

School Council Minutes of 17.03.06

Present – Josh Stronach, Shaun Mathias, Jack Lewis, Adam Smith, Joe Harmandian Hadley, Andrew Scourse, Jessica Young, Jake Butler, Amber Sims, Nathaniel Huggins.

Apologies:- Leyton Jones, Charlotte Brock – ill

Matters arising.

Since the last meeting, the Water Fountain has been installed as requested. Vicky has given Bob timetable times when the sensory room is free and he is to discuss this with other teachers to see if they can make use of it. The ICT suite has had it's homepage set to the school site as requested. The issue of the door closers has been taken to Andy and Vicky reported that Andy has spoken to the company involved and they should be coming in over the Easter holidays to adjust the timing. The situation regarding having student mentors in classrooms has been put to staff, and needs to be followed up.

Action – Follow up with SMT and Teachers regarding student mentors

The Council members then referred to their link books for new items of business. Similar issues have been collated together.

ICT

There were a lot of general requests for new computers. The point was made by Josh that if you have 5 minutes of time of your choice and you choose computers, and it takes over three minutes for the machine to boot up, then it is time wasted. He said the computers near 3 Blue are particularly slow.

Bob reported that there are a lot of new computers and equipment being ordered at the moment so they should start seeing some improvements.

There was also a request for things like jokes or things from the pupils on the Website. Vicky suggested that a folder be made on the pupil area called website where pupils could put anything they would like to see on the website and she would pick it up and put it up assuming that there was nothing inappropriate. The nature of material was discussed, such as links to good games, or interesting pages, or short articles and jokes. Vicky said she could build an area that would work for them around the material they sent her. How this might work was discussed and it was decided that this would be a good idea.

Action – Vicky/ Bob to ask for a shared website folder to be created on the Pupil server then inform teachers/pupils they can put things in there.

Curriculum

Jack requested that there be more things in the quiet rooms to help people calm down. This caused some dispute as other council members were of the opinion that the point of a quiet room was to have nothing in it.

The subject of having peer counsellors was discussed again. It was noted that Adam and Amber already spend time assisting with other groups and pupils and this seemed to be a very good arrangement for all of them. They were keen that this be used as example to other teachers to encourage them that it is a good idea.

The idea of a gardening club was still being requested and a girls football team. The majority of the Council members thought the football team would be a problem due to numbers of girls.

Action – Bob to discuss student mentors/ peer counsellors with the SMT and staff

Premises

Several council members brought up the issue of the rubbish bin for outside the five aside pitch. This has been requested before and Vicky was able to report that Suzy the Bursar had managed to put in an order for one that week, after explaining the reason for the delay. The Council is looking forward to it being in place.

Difficulties with the water pressure in the fountain were reported as it is so low that people won't use it because it meant putting your mouth around the nozzle. Vicky reported on behalf of Andy that he is aware of this and has organised for the pressure to be adjusted.

They also reported that Tom Calley had problems reaching it – Bob was under the impression that Andy had specifically tested with Tom for that, and promised to ask him to look into it.

The temperatures in the swimming pool and the changing rooms came into question. Some council members felt that on the side in the pool itself it was cold, but the changing rooms were very hot. They requested that Andy look into this, as Vicky mentioned there were specific ranges of temperature that the pool had to be heated too. They would like to know what they are and if there has been any problems with it.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding lockers. They were aware that before the subject had come up and that cost was a factor but several members cited previous schools where a 'rental' figure was charged, and a key deposit for a period of time and if the key was lost, money would be paid to get a replacement. They understood that there were issues of space and that they could be damaged, but as a whole they were equally keen that there be some secure space for their belongings. A rough count showed that five of the school council members had had something stolen at some point in the school. It led on to a discussion about what was allowable to bring in to school, what should be left at the office and if there was an alternative means of secure storage. They would like to have some guidelines from the SMT regarding this.

It was pointed out that there is quite a low hanging branch over by the sensory garden which might be dangerous, and they would like more flowers or colour around the playground and sensory garden.

One of the blinds is not working in the Foundation area. It was asked if Andy or Hug could look at it for them.

Action:- Andy to check access issues for Wheelchair users to water fountain. Andy to look at blind in Foundation area. Bob to ask SMT regarding lockers and guidelines for items brought into school. Andy to check swimming pool temperatures and report what the temperatures should be. Andy to look at low hanging branch. Situation on rubbish bin and water pressure to be monitored

Playground

There was a request for some sort of netting or cover to stop the ball going out of the five-aside pitch. Some of the School council had spoken informally to James Caaney about it but wanted it noted officially.

There were some concerns about staff being fair and vigilant in the playground. The council wanted a consistency and fairness in approach to incidences. One reported that he had been told off for an incident in the playground when in fact he had been inside, in a classroom with someone.

The foundation and primary area are very keen to have refurbishment and development of their playground area. Specifically they would like a large sandpit, possibly some sort of ground level treehouse . They would also like some footballs, and orange juice at lunch time.

They also wanted to know why the wheelchair swing was always locked as it seemed it never got used. Several members suggested it was because it was too cold for the wheelchair users to use it, but it was agreed this should be looked into.

Action – Bob to raise issues of fairness, the redevelopment of the Foundation/primary area's playground, wheelchair swing, 5-aside netting and acquiring footballs to SMT

Stationary supplies.

It was asked if it would be possible to have a basic stationary shop where pupils could get simple things like erasers, pens and pencils in the school day as often they find themselves without necessary supplies. They were thinking about it being in the office so they could come to it if they wanted anything.

Action – Bob to suggest stationery idea to SMT

Bob thanks the council for interesting ideas and discussion and promised to take their questions and requests to the SMT on Monday 20th March.

The meeting finished at 1.50pm