# Minutes of the Parent Voice meeting – Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014
## Held in The Barn Cedar Studio

1. **Welcome and introduction**

Mr McIntosh (Deputy Headteacher) welcomed parents.

2. **Minutes of last meeting and action points**

- **Clubs (times)**

   Since the last meeting, the end times of clubs in the Junior School had been extended to 4.15pm, which meant that finish times between the Junior and Infant school were now staggered as a result.

- **School dinners**

   In answer to a query from the last meeting, jacket potatoes are definitely cut open for children and a filling placed inside.

   A concern was raised that some children were sometimes still not able to have the choice of dinner they made in morning registration because supplies had run out. Was this due to children changing their minds when they go to lunch? This was unlikely to be able to happen anymore as, since the end of September, the lunch register was now used in the line-up for dinners to separate children into groups according to their choice and this was supervised. Were teachers entering the choice correctly? Mr McIntosh said that teachers had been made aware early in the term of the need to enter different codes for hot dinners, jacket potatoes, vegetarian option or sandwiches. He would check up on Ashlyns 'option 1/option 2' coding.

   Parents asked if Parent Pay could be set up to record the actual dinner choice for each day a school dinner was requested or if it could be considered to have the same system as the Infants whereby paper slips to record dinner choices are completed on a weekly basis. Mr McIntosh would investigate if either option would be viable and useful.

   An enquiry about menus being available in classrooms was made – Mr McIntosh was not sure but would find out and ask for them to be available in all classrooms if they were not already. Some parents had been reluctant to print out the menu emailed to them as it was very demanding on ink – this was something to suggest altering with Ashlyns.

- **Headteacher's holiday homework**

   Mr McTaggart had created an engaging display with the homework received, and as there had been so many returned to him, the contents were refreshed on a regular basis to enable as many pieces as possible to be displayed and looked at by other pupils. Mr McTaggart had also taken photographs of some of the work and this was displayed on a rolling format on the TV screen in the entrance hall so that pupils, staff, parents and visitors could view the good work produced.

Further discussion about homework took place. Mr McIntosh introduced the concept of 'Learning Logs' or 'Homework Journals' which were being discussed and considered by the school and which may be introduced next term. These are a weekly record of pupils' self-reflection and self-evaluation on their learning with opportunity to note down what was learnt, the ways in which learning took place, areas of strength and achievement as well as areas of challenge and further improvement and how well pupils believed they had moved on in their learning. This would be reviewed each week by teachers and the class. It is a tool that would support the important learning habits of feedback and evaluation and one that is already in place in one of our partner STEP schools.

Parents commented that they were not always clear about the nature of the homework set, partly due to some children not writing it clearly enough in their Learning Habits, or possibly summarising too simply what is put on the board for them to copy or not remembering what their class teacher told them regarding the task. Mr McIntosh said that the school intended to have year group or possibly class blogs on our school website sometime next year and that weekly homework could also be entered on that and accessed by parents if they were unsure about the tasks set.

It was brought to Mr McIntosh's attention that Big Talk homework, in preparation for the Big Write task (occurring bi-weekly in Years 3-5, usually on Fridays) was not always being given early in the week as requested in an earlier Parent Voice meeting and agreed by the school. Mr McIntosh would send a reminder to all teachers about this.

Related to this, though not to homework, the Big Write tasks were not immediately obvious to see in the collection of work presented at Parents' Evenings in October. Mr McIntosh stated that he thought most, if not all, teachers would have included this in pupils' general folder but that he would request teachers ensure they are easily accessible and visible for the next round of Parents' Evenings next February.

- **Minibooks/laptops in Year 4**
  The school was investigating a change to the current system of parents in Year 4 opting to purchase minibooks for their children to use in and outside of school until the end of Year 6. There was still the intention to instigate an optional computer resource scheme but instead, a possible option being investigated at the moment was to rent the resource (which may be a tablet with an attachable keyboard instead of a laptop) on a long term basis but with the same benefits of being able to use them exclusively in school and also take them home to use. Some of the reasons why the school was considering this change to renting was due to the current cost involved, the problem of the technology becoming gradually obsolete after 3 years (from first use in Year 4) and the inevitable wear and tear to the resource.

Parents wanted to know what protection would be in place for tablets, if that was what was chosen; Mr McIntosh said that a hard shell would be part of the tablet and possibly a soft case as well, though he was not certain about that level of detail. There would also be insurance included as part of the rental cost.

Parents wondered if the technology available on the tablets (or whatever was selected as a resource) could instead be made available for parents to download and use on home PCs/tablets/laptops or if the software used could be that which is available on the internet. Mr McIntosh would investigate and discuss at the next meeting.

Whatever option was decided upon, it would not be possible to get the technology in advance of Christmas, though it could be that details about the scheme would be issued to Year 4 parents by then.

3. **AOB**

Problems with children using SAM learning (used in Year 6 at the moment) were raised. Mr McTaggart had been made aware and Mr McIntosh would discuss this with him and Year 6 teachers and see if a resolution was being sought.

Parents suggested that a presentation about how to use SAM learning would be useful to better enable them to help their children with the software. Mr McIntosh would pass this request on to the relevant people.

4. **Dates/events**

A list of dates and events, previously published on Newsletters, was presented. Of particular note was a correction that needed to be made to the days published for the Years 3 & 4 Christmas productions. The *dates* published – 10$^{th}$ and 11$^{th}$ December – were correct, but they did not correspond to the *days* published.
To clarify:
- The Year 3 productions will be on Wednesday 10$^{th}$ December at 2pm and Thursday 11$^{th}$ December at 7pm
- The Year 4 productions will be on Wednesday 10$^{th}$ December at 7pm and Thursday 11$^{th}$ December at 2pm

5. **Date and time of next meeting**

Because of various commitments and events, the next meeting would need to be in the last week of term and Mr McIntosh proposed Thursday 18$^{th}$ December at 2.15pm; however, it was suggested by parents that the next meeting could be in January instead as the last few weeks of term would be very busy for both school and parents. This would also allow a considered review and discussion of the events connected with Christmas. The next meeting would therefore be in The Barn on **Thursday 15$^{th}$ January at 2.15pm (refreshments from 2pm).**

Mr McIntosh thanked parents for their attendance and reiterated that any requests for agenda items could be made to him in advance. The meeting concluded at 9.50am.