

# Old Ford Academy Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 23rd April 2024

Kevin began the meeting by outlining what happens in the Old Ford Academy Council meetings.

Kevin said it is best to suggest agenda items in advance in case there is any information Kevin needs to prepare information before the meeting.

## **Minutes from last meeting discussed**

### **Year 6 Residential**

Yr 6 residential is on the Isle of Wight in July

70 children signed up, which is really good out of a year group of 85.

Dawud met with Stephen Aravena about the Dragon Breathing work the school is doing. Stephen is a trained psychotherapist who works with the school and the staff and pupils and the dragon breathing technique used with the children after break and lunch where the pupils sit down and take a deep breath in and out to help them calm down and settle for class. The idea is that the out breath is longer than the in breath and most classes use this now after break and lunch time.

### **School Lunches**

Restarted inviting parents and carers for school lunches, it was in the recent newsletter, and Year 6 was the first one and there is a different year group of parents/ carers come in to have lunch with their children.

Kevin said its nice to see parents in the school to see what the school lunch is like.

The school still have paper plates due to the industrial dishwasher still being broken.

The school is hoping that it will be fixed quite soon.

### **MyChildAtSchool app**

School sends out all the texts to parents and carer via the app and it is a lot cheaper than sending out text messages.

The app is not fully set up but a parent asked about sending messages to the school via the app. Kevin said he will be meeting the providers so will raise that with them.

It was suggested that workshops could be set up for parents/ carers who cannot get the app up and running on their phones.

One parent said that it is proving hard for some parents to get the app up and running on their phones.

Kevin said the school could set up a workshop for parents but also raised that parents/ carers can come into the office and be shown how to set up/ use the app on their phones.

## **Attendance**

Attendance is still a hot topic and the school are working to improve this.

## **Careers Visits**

Menna has offered support the school in linking with employers for careers visits

## **Residential**

A parent asked about the arrangements for the Year 6 residential.

Parents and carers can pay a £50 deposit and then pay the rest before the residential.

The cost of the residential is £180 for the 3 nights, including transport.

If parents/ carers are on income support then it is half that.

Parents can pay in instalments if that is easier.

## **School Uniform exchange**

Parent asked how they can support this?

Is there a way of raising this within the parent/ carer community to get this going?

Other schools have a box where parents and carers can put clothes in or for parents/ carers to take from.

It was mentioned that a teacher took clothes in at reception.

Maybe ask parents/ carers to come in and help sort through clothes to check they are cleaned and undamaged.

Could be done in each year group or could be set up as a swap, where parents carers swap clothes.

Kevin will speak to Shabina as the clothes will need to be stored somewhere and see if she can set up parents/ carers to come and sort through

School could store the clothes in boxes and there could be a set date for bringing in clothes.

Dawud raised that we should think about how the clothes are displayed and sorted through and this could take time to do but also you don't want parents/ carers to be pouring over a box to go through clothes.

Kevin will send out a message to parents carers to ask them to come in and help sort through and donate clothes.

## **School Library**

One parent asked if there is a library.

Kevin said the school used to have one but it wasn't used very much and now every class has a class library, so all the books were put into classes. And if the teacher wanted to use the library they can go to the Idea Store.

## **Parent/ Carers WhatsApp Group**

Dawud raised the idea of setting up a new parents/ carers WhatsApp group

Kevin will send out an email and existing academy council members can set up a new group

It's not part of the school but run by parents and it would be good for the Academy Council members to stay in touch.

It would be a great way to get feedback from parents/ carers and share info or get agenda items for the meetings or raise any issues.

The new academy council members have agreed to set up a new parents/ carers WhatsApp group.

### **Meet the teacher**

One parent raised that she doesn't yet know the names of the teachers and staff and wondered if there could be a list of staff with their photos so she could get to know her son's teachers and staff at the school. Other parents agreed it would be very useful to know who the main contacts and staff are at the school and which staff are teaching/ supporting their children

Kevin raised that the school do a Meet the Teacher at the beginning of the year and then there are curriculum letters, although these don't always have teachers names. Kevin will check in terms of GDPR regarding this.

### **Swimming Pool at Old Ford Primary**

Pupils in Year 6 always go swimming to Mile End Leisure Centre but it takes the morning to get there and swim as they have to travel on 2 buses.

Government guidance says that all pupils by year 6 should be able to swim the length of a swimming pool and the school only have low numbers hitting that target for swimming.

Now the trust started to expand the swimming to include Year 5 as well as to some pupils in year 4.

There is a company who bring a swimming pool to schools so there is a pool on site.

In September there will be a portable swimming pool for a few weeks in the playground to help improve pupils swimming

It connects to the mains water, which is filtered and heated and it comes with a swimming instructor. The company build the pool with solid sides, has a marquee over the top and will take up about a 1/3 of the playground.

15 pupils can swim at one time, so that will be half a class. Classes from year 4 to year 6 will be able to swim.

It will mean the pupils do not have to go all the way to Mile End, saves on the time getting changed and the focus will be on swimming lessons rather than travelling.

It's not very deep and it will open for 7 weeks in the first term so the pupils can get a term's worth of swimming and then return to normal swimming sessions in the New Year.