

## PARENTS FORUM MINUTES

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June, 7-8pm, via Zoom

ATTENDEES: Rachel Davies, Headteacher (RD)  
Victoria Rodrigues, Business & Operations Leader (VR)  
Sarah Inwood, Catering Manager, Chartwells (In-House Lunch provider)  
Joanna Lovatt, Chair and Parent Support Adviser (JL)

JL welcomed the 19 parents who attended as well as the staff and visitor.

Before starting the main part of the meeting, JL thanked all those parents, families and children who had reached out to help others during the difficult times presented by the pandemic. The school were made aware of instances of families helping with shopping, bringing children to and from school, meeting up for external play dates, being a listening ear etc. All these acts of kindness have kept the school community alive at a time when the PTA had tried to keep spirits up in very remote times. Please pass on our gratitude to all those trying to make a difference in any way possible.

Two points had been carried over from the previous parents forum in March. They were:

- **Would there be an option, in the future, for the school to look at more freshly cooked menus for the children in school? Understandably, during the pandemic, there has had to be some flexibility with regard to the menus.**
- **Moving forward, could there be more healthier options (and fewer foods that are fast-food types such as Fried Chicken, Wedges, Fish Fingers, Pizza) or at least making those fast-food options home-made?**

JL invited Sarah Inwood to answer the two points above.

SI started by saying that, from September, the menu would be expanded again. They have had to be very careful to ensure that their supply lines would be kept open and this has led to a long process as there is a national shortage of HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicles) drivers.

Chartwells are in the process of finalising the finished menu.

From September, Pizza's would be back on the menu for Tuesdays to enable the class leaving for swimming to be able to turnaround their lunch time in a speedy fashion, at the school's request.

On Thursdays, there would now be a new line of main courses as designed by Allegra McEvedy, a well-respected Chef.

The new menu would also have a special visual sign to denote that main course that is the healthier option for that day.

There would also be four choices of main course, rather than the previous 3 main courses. The fourth would be plain pasta with tomato sauce available, every single day. JL commented that this was a good idea for any children who found food a challenge or who needed something very simple for that day.

More dishes will be made from scratch, with fresh ingredients and they were moving towards offering more plant-based offerings.

The menu would be continued until the February half term, rather than the previous change at the October half term. This allows them more time to those schools requiring medical bespoke menus as well as the wish to leave the restrictions of the pandemic behind them.

As ever, Chartwells would continue to hear feedback from the School Council.

The salad bar should be introduced back in September, assuming that year groups would no longer be operating in “bubbles”. The issue with bubbles was sharing serving spoons between year groups as well as ensuring optimal hygiene.

With no further points raised by parents, JL thanked SI for her input and constructive answers.

Parents were then asked to raise any other issues, via the ‘chat’ option or by unmuting themselves.

- **MUSIC AND OTHER CLUBS** - What was going to offered in September? VR kindly answered that with the current planed restrictions due to be lifted, the plan was to return to normal as much as possible.

Travis, who runs the Guitar and Drumming lessons on Thursday and the “Sing Academy” on Fridays, would now be directly co-ordinating them with parents rather than through the school. These would be run in the Music Room, situated in the back playground.

AKTIVA would be asking for ideas from parents in September, with a plan to bring in a new pricing plan. The new plan would allow parents to choose to use their after-school club until 4.30pm or until 6pm. Details have still to be finalised. As a result of the pandemic, AKTIVA are unclear as to which individuals/companies are still able to continue to offer their services so they are unable to confirm the exact clubs at the moment. They hope to be able to offer football and chess, as these were two of the best attended clubs.

- **ALTERNATIVES TO SWEETS AS BIRTHDAY OFFERINGS IN CLASS** – a parent asked if there was a move to reduce or remove the option of having sweets as a class celebration for a pupil’s birthday. RD explained that whilst the school have asked teachers to hand these out at the end of the day, so that pupils could take them straight to their Parents/Carers rather than eating the on the premises, it was not inclined to ban them altogether. They welcome those parents who wish to bring in books, pencils or stickers but also recognise that the option of having sweets means that bringing a treat for classmates is accessible for all our families, regardless of circumstances.
- **WILL THE CHOIR BE BACK IN SEPTEMBER?** Under current restrictions, singing is not allowed but the school is hopeful that those restrictions will be lifted by September. There may need to be some tweaks to the running of the choir but the school are very keen to bring it back.
- **WILL SWIMMING BE RESUMED?** Swimming for Years 3 & 4 will be brought back, on Tuesdays as before, at New Chiswick Pool. Unfortunately, there is limited availability of the pool and for the current Year 4’s who will have missed out on swimming lessons, there was not a foreseeable opportunity to take them swimming unless more slots become available at New Chiswick Pool.
- **WHAT IS THE RULE FOR USING CHANGING ROOMS WHEN SWIMMING?** All children use cubicles to change in, with some being offered individual cubicles. All shared cubicles are for the same sex and not ever shared.
- **IS THERE TO BE AN ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIER TO MARKS & SPENCERS?** VR acknowledged that the school had joined M&S at a difficult time and that she was to have a meeting in the near future to discuss their progress. Moving forward, the school had decided that the only Logo items are to be the school jumper, cardigan and the PE hoodie, along with Book Bags (for Nursery through to Year 2) and the Backpacks (for Year 3 through to Year 6). The white tops and grey bottom garments could be sourced from elsewhere such as Tesco, Primark etc. The school had deliberately relaxed the rules during the pandemic, recognising that families were finding it difficult financially and/or logistically.

One parent was finding it difficult to source larger sizes. VR asked her to email her to confirm the item(s) she was having difficulties with and the size(s) she was looking for.

- **SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS – WOULD THERE BE ANY CHANCE OF PRINTING THE YEAR GROUP, CLASS, SCHOOL ACADEMIC YEAR AND POSSIBLY NAMES OF THOSE PHOTOGRAPHED?**

VR said that they could certainly ask the current supplier as they offered a variety of choices, which could then mean a different price but parents could then decide whether to purchase.

As there were no further queries or issues raised, the meeting was closed and all participants were thanked.

The date for the next Parents Forum will be sent out with the Autumn Term dates.