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## Parents' Forum Minutes

26<sup>th</sup> May 2021

*Present: Vicki Fenemore, Sheevaun Manning, Paula Bannister, Nikki Hawkins, Sammy Steer-Fowler, Carly Cook, Robin Harper*  
*In attendance: Susie Catling*

### Welcome and Apologies

Vicki welcomed everyone to the meeting. No apologies – all present.

### Parent Input

Parent suggestions received prior to the meeting were discussed and relevant information was shared by Vicki.

i) Cooking lessons

Vicki advised that the plan is to set up the old preschool cabin as a cooking/DT area and cooking lessons will be offered to all pupils.

ii) Mixed age PE lessons

Vicki explained that it is challenging to mix varied age groups for PE on a regular basis because of differentiated curriculum but the school's aim is for the children to interact across the year groups as much as possible, ie enrichment days. We are also fortunate that our one-bubble Covid set-up allows our children to mix across all year groups. This is not possible in the majority of schools.

iii) Swimming

Swimming is part of the curriculum and schools have the responsibility to ensure that every child leaves primary school able to swim 25m. Kings Nympton has traditionally organised swimming lessons every other year but this has not been possible since early 2020 in view of Covid. Swimming lessons are now back on the agenda and will restart next academic year. TBC which children will be offered lessons.

iv) Day trips

Vicki advised that SLT is currently planning lots of enrichment activities, day trips and residential for next year at the moment. Trips are planned to support the curriculum but they also have a role to play for their own sake - enrichment/fun/ socialisation/community. The school is planning to use PPE funding to put on one enrichment activity per month next year. Friends of Kings Nympton School financial support is also appreciated very much. The group discussed the importance of offering a varied programme, sport, drama and music. Nikki noted that the school has done well to have enrichment activities up and running again this term given the Covid situation. The group also discussed Skern Lodge and Wake Park and Vicki agreed that both options will be looked at. Nikki also observed how great it is that Mandy is qualified for Forest School. Paula asked about sports visits – Vicki advised SSW are looking into a football day and the school will look out for other opportunities.

v) Clubs

The school is currently exploring new ideas for next academic year, using expertise from in-house but also externally. Nikki observed that, historically, this is an area the school has struggled with and is potentially one of the areas that puts prospective families off. The group agreed that this needs to be a focus going forward. Susie to explore ideas. Sammy volunteered to possibly run a club from September, Vicki will follow up. Request for volunteers to run clubs next year to be included in the newsletter. Robin acknowledged that putting funding into the running of clubs would be a good use of budget.

vi) Moving-up and Transition

The school always has 2 move up days every year in July but some parents may not be aware of this as it obviously wasn't possible last year. All year groups move up to the next year for 2 full days. The group agreed that the buddy idea volunteered by a parent is lovely and will be adopted. All year groups move up to the next year for 2 full days.

vii) Educational Resources

Vicki shared with the group the online resources that are currently used in school:

Reception/Year 1 – Bug Club and Active Learn

Year 2- Abacus and Read Theory

KS2 – Read Theory

It was agreed that this information should be shared with parents and also recommendations for other free resources that families may choose to use at home: Oxford Owl and BBC Bitesize. Vicki explained that Nessy is for children with SEN. The school is currently sourcing a quote for Mathletics.

viii) Security

A parent concern about the easy access to the school grounds was discussed. The group agreed that the top gate should be locked during the day as pupils and members of the public could come and go undetected. It was discussed whether this gate should be permanently locked and the front entrance only used, but concerns about traffic over-rode this. Vicki will also source a quote for a buzzer gate for the front gate. The bottom field gate should be permanently locked. Vicki will liaise with Guardian and report back.

i) Other ideas

The suggestion of the children creating a time capsule and being asked to contribute to ideas for enrichment was also discussed. Vicki reiterated that the school is always keen to get the children's input.

**Other Parent Concerns**

Nikki shared that some families have concerns over numbers dropping. Vicki confirmed that financially the school is in a very good position but that it would be good to improve our numbers and we are actively addressing this through new marketing. Vicki acknowledged that the school has lost a few parents and staff but emphasised that everything we do is about the children and their best interests. Education never stands still and change management can be tricky. The group discussed how important it is that we communicate about all the great things the school is doing and achieving. The school has been through a lot of changes but the team feels that we are now in a positive place, as recognised recently by external parties - David Chaplin (school improvement partner) and Jo Dymond (Babcock Education Advisor).

Carly observed that the changes at school have been compounded by Covid and this should be acknowledged.

Vicki emphasized to the group that there is no intention of the Federation becoming part of a Multi Academy Trust.

The group discussed the positives of the school and how important it is that we build on these. Nikki observed that bigger isn't necessarily better; our smallness is our uniqueness and what makes us special. The children come home happy and always want to go to school. Happiness is what counts. Sheevaun shared that she works across Devon and Cornwall schools – but there is something special about Kings Nympton – a real positive energy. The staff are happy and energised. The school acknowledges that we need to be open to change and new opportunities whilst listening to what parents are saying.

The group discussed that we need to be clearer as to what the Forum is so that parents feel that they can share their thoughts and ideas. Examples will be included in the newsletter. Carly and Nikki also both volunteered for other parents to come to them directly if there was anything they wanted to discuss.

Vicki thanked everyone for attending. Meeting closed at 1500.