

## School Council Meeting

Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2004 1.00pm

1. David Gregory attended to open the meeting and describe how the Council is an opportunity for them to represent the views of the school, to recommend things to change, deal with problems and send feedback on things that are working and those which are not.
2. Bob Paul took the opportunity to lay down the ground rules  
In a meeting it is important to let one person talk at a time, and then respond, not interrupt.
3. **What is the role of the School Council?**  
The job of the School Council is to improve the school and look at issues that effect everyone. Bob Paul emphasised that the Council should be considering practical issues and thinking about things that can work, rather than things that cannot even be tackled.
4. **How is it going to work?**  
The council seemed happy to stick with the idea of meeting once a term. They understood that they are to go to their groups and discuss things with them and bring them to the Council.  
Vicky suggested that they have a council Link book for each tutor group represented and that any ideas and issues be noted down in there and then brought to the meeting.  
This was considered to be a good idea and Vicky is to prepare and give out these books.

### Ideas and Issues.

There were a good many ideas and issues, some of which overlapped.  
These are summarised as follows.

### **Enhancing the Playground and Playing Field facilities.**

- 1) Andy Ledbury suggested the possibility of a baseball pitch being marked out,
- 2) Another Basketball net would be good – as of the two, one has been destroyed. Bob Paul raised the issue that if it had been destroyed this might happen again.
- 3) For the young ones – Shaun M reported on their behalf that they consider the surface of their playground to be bumpy and hard to run on. They would like slides and climbing frames in the courtyard area.
- 4) Laurence P and mentioned that there were now wheelchair swings but no normal swings and people would quite like them
- 5) Tom Calley said they would like more wheelchair swings as well
- 6) Leyton Jones also suggested that the younger ones might want newer space hoppers or perhaps an activity ‘playhouse’.
- 7) General agreement that it would be good if there was a football pitch area marked out somewhere where it was not constantly being crossed by people not playing as that made it difficult
- 8) Laurence suggested that there should be more things for the older children in the playground area, things to encourage them all to keep fit. Perhaps gym equipment or a gym club with weights or activities. This was considered to be a good idea as it would help burn off energy and help them keep fit and give something different to do.
- 9) It was mentioned that the ropes in the main playground was something no one seemed to go on, and it might be better suited for the younger ones playground

## **Bullying issues.**

Tom Calley raised that there were problems with people in wheelchairs being bullied. The method of bullying is to touch and mess around with the control joystick and buttons. This primarily takes place in the playground. He wanted some action taken

Ben Brittain confirmed that this happened to other pupils without wheelchair, particular in the playground and other representatives said that they seen signs of bullying despite the fact they knew what the process was for stopping it.

## **Computers and I.T**

There was general agreement that the computers in the school were in need of updating or upgrading as there seems to be an increase in problems with them not working or breaking down Mark Webber suggested that Rm22 would benefit from having an Interactive Whiteboard.

Laurence Phillips raised the point that for some of the games and sites they use, the computers are not necessarily up to date enough to use it. They do not have the correct plugins which is frustrating.

Leyton suggested that Webcams might be a useful tool as they can be used to talk to and view people in other locations – possibly even in other school.

Natalie Thomas suggested that there be more symbol support on keyboards on the computers, not just on specific computers.

## **General school issues.**

### **School dinners**

Tom Calley raised the fact that school dinners are sometimes nice and sometimes not and that cutlery and utensils are often seen to be dirty. There was general agreement to this point from all of the council representatives. They would like the meals nice most of the time and would like the cutlery, jugs, glasses etc cleaner

### **Quiet room – Inside social area.**

Tom Calley suggested that there be a quiet room inside for those who don't want to go outside into the playground at break and play time. This lead to a discussion with a lot of suggestion about it possibly being a social area with board games and general activities. These could be separate or combine ideas. Most representatives thought this was a very good idea and that it would help cut down on some of the other problems that sometimes occur at break.

### **Longer Break times.**

Mark Webber suggested that extending playtime or lunchtime would be good. It was agreed that an hour for break was impractical, but serious discussion took place about whether adding extra time onto lunch time and then making the school day longer would be possible. The Council members agreed that it might be an idea to look into that but were aware of the issues of everyone being picked up after school, and that it might be too long for some of the young ones. But they considered that by the time they had actually had lunch there was very little time to actually 'play'.

## **Security**

Mark raised the fact that the Drum and Bells in the sensory Garden are broken. And that they always seem to be broken and could they please be fixed.

Vicky mentioned that Hugh and Andy have fixed the bells roughly 4 times in the previous two weeks and that they had been securely fastened.

The council representatives believed that the majority of damage took place by people outside of the school, coming in out of school hours. This led to a discussion on vandalism and how to stop it happening.

Mark suggested that perhaps CCTV camera's might be useful in regularly vandalised areas in the school. Perhaps corridors, playground and boys toilets.

There was resistance to the idea of CCTV in the boys toilets for privacy issues, though this was cited as the worst place.

Mark also mentioned that pupils should be stopped from climbing on the roof to retrieve balls as it was dangerous. They were aware it wasn't meant to happen but reported that it still did.

Mark also suggested that it was important that the School try and get additional parking and a clearer area for minibuses to turn. The other representatives agreed that this was a problem. It meant that going home was delayed, and could be dangerous.

## **School Pets.**

Michael Chant suggested that School Pets or animals in the school might be a good idea. The others agreed that it might be very positive for the whole school, and beneficial. They were considered to be a generally low cost sort of project

## **Charity**

Natalie suggested that the school should be more involved with charity, and charity events. She suggested getting collection boxes. It was brought up that there were charities and events they were aware of and asked why more wasn't being done in school. All of the representatives were aware for example of the Sudan Crisis, and that there was Big Ted's Day out and were keen to do something for a variety of charities – animal, children related, crisis etc. Natalie was particularly keen on animal charities, though they were all rather enthusiastic about the Sudan appeal.

**Meeting ended 2.00 pm**