

Minutes of Pixmore Parent Forum Thursday 28th January 2016

Present:	Tracy Coates and Martha	- Parent and child
	Rachel Toddington	- Parent
	Daryl Heath	- Parent
	Jeanette Mooney	- Parent
	Ruth Mann	- Parent
	Jessica West and Lucy	- Parent and child
	Lyndsey Slaney-Parker	- Parent and child
	Tina Dickens	- Parent and Chair of Governors
	Kath West	- Governor (SEND focus)
	Sue Willans	- SENCo

Agenda:

- Welcome and introductions
- Safer routes to school and Travel Plan for school
- Raising awareness of children's emotional well-being
- AOB and suggestions for topics for the next forum

Welcome and introductions: It was great to see everyone at the forum.

Thank you to all who attended; your views matter, and we always take them seriously.

Safer Routes to School and Travel Plan

Mrs Evans spoke to parents about plans to make the route to Pixmore School along Rushby Mead safer in order to encourage more parents to walk their children to school. A representative from Herts. County Council has now been into school, and a plan in principle has been agreed to change the pedestrian access to be nearer to the Pixmore Way end of Rushby Mead. This is the end where the majority of children walk along and they are currently having to cross both vehicular entrance, and exit points, in order to access the existing pedestrian access.

Although measures have been put in place, such as closing the vehicular access nearest the pedestrian access, this has also increased traffic in and out of school at the other entrance when staff arrive and leave school. This has been alleviated to some extent now as Mr Anderson stands by this access point in the mornings to monitor traffic. However, this doesn't happen at the end of the day, and one parent felt this should be considered to further improve safety. Also, markings on the road by these entry and exit points either need to be removed or changed as they confuse people.

Parents were advised that in order to prove the case for the changes, they should write to Herts County Council expressing their concerns as these letters need to be done individually. It was suggested that if school produces a template, parents could either print it off, sign and return it, or could come into school to do so. One parent also made the suggestion of staff members standing by the school gate at the end of the school day to ask parents to sign individual letters as a way of maximising the return. One parent also gave the names of contacts who may be useful in seeking support for the changes.

Parents were also reminded that they can park in St. Paul's Church car park, or the Methodist Church car park and walk, or 'park and stride', as permission has been given by the churches to do this. This would further alleviate the volume of traffic along Rushby Mead.

The Walking Bus, which used to operate between Pixmore and Hillshott Schools is no longer in operation as there were insufficient helpers and children to sustain it; however, this could be started again if the schools work together to recruit parent helpers. Mrs Evans will liaise with Mrs Leighton to discuss this.

Mrs. Evans also introduced the questionnaires for submission with the school Travel Plan and asked parents to complete them at the meeting if possible. These have also been completed by teachers in class with the children and will enable school to establish how people travel to school and what prevents them from walking if they drive usually. This information will also be used as part of the evidence to submit to Herts County Council.

Feeling Good Week 2016

SW spoke to parents about the high priority attached to the importance of children's emotional well-being at Pixmore, and the adjustments made to support children, including those with more complex needs. If children do not feel emotionally secure, this will affect their learning. The three-tier system was explained:

- Tier 1: school-based support for all children, including support within class as part of PSHCE, and mentor/key worker support for some individuals.
- Tier 2: In-school support from visiting professionals including a play therapist and the North Herts Primary Support Service
- Tier 3: Referral to external services for a minority of children requiring more specialist support

Funding of £500 has been secured to enable the school to take part in 'Feeling Good Week 2016', a nationwide event aimed at raising awareness of the importance of addressing the emotional needs of young people. The event links well with Autism Awareness Week, which runs in March, as children with Autism frequently experience emotional difficulties. Although dates for the week have yet to be agreed, the outline for the week was explained, including how the funding will be used:

- Assembly involving the children talking about their own experiences in managing their emotions
- Coffee morning for parents with a visiting speaker talking about his role in counselling children in school and support for parents in understanding their children's emotional well-being
- Purchase of books about children's differences, including Autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia, to be placed in a new section of the library called 'Good to be me, good to be you'.
- Training for one teaching assistant on a programme called ELSA – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant to enable them to further develop mentor support within school.
- Sessions in class delivered by class teachers to help children develop their awareness of the importance of the emotional well-being
- Inset training session for school staff by a visiting play therapist

Parents felt this was an important issue and discussed some of their own experiences with their own children. SW distributed information for parents on a range of relevant courses and organisations.

SEND Focus Group

Kath asked parents if they would be willing to become part of an SEND focus group, the role of which would be to meet once a term to discuss specific matters relating to the development of practice at Pixmore for children with additional needs. Each meeting would have a specific focus, such as homework for children with additional needs, with an agenda and information distributed before the meeting.

Interested parents gave their details and preferred meeting times. SW will liaise with Kath regarding items for the agenda for this focus group and email details to parents.

SW thanked parents for attending the meeting.

Next Forum: Friday 11th March 2016 9:15-11:00 – visiting speaker Billy Lansdell – School Counsellor

Next Parent Forum: Friday 27th November 2015 from 9:00-10:15p.m.