up is in progress, more information will follow in due course.
- Disposable drinks for trips – bad for the environment and school should be promoting reduction in single use plastics (if children are carrying a drink then why is it different if it's in reusable bottle?)
 - CG explained that it's down to the setting, e.g. river and rowing museum do not allow them to carry bottles around to avoid lost water bottles. They have multiple schools in & the river and rowing museum at the same time and it is at the museum's request.
 - Normally the school do advocate no plastic where possible.
 - If the children do not come home with them then they are recycled at the venue.
- AOB
 - a. Avoiding Gender stereotyping at such a young age
 - Discussion around very few girls doing football/very few boys in choir or dancing stars and how to encourage more gender neutral inspiration to the children.
 - School do promote a uniform message throughout the school day, e.g. in assemblies
 - Discussion about external speakers (e.g. fencing demo in assembly), and whether anyone knows an inspirational speaker/profession;
 - **Action – CS to ask on the Facebook group for volunteers.**
 - **Action – SB to investigate Reading FC visitor**
 - b. Ofsted Celebration Day
 - The school are currently finalising arrangements, but children will have a lovely off-timetable day doing the things that they don't normally get to do, e.g. making cakes, sports activities, treasure hunt, optional dress-up etc
 - CG confirmed again how proud she is of the children and how well they reacted to the inspectors, and how well behaved they were when the inspectors were in school. This was also complimented by the inspector.

c. Parent Pack/FAQ document for new cygnets

- Discussed about whether to create a document with all of the 'this is what you need to know' things about joining school from a parent perspective (i.e. not double up on the official school things, but from a parent's point of view).
 - CG agreed this was a good idea.
 - To be created by the parent forum
 - **Action: CS to request for ideas via the Facebook group.**
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- Next meeting: 17 May 19 @9am