

## **Parent Forum**

### **Minutes of meeting 7<sup>th</sup> February 2012**

Present: Louise Stokes, Joanna Heller, Bernard Klemenzenz, Vicky Chandler, Ioana Balanoiu, Mandy Madden.

Apologies: Tina Mula, Ana Dobeson, Mavis Boateng.

Louise Stokes had been updated on topics previously raised at the Forum meetings:

A bike rack has now been purchased. This will be set up over the half-term. Unfortunately it was not possible to provide an under-cover shelter for bikes, due to electrical wiring under the designated area; however 4 racks will be provide with space for approximately 8 bikes. This area is for the use of adults only and unfortunately cannot be used by children wishing to ride to school with their parents.

The Forum Reps had received concerns from parents regarding the dropping off of children in the layby adjacent to the school gate; and the problem of children not using the designated crossing. These concerns were forwarded to the Governors. Miss Hobbs has informed the Forum that the Governors have written to the Council expressing the concerns over our children's safety. Mrs Madden indicated that this is not just an issue for St John's children but that it seems to be involving the children and parents from the school opposite, Arundel Court, whose parents appear to be using the layby and allowing their children to run across the road.

Some time ago the Forum were asked to gain feedback from parents on school dinner provision. Menu choice seemed to be a concern and the use of

coloured bands to indicate menu choice was suggested. Parents voted in favour of such an option. There remains an issue with menu choice and have recently been parents approaching the school because their child has been unable to have the meal of their choice, and as a consequence of certain foods having run out, being given an unappealing mix of foods for their meal. The Forum asked for feedback on what was happening with the 'choice bands' option. Miss Hobbs informed the Forum that the contract with the current school meal providers was up for renewal and that when approached about the 'bands' had indicated that it was down to the school to sort out. As there is likely to be a new supplier in September the Forum have agreed to wait until then before looking into the problem again, but have suggested that they would be more than happy to participate in the organisation and implementation of the use of the bands in the school. Mrs Stokes would be more than happy to visit schools where the bands are used to find out how it was set up and how it runs on a day to day basis.

Discussing the choices on the menu, the vegetarian option was looked at. A vegetarian option is provided because a child in the school is listed as requiring a vegetarian meal, unfortunately, several vegetarian meals have to be produced resulting in some non-vegetarian children in the school having to have that meal choice. The Forum would like that to be looked into, because the child who requires the vegetarian meal does not always choose it and may opt for something from the main menu, meaning that there is one less main (meat) menu option available.

As part of our Lenten journey this year, the school will be holding events that encourage families to use Fair Trade products. Miss Hobbs has approached the Forum Reps to participate in a 'pancake race' at 3pm on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February. Mrs Mula, Mrs Heller, Mrs Maddens, Mr Klemenzenz, Mrs Boateng, Miss Chandler and Miss Brennan have kindly agreed to do this to represent their class. Mrs Stokes will contact 'The News' to see if they would be interested in covering this for us. This may also be of interest to 'Cafod' and Mrs Stokes will inform them of our school community's '40 days to make a difference' appeal. All money raised will go to the Cathedral's Lenten appeal.

Preparations are under way for the Easter Fair on the 28<sup>th</sup> March. Parent Reps have taken letters to distribute amongst businesses, asking for raffle prizes. Letters will go out asking for helpers. A couple of weeks before the event Mrs Stokes will send out letters requesting donations of bottles for a bottle tombola and unused/unwanted gifts for a gift tombola. Parents will also be approached for donations of cakes for a cake stall. An Easter bonnet parade will be organised, families will be given 2/3 weeks notice of this. Small prizes will be given to each entry.

It has come to light that the school has a small collection of school t-shirts and other items for use when children may have got wet. Many of the items are not needed and taking up valuable space, however, the school does need spare sets of underwear in a range of sizes. It has been suggested that we could run a stall with the extra items available to purchase and any money raised being used to buy the underwear that is needed.

As a result of the refreshments offered at the last parent's evening being so well received, the Forum have kindly agreed to provide refreshments again. The Forum Reps are looking into sharing the times amongst themselves so that the refreshments can be offered on each evening. A timetable will be drawn up and Mrs Stokes will send reminders out to the reps nearer the time.

The next meeting for the Forum should be at the beginning of March however, it was suggested by Mrs Madden that we may need to have a couple of meetings over the next month to ensure that everything is organised for the Easter Fair.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at 2.30 p.m. (This is not at the usual time of the first Tuesday of the month, but taking into account the extra time needed to finalise details for the fair.)