

ROCKMOUNT PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE PARENT/CARER FORUM MEETING 17TH NOVEMBER 2023 – 9.00 A.M.

(Please note that questions raised by forum representatives are written in bold)

Item	
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Introduction</u></p> <p>The chair welcomed all the members to the first meeting of the year and invited everyone to introduce themselves and the class they were representing. Staff members present also introduced themselves and their roles.</p>
	<p><u>Presentation on the Learning Kitchen – Hannah Walker - Art and DT subject leader</u></p> <p>The Headteacher introduced Ms Walker and explained that all the work in the learning kitchen is fully completed, and it has been equipped with all the resources required for teaching and learning. The learning kitchen is a great asset to the school.</p> <p>Ms Walker presented the combined art and DT curriculum map at the meeting, explaining that it is also on school website.</p> <p>She explained further that food technology forms part of the design and technology curriculum. Ms Walker updated the forum on plans to raise the profile of the learning kitchen and extend it's use, including providing more opportunities for year 5 and 6 pupils to use the learning kitchen in their enterprise ventures to raise funds for school trips and extra resources.</p> <p>Ms Walker told the forum that she had also presented to staff on the inset day at the beginning of term, sharing ideas to support teachers in making effective use of the learning kitchen through the inclusion of a food-based learning activity each half term. The aim is to develop children's cooking skills. There are also plans to hold whole school assemblies with the children to increase their sense of enterprise and give examples of how they can use the learning kitchen for entrepreneurial pursuits.</p> <p>Ms Walker explained the learning kitchen focus on the art and DT curriculum map where teachers have mapped out different ideas for activities involving use of the learning kitchen. Where possible, these are linked to a current topic of study and/or incorporate enterprise too.</p> <p>The guidance in the national curriculum on cooking recommends that products made should be predominantly savoury and that teaching should include awareness about where the food is grown and what constitutes a healthy diet. These areas are covered within the DT curriculum. The children really enjoy using crops from the edible garden for cooking. Some of the older children are looking forward to using the tomatoes grown</p>

Item	
	<p>in the edible garden to make and sell chutney.</p> <p>Ms Walker gave some examples of the cooking the children have done previously, linked to what they have been studying. For example, year 3 made hummus and tzatziki in the summer term when studying Greece, and stewed fruit when studying the Stone Age. During their studies on Europe, children made French pastries.</p> <p>The height of the counters in the learning kitchen means that the room is most suited for use by children from Year 2 upwards. Children in nursery, reception and year 1 have had opportunities to do their food preparation in class and take it along to the learning kitchen receiving support to use the ovens.</p> <p>The learning kitchen is also being marketed for use by external groups. A group hired the learning kitchen and hall space during the October half-term for a cooking workshop with a black history focus.</p> <p>Is enterprise linked to trying to make money for the school from external sources?</p> <p>In some respects, but also to encourage enterprise in years 5 & 6 in particular. For example, if the children come up with a charity initiative, or would like to raise additional funds for a planned school trip that might be a bit costlier than others, they are encouraged to work out the cost of the activity, and how much they need to make to cover costs. The children are also raising funds to support the winter fair, with profits going to Rockmount Friends and Community.</p> <p>Ms Walker finished her presentation by informing the forum that the learning kitchen page and DT curriculum page have been updated on the website. She encouraged everyone to take a look.</p>
	<p><u>Filtering and Monitoring presentation by Mr Chughtai-Skillen</u></p> <p>Mr Chughtai-Skillen explained that the Keeping Children safe in Education document is updated by the department for education every year and underpins all safeguarding procedures, providing comprehensive guidance to schools. Each September, staff are given the updated version of the document to read. Filtering and Monitoring guidance has formed a big part of this year's update and all staff and governors have received training in this regard. It was also thought it would be helpful to present this new information at the parent forum.</p> <p>Mr Chughtai-Skillen as IT lead and Ms Rankine, Assistant Head and one of the designated safeguarding leads have been assigned lead roles in ensuring the school meets it's filtering and monitoring responsibilities. They also work closely with the governor who has been assigned as the safeguarding link. As with all safeguarding systems, all staff have a responsibility to ensure the school's filtering and monitoring practices are followed.</p> <p>As part of their safeguarding duties, the school is required to review the filtering and</p>

Item	
	<p>monitoring provision as least annually. At Rockmount, in addition to this, Mr Chughtai-Skillen and Ms. Rankine meet with our IT support provider, Openair, half-termly to review a report of key words that have been searched on the internet in school. This information is used to address any concerns.</p> <p>As part of his presentation, Mr Chughtai-Skillen explained the guidance followed to block harmful & inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning (called over blocking).</p> <p>Mr Chughtai-Skillen gave further explanation on the differences between filtering and monitoring:</p> <p>Filtering systems: Filter access to harmful sites and content to children in school.</p> <p>Monitoring systems: Monitor user access or searches for certain types of harmful content on school devices. The school is then alerted to any concerning content and can intervene and respond.</p> <p>The school's broadband is provided by London Grid for Learning and their system is compliant with all the government requirements for filtering and monitoring. Any content searched for in school goes through the London Grid for Learning filtering system.</p> <p>Websites linked to topics such as discrimination, gambling, radicalisation, piracy/copyright theft, drugs/substance abuse and self-harm are all blocked by the school's filtering system. However, no system is guaranteed to be 100% safe, and this is where monitoring procedures kick in.</p> <p>When children are engaged in learning using devices, staff go around the room and monitor what they are doing.</p> <p>There is a Google form that staff are required to use to report any concerns. Based on this information, it will be determined whether a particular site needs to be blocked. These decisions are kept under constant review.</p> <p>Over blocking</p> <p>"over blocking" can lead to unreasonable restrictions if teachers are unable to access educational resources for pupils to participate in teaching and learning. If the internet in school bears no resemblance to what the children have at home this might make it more likely that they will find inappropriate material when carrying out searches outside school. For this reason, children are taught what to do if they find inappropriate materials whilst online.</p> <p>Staff are asked to plan ahead and look at the resources that they would like to use to support teaching and learning to ensure certain sites can be accessed during lessons.</p> <p>Children are empowered through their computing lessons, PHSE curriculum and assemblies to speak about things that might make them feel uncomfortable.</p>

Item	
	<p>As an additional safety measure, children in KS2 now all have individual logins to better keep track of what they are accessing online.</p> <p>The younger children have a generic login. Mr Chughtai-Skillen reported that the children are really good about speaking out if something makes them feel uncomfortable and staff will go round and monitor online activity and report any concerns or over blocking.</p> <p>Is monitoring, the responsibility of teaching staff or is it possible to track monitoring digitally too?</p> <p>Within filtering, we use reports to see what terms children have accessed or researched but in terms of our monitoring, we have decided to go for a more physical monitoring. We feel this system is more effective, with staff walking around looking at what the children are doing you are more able to pick up on things. Also, where the children have been empowered with the online safety curriculum and PSHE, when they see something they think needs reporting they do speak out.</p> <p>What happens when things are flagged up?</p> <p>We will receive a report from London Grid For Learning telling us that a particular term has been searched and by whom. It may be that an initial conversation will be had with the person concerned and this can be used as a teaching tool to explain why it might not be appropriate for them to access that site.</p> <p>How are subjects taught through PSHE such as self-harm, drug abuse and sex education without over blocking?</p> <p>This is done by looking at appropriate terms that could be searched, for example from a science prospective, it could be typing in the correct anatomical term. During e-safety lessons the children are taught to use websites appropriately and what to do if they find something concerning during their research so that the website can be reviewed and blocked if necessary.</p> <p>Another example is that if year 6 are having a taught session on drug abuse, the teacher can let Mr Chughtai-Skillen and Miss Rankine know when that will be happening and we can unblock the relevant websites for that particular year group for a period of time, based on the fact that this key stage all have individual logins.</p> <p>Are the children given advice on certain websites that are useful if they want to continue their research at home?</p> <p>The PSHE curriculum map on the school website gives advice on helpful websites, also during the lessons the children are signposted to sites that can help with their research.</p> <p>Do you speak to the older children about how the resources they are accessing in school might be presented differently when searching at home? Do you have any advice for parents on how to address this with their children?</p>

Item	
	<p>During the lesson children may try to access certain sites and find they are not accessible to them in school and question why. This then raises conversations about why children can't have access to websites such as YouTube in school.</p> <p>Mr Chughtai-Skillen informed the group that he is arranging for someone from ParentZone, an organisation who provide advice specific to parents in the borough on the use of the internet to come in and run a parent workshop. The focus will be support for parents, including advice on how to add filters at home, use of social media and how to initiate conversations on appropriate use of the internet outside of school. There is also advice on some of these topics on the school website in the online safety section.</p> <p>Do the children have free access to the internet when in school or only during computing lessons?</p> <p>There is limited time for children to have free access to the internet in school – this may happen during a maths lesson for example where the children are given time to play a maths related game but are directed to what websites they have permission to access.</p>
1.	<p>School photos</p> <p>The parent forum was advised that this item had been raised by parents/carers in Crystal, Ruby and Turquoise classes.</p> <p>The Chair provided the parent forum members with the results of a parent/carer survey regarding school photograph options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should the school photographs be made available to all year groups or remain open to reception and year 6 only: 85% of respondents said photographs should be made available to all year groups. 2. Would you purchase an individual photo of your child? 93% yes 3. Would you purchase a whole class photo? 77% yes 4. Modern style (currently used) or more traditional style photographs: 49% modern/51% traditional 5. Would you purchase a sibling photo 98% yes <p>The Headteacher added some more context to the current position. The subject was raised at parent forum some years back because parents reported feeling pressured by their children to buy photographs that perhaps they didn't want, especially at a time where most people have mobile devices that they are able to use to take photos on more readily.</p> <p>After consultation with parent forum at the time, it was therefore decided that photographs would be taken when children are in reception and year 6. The arrangements for school photographs takes up a lot of the school day with staff assisting the photographer in gathering children and making sure they are in the right place at the right time but we would be happy to trial photographs for all year groups</p>

Item	
	<p>this year and then review how it goes. The date for photographs this academic year has already been booked for the summer term. If the new arrangements prove successful, maybe in future the photographs could be scheduled for mid-autumn so families have the prints in time to use as Christmas gifts.</p> <p>Could you use parent volunteers to assist the photographer?</p> <p>The Headteacher said that this support would be very helpful.</p> <p>Would it be possible to have an option to add an extra donation payment that would benefit the school?</p> <p>That is also a lovely idea that we could explore with the photography company.</p>
2.	<p>After School Activity Clubs</p> <p>This item was raised from parents who enquired if it would be possible to increase the number of spaces in activity clubs.</p> <p>The Extended Services Manager, Ms de Miguel reported that room space for activity clubs is limited and some clubs have to limit numbers of children because of the type of activity/ratio of adults to children etc. We also consider the impact on the quality of club if the group is too big. Ms de Miguel said if she has a long waiting list for a particular activity, she will sometimes ask the teacher/instructor if they are able to take a few more children but this not always possible.</p> <p>Last year we trialled running an art club for KS1 and KS2. The KS1 club will be re-introduced after Christmas when the younger children will be more settled and familiar with school routines.</p> <p>The Headteacher added that we always ensure we are including additional places for pupil premium pupils to have access to activity club opportunities.</p> <p>Could you consider running a rotational booking system to restrict parents/carers booking a child on to an activity club if they attended the previous half term?</p> <p>A member of the forum commented that they were unsure if this system would work for activity clubs such as languages or dance that require continuity.</p> <p>Ms de Miguel advised that teachers/instructors plan teaching of different skills and topics in a way for children to receive a taster. This means that any child joining can pick up the teaching and not be left out. Additionally, the payment system means that clubs have to be set up manually with each activity opened one at a time. To restrict children who had attended previously would involve manually input by Ms de Miguel and would be very time consuming.</p> <p>Were you looking at alternatives to the ParentPay system?</p> <p>We did some research in to alternative payment systems hoping to find a system that</p>

Item	
	<p>would meet the needs of all users and found that such a system does not exist so we are continuing with ParentPay for the time being.</p> <p>Can the clubs go live outside of working hours? – many parents complain they can't book their children on to clubs whilst they are at work.</p> <p>Ms de Miguel explained that this would need to be done manually and cannot be scheduled to happen automatically. Consideration has been given to the best time to open the bookings for activity clubs and there is never a time that suits everyone. Ms de Miguel invited the representatives to consult with their classes to see if anyone has suggestions on a workable plan for opening up bookings that might feel fairer to more users.</p> <p>The Headteacher added that there is a good range of clubs available and Ms de Miguel works hard to introduce new clubs. We would be pleased to hear from anyone who would be interested in running a new club, in particular, electronics or cookery. Please speak to Ms de Miguel in this regard and we will try and facilitate.</p> <p>The Headteacher said that when she meets with the Headteacher from Downsvie, our partner school she will ask how they run the booking system for their activity clubs too.</p>
3.	<p>After School Club</p> <p>Places for after school wraparound care. This was raised by some parents/carers who felt some frustration when they are not allocated the exact offer they requested.</p> <p>Is it possible to allocate a small number of places for families who cannot book for a whole year because of their working pattern?</p> <p>Ms de Miguel explained that there is no requirement for parents/carers to commit to booking for the whole year. If they wish to cancel, they would be required to give half a terms notice. She added that around May/June is when she sends letters out to current users asking them to confirm if they wish to continue with their current offer or amend or cancel for the autumn term.</p> <p>From there she can start planning the provision for the following year, also reallocating places that arise due to year 6 leavers, other children leaving the school at the end of the summer term.</p> <p>Current users sometimes don't want to make any changes and the number of year 6 places to re-allocate is usually quite small as parents cancel before the summer term as they start to prepare their children for independence before they leave for secondary school.</p> <p>Ms de Miguel said that she has been able to take more children this year in after school club to meet demand and will be recruiting more staff. The Headteacher added that the club has expanded as much as possible with protection of the quality of the provision in mind too. This is why the school has chosen to run the club in house rather than using</p>

Item	
	<p>an external provider.</p> <p>We have to ensure the correct ratio of staff to children and catering provision is maintained which makes it hard to accommodate ad hoc requests, although we do factor in provision for occasional emergencies so that children can join after school club if this should happen.</p> <p>If someone is paying for a place but not using the full allocation of their provision on a regular basis, Ms de Miguel advised that she will write to them to check that the place is still needed as it could go to another family if it is no longer required.</p> <p>Parents who wish to cancel their booking are requested to give 6 week's notice but if there is someone that can take the place immediately this could possibly be waived after discussion with Ms de Miguel.</p>
4.	<p>Sports Arena – allocation of use/making a more gender-neutral space</p> <p>The Chair advised that the item had been raised as parents/carers expressed that some of the girls would like to play football but feel reluctant to join in what they perceive to be a boy dominated space. How can girls be encouraged to play sports?</p> <p>The Headteacher explained that the older children have separate breaks and lunchtimes to the younger children. Their lunchtime is from 12.30 – 1.30, and a member of staff, Mr Taylor who has a keen interest in sport runs a half-termly sports focus at lunchtime and playtime. This could be tag rugby, netball, basketball for example. The focus sport is promoted around the school with posters and takes place in the arena and the bottom part of the playground. Mr Taylor ensures there is a constant turnaround of children playing in the arena. At the end of the half-term sports focus period, he might organise a mini tournament. We have seen that girls are playing in the sports arena more and more as a result of Mr Taylor's encouragement.</p> <p>Friday is what we call football Friday. A few years ago, a decision was made that football would not be played in the playground every day as it used to dominate the whole of the playground and then time after the break to sort out disagreements about the game. At this time, we decided it would be a good opportunity to promote other sports during break times on Monday to Thursday. On Friday's children who would like to play football assemble by the arena and are supervised to have turns playing football.</p> <p>There was a suggestion to make a girl's only day for sports but we would like to promote inclusivity by encouraging the girls to be a part of the team rather than making a separate opportunity for them. The PE leads, Rene Tucknott and Daniel Yeboah are working with The Croydon Schools Partnership to develop this opportunity. We will also incorporate time to talk to the children to promote inclusive sporting activities as part of our circle times rota.</p> <p>We are capitalising on the use of the sports arena, particularly now that it's turfed. Once the new surface has settled, we will get the ground markings painted on in the spring</p>

Item	
	term.
5.	<p>Pupil Groups</p> <p>Parents from Pearl Class asked if there would be more opportunities for different children to be chosen to be pupil representatives such as school council or wellbeing ambassadors. It sometimes feels like the same children are chosen continuously.</p> <p>Ms Rankine explained that a pupil can only be a school council representative once during their time at Rockmount. The wellbeing ambassadors are voted in by their peers but staff do make sure the same children are not chosen all the time. There was a period over lockdown where because the representatives at the time didn't get a chance to carry out their role fully, they were appointed for a second year but that is the only time this has happened.</p> <p>Before voting for the roles of wellbeing ambassadors and school council representatives begins, we have an assembly where we talk about democracy, voting and politics. Children can nominate themselves for these roles and the class will then vote. There are currently seven pupil group roles, promoted and managed by Amber Pearless, Deputy Head. These roles are selected in slightly different ways, for example if a child expresses an interest in being a digital leader or peer mediator or anti bullying ambassador they will be encouraged and supported by Mr Chughtai-Skillen or Ms. Schembri our Learning Mentor to go through a programme of training with external providers. We make sure that 3 different roles in one class are not attached to one child. This year we aim to establish pupils in their leadership roles at the end of the summer term so that they feel ready start at the beginning of the autumn term.</p> <p>Are all the different leadership roles listed on the website?</p> <p>Yes, the information is under the 'pupils' tab in pupil leadership groups with updates on the work they do.</p> <p>A parent commented that some of the pupil leadership roles appeal to some of the quieter pupils. Her daughter had been encouraged to take on a lead role in the class and has thoroughly enjoyed the experience.</p>
	<p>Election of Chair</p> <p>The current Chair invited all members to nominate themselves if they would be interested in standing as Chair/Co-Chairs.</p> <p>David Burgess-Bellay and Karen Stavenhagen agreed to co-chair and were voted in unanimously by the rest of the group.</p> <p>David Burgess-Bellay declared that he had also been voted in recently as a parent governor.</p> <p>The Headteacher explained that the Chair was previously a governor and this had</p>

Item	
	<p>provided an excellent link between the governing body and the parent forum.</p> <p>Olivia Jackson agreed to support the newly appointed Co-Chair's with preparation for meetings etc.</p>
	<p><u>Date for next meeting</u></p> <p>TBC</p>