COLLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL
PARENT FOCUS GROUP
4th December 2015

MINUTES

PRESENT

School:

Kevin Hogston	Headteacher & Chairman
Jane Way	Deputy Headteacher
Sophie Macartney	Assistant Headteacher
Denise Hart	Governor
Julia Combe	Governor
Frances Wells	Treasurer, CSA

Parent members:

	Year Grp	Children	Representation
Richard Sharples	Nursery	Nursery, Yr 2	Dads
Paul Dowsett	Reception	Reception	Dads
Nafisa Chomoko	Reception	Reception, Yr 4	
Rachel Derrick	Year 1	Yrs 1, 3, 5	SEN
Jessica Petelin	Year 1	Yr 1	
Carolyn Jones	Year 2	Reception, Yr 2	
Amanda Eliades	Year 2	Yrs 2, 3, 6	
Maha Newell	Year 3	Yrs 1, 3, 5	Working parent
Heather Tomlinson	Year 3	Yrs 3, 6	
Helen Danzey	Year 4	Yr 4	
Kirsty Brown	Year 5	Yrs 2, 5	
Petra Fleming	Year 5	Rec, Yrs 5, 6	

APOLOGIES:

Pauliina Purnell	Year 4	Yr 4	Working parent
Victoria Hodson	Year 6	Yrs 3, 6	Working parent
Nina Bradburn	Year 6	Yrs 1, 4, 6	

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Kevin Hogston (KH) reported that changes to the use of the playground at the end of the day had successfully been put in place. A prompt finish at the end of the day had been mentioned to staff.

WHAT'S WORKING WELL - POSITIVE FEEDBACK

This will be a regular first agenda item, an opportunity for members to give some positive feedback to the meeting. The following were highlighted:

a. The online booking system for parent/teacher meetings was acknowledged as being a huge improvement. For the next meetings in February, the booking system will go live at 8 pm, which was agreed to be a more convenient time for all parents.
b. Online payments for lunches, visits and most recently CATS make payments simpler and more convenient.
c. The new format newsletter has been enthusiastically received including the update communications.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

The children's preference for pasta was discussed at length. Concerns were raised about the number of children who choose pasta as their meal every day.

KH explained that the children are encouraged to take the main meal, but if they do not like it they can choose pasta or a baked potato, served with a sauce, vegetables or salad. There has to be an alternative to the main meal, they cannot allow the children to be hungry in class in the afternoon.

Jane Way pointed out that the school had removed pasta from the menu once before, but it had resulted in a lot of very upset children, especially the youngest children for whom lunch time has to be a positive experience.

Rachel Derrick explained that our SEN children do not like their routines to be changed, they choose the same meals every day and if it were taken away, they would feel confused and upset.

Concerns were raised about the nutritional value of pasta and perhaps more could be done in school to highlight nutrition and to educate the children about the value of different foods to help them make better choices and perhaps become more adventurous and try different meals. It was outlined that the pasta and rice contain a proportion of wholemeal pasta/rice to increase the fibre content of the option.

KH proposed inviting a nutritionist to speak to the children in assembly and to raise children's awareness of the importance of making good choices.

Action: KH to arrange assemblies

KH also proposed a trial to remove pasta from the menu one day/week in the Spring term. The most popular meals are roast lunch on Wednesdays and fish & chips on Fridays. Pasta will be removed on one of these days when most children would be happy to choose the main meal. This was agreed by most members.

Action: KH

BIRTHDAY SWEETS

The discussion was continued from the previous meeting as to whether birthday sweets should be given to the children, but not eaten until they are with their parent, or whether they should not be given at all.

There are many families who do not want birthday sweets to be banned. It was agreed that this was not something the school should dictate and that it would be better if a decision were to come from parents. Members agreed that the issue should be addressed with parents, giving them time to consider the different arguments and to then give an opinion. KH will write a note in the newsletter. Sweets and sugary drinks will be included in the assemblies on nutrition.

Action: KH

SCHOOL FUNDING

KH explained that because the school is in an area of low deprivation, we have few SEN or Pupil Premium children and we are not affiliated to the church, we do not receive as much funding as schools in other boroughs. The school budget is becoming increasingly stretched and he highlighted the growing importance of the money raised by the CSA. However, at the last CSA meeting attendance was very low and it is apparent that a huge amount of work is done by a small group of parents. At the AGM on 2nd February 2016 several key members will be stepping down and KH asked how the school can encourage new members to step forward and become involved.

It was suggested that more could be done to improve parents' perception of the CSA. It is seen as being very cliquey and volunteers are perhaps not organised as well as they could be. More could be done to inform parents what the CSA's targets are and the specific projects for which the money is being raised. Regular updates on progress and what the shortfalls are would also be welcomed. Equally, the CSA should not be seen purely as a fundraiser, it is an important part of the school community.

KH highlighted the importance of increasing support, encouraging new parents with new ideas to get involved and to increase attendance at the AGM on 2nd February. This will be the main agenda item at the next meeting in January.

AOB

KH asked for future agenda items, the following were put forward:

More spaces at CATS
Homework
School lunches – puddings

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 26th January, 6.00 pm (staff room)