**PRESENT:** Wendy Donnelly (head teacher); Tracey McGloin (Home School Support and staff governor); Liz Goad (governor); Lizzie Roser (parent); Suzanne Alford (parent); Genette Hawkins (parent); Laura Jones (parent); Numera Anwar (parent).

**APOLOGIES** received from Mark Tickner, Chair of Governors

**AGENDA:**

* *Welcome and introductions*
* *Agree Terms of Reference*
* *School expansion update*
* *Communication*
* *Hand-drying arrangement in the FS/KS1 toilets*

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence**

Wendy Donnelly opened the meeting and thanked all parents for their commitment in joining the Parent Forum. Apologies were passed on from Mark Tickner who was unable to attend due to last minute work commitments.

1. **Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for the group were read, agreed and signed by each member. Wendy Donnelly signed on behalf of the school, Liz Goad signed on behalf of the Governing Body. Terms of reference will be reviewed annually.

1. **School expansion update**

WD explained that the expansion of the school would be going ahead and that building work was scheduled to begin at Easter. Phase One consists of two new EYFS classrooms, an new reception/office block and re-structuring/refurbishment of the existing office area/entrance hall. Phase One should be completed by September this year.

Phase Two (timing to be confirmed) consists of the extension of the school hall and the provision of two additional classrooms behind the current Ravens and Swans Classes. These will be joined to the school by a new corridor from the extended hall and a covered walkway from the playground.

The school will eventually be two-from entry i.e. 60 per year group. Our current admission number is 40 per year group and we have more than 40 in every year up to, and including, Year 4. In September, we will need to have: two FS classes (in the new building); two Year 1 classes in the current Foundation Stage classrooms; two Year 2 classes in the current Owls and Robins rooms. Unless there is a huge influx of children, KS2 will continue to be organised across five classes – we won’t know how these will be arranged until the summer because we continue to have a number of children admitted across the school (12 new children since September).

The staff are pleased with the plans because we desperately need more office space and small teaching areas to accommodate the children’s needs.

WD confirmed that, contrary to the beliefs of some people in the community, the school has not received any funding from Redrow. The funding that the builders have to pay into the community goes direct to Medway Council and was, in the first instance, used to extend Cuxton Primary. However, it was always the intention that there would be funding to expand Halling School when it became necessary. Redrow re-planted the large planters in our playground with butterfly-friendly shrubs and also gave us some bird boxes.

The impact on the parking available at the school was mentioned briefly and it was suggested that we may return to this at a later date. The school had requested a drive-in, drive-out reconfiguration, including a drop-off zone, but Medway Council are unable to fund this.

Numera Anwar asked if Medway would be providing furnishings for the new and re-furbished areas. WD replied that there would be a budget to cover this but some existing furnishings could be re-allocated.

1. **Communication**

Parent representatives confirmed their preferred arrangements for contact from other parents:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| YEAR GROUP | REPRESENTATIVE | PREFERRED METHOD OF CONTACT |
| Lizzie Roser | Year R | Email: [lizziehilder@gmail.com](mailto:lizziehilder@gmail.com) or face-to-face |
| Suzanne Alford | Year 1 | Email: [suzyxray@hotmail.com](mailto:suzyxray@hotmail.com) or mobile 07946495002 |
| Laura Jones | Year 2 | Email: [warrens.1@live.co.uk](mailto:warrens.1@live.co.uk) or face-to-face |
| Genette Hawkins | Year 3 | Email: [genette14@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:genette14@hotmail.co.uk) or face-to-face |
| Numera Anwar | Year 4 | Email: [numera@outlook.com](mailto:numera@outlook.com) |

NM asked if it was possible for the school to provide a weekly bulletin with brief reminders of events coming up the following week. This could also include the names of pupils who have received the Star of the Week Award. She will send a copy of a bulletin from another school and WD will have a look at it.

SA asked if emails could come out under the heading of Halling Primary School rather than Caroline Hutton as they can sometimes be inadvertently deleted. WD will look into this.

SA and NA asked if the school has any plans to introduce and on-line payment system. LR, GH and LJ all agreed that this would be very helpful for parents. WD explained that we have looked into this and, when the academy conversion if finalised, we will be bringing our office systems in line with the Cliffe Woods Trust. This will include on-line payment systems.

TM outlined the school’s current work on re-designing the school website. She also explained that we are looking at using Twitter and also the possibility of a facebook page to celebrate school events etc.

1. **Hand-drying arrangements in the FS/KS1 toilets**

This item was brought to the forum by LR who had been contacted by another parent. WD explained that the hand-dryer was not used much by the children because some were afraid of the noise and it also takes a long time to dry hands properly. Mrs Woolmer places a hand towel in the toilets but this is not a satisfactory long-term arrangement. WD confirmed that the site manager would be fitting a hand towel dispenser this week. There are some concerns that children will put the hand towels into toilets resulting in blockages (we have some problems with toilet tissue being wasted and causing blockages). However, the staff will tell children that all hand towels must be put into the bin.

WD mentioned the need for complete refurbishment of these toilets and explained that a quote for this work came in recently at £25 000. The Friends of Halling were approached last year about fund-raising but they believe that their focus should be on providing extras for the children. WD agrees with this; schools should have sufficient funding for such work but this is just not the case in the current climate. We are looking at the possibility of the bulk of this work being done in-house as and when we can afford it.

WD confirmed that the all of the new classrooms will have their own toilets and cloakrooms.

1. **Any other business**

SA asked if there would be a meeting to explain **Thinking Hats homework** to the current Year One parents. GH said that, never having had any guidance, she finds it tricky to support her daughter. WD confirmed that we usually have these sessions regularly to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to attend a workshop outlining the rationale and expectations for Thinking Hats homework. The rationale was briefly outlined and WD explained that parents and children can be as creative as they like in thinking around the question. Children have produced artwork; models; baked cakes; produced music videos; sewed patchwork; produced powerpoints etc. There is no right or wrong way to do this.

A question was asked regarding consistency around marking of homework for siblings and also the criteria for achieving the different stickers.

WD will pass all of these comments on to Mrs Mauldon who leads on Thinking Hats.

Parents stated that the **drama workshops in KS1** have been very successful; the children have been enjoyed them and been inspired by them – “firing their imaginations.” **Times Tables Rockstars** is also very popular and the competition in KS2 has enthused many children.

**ACTIONS:**

* Wendy Donnelly to talk to Mrs Mauldon about a Think Hats meeting for Year One and new parents;
* Wendy Donnelly to pass on comments re marking of above to Mrs Mauldon;
* Numera Anwar to email example of school bulletin sheet to WD for consideration;
* WD to check with office staff re sending out of email under Caroline Hutton’s address;
* Office to signpost parents to minutes on website for contact details of parent representatives.

***THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD AT 2:00 ON WEDNESDAY 21ST MARCH 2018***