

Parent Forum meeting - 08/03/18

Present

Jen Hardy	Chair of Parent Forum
Gavin Farrell	Headteacher
Laura Gautrey	Phase Leader
Liz Di Luzio	Phase Leader
Liz Ranger	Scheme Manager for Home-Start Lambeth

Agenda

1.	Apologies for absence	Diane John-Cyrus (Deputy head teacher)
2.	Introductions	Gavin Farrell Head teacher Laura Ranger Scheme Manager for Home-Start Lambeth
3.	Actions arising from previous meeting	There were no actions from the previous meeting, minutes are now on the website to view. Jen confirmed that as mentioned in the last meeting the Head of Lambeth SEN has been invited to speak at our Parent Forum and that we are hoping he will be able to attend a future meeting.
4.	Matters arising from previous actions	N/A
5.	Focus for this meeting:	<p style="text-align: center;">‘Parent/carer volunteering for Home-Start Lambeth’</p>
		<p>Jen introduced Liz Ranger, the Scheme Manager for Home-Start Lambeth</p> <p>Liz spoke about how the scheme supports Lambeth families (with a child under 5 years old) in crisis. It is a simple idea that uses the skills of parents to support other parents. Volunteers are provided with full training and are then matched up to a family who they visit once a week for 2 hours. Volunteers gain skills, confidence and references. One parent present was already a volunteer on the scheme and spoke about how much she enjoyed it. A new course is starting in May, training will be 6 sessions on a Thursday (9:30-14:30)</p> <p>More information is included below these minutes, a link will be placed on our website and flyers will be distributed to the PTA</p> <p>Liz Ranger - Scheme Manager for Home-Start Lambeth Contact details: www.homestartlambeth.co.uk/being-a-volunteer info@homestartlambeth.co.uk 020 7924 9292</p>

6.	<p>Focus for this meeting: 'Parent/carers volunteering to support learning at Crown Lane'</p>
	<p>Diane John-Cyrus was due to speak but was unable to attend, she had given Jen details and information to share:</p> <p>As mentioned in a previous Parent Forum, the school is creating a body of people to work with children and will be asking for volunteers to help in school. The focus will begin with reading in years 2, 3 and 4. Preparations will begin in Summer term in order to start reading with the children in September/October.</p> <p>Preparations will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - completion of a short application form - obtaining a successful DBS check - training from the school (reading tips and techniques, how to assess age-related reading levels etc) <p>Details on how to apply will be provided in the newsletter at the end of this term</p> <p>A parent enquired about the time commitment required and Jen said she would ask Diane to include it in the newsletter</p>
7.	<p>Matters to raise from Parent Forum emails received or other</p>
	<p>Jen had received an email from a parent unable to attend. Their concerns were that there are less chances for pupils to be active in their break times since games such as It, Stick in the mud and football have been banned. They felt that it is very important to have movement opportunities during the day and that it is vital for the children to expend energy in a physical way but that this is unfortunately being increasingly curtailed by more and more restrictions and rules. They asked that the school find more positive and progressive solution to resolve this issue.</p> <p>Gavin spoke before opening it up to the floor. The Senior Leadership had already met to discuss the need for more activities and equipment also, using teams of children supported by adults to set up games and equipment. Tennis balls fly over the fence regularly and so stock has depleted, the new budget begins in April and Gavin will look to see if any can be used to top up equipment. He will also look into applying for funding to achieve this. A local graffiti artist has already been contacted to put down some painted activities on the playground such as hopscotch. Gavin spoke about how since we achieved the gold Inclusion Quality Mark he is able to generate money by working at others schools and advising them on their inclusion. He said that money could be put into a specific fund for immediate need which would include new playground equipment. It was suggested that the school council were used to ask the pupils what equipment they would like.</p> <p>Jen then opened the matter to the Forum:</p> <p>A parent suggested that we ask companies in to teach games to the children and adults, also to train some children to become supervised play leaders. Whilst there is not a budget for this Gavin said he would speak to our sports coach about helping with this.</p>

The question was asked about why some games, such as It, have been banned. It was explained that there had been a ban on rough play and chasing as it had become a problem with children shoving each other and dragging each other by the hood or top, this had led to injuries. This had been a particular problem in the main playground whilst the space was reduced due to the building of the Base but now that the space had been returned it was agreed that the school would reconsider what games were allowed.

A parent asked about why football was not allowed and Gavin confirmed that football had not been banned indefinitely but that was no longer allowed in years 3 and 4 as it had been causing problems with behaviour, the children were bringing this back into the classrooms after break and lunch and it was affecting learning time. Some parents felt that it was one or two particular children that were causing this but were assured that it was actually a problem for a large number of pupils.

Parents felt that there was some confusion over what games had been banned and what was allowed as well as what the consequences might be if the games were played. It was fed back that one adult in particular was felt by the children to be overreacting when disciplining e.g. giving out instant detentions. Gavin said he would investigate.

It was suggested that children could be taught to play age related games appropriately and Gavin said that he would speak to our sports coach about helping with this.

Staggered play and lunchtimes were suggested to relieve congestion in the playground and it was explained that play and lunch times are already staggered 3 ways. Liz di Luzio pointed out that it is also good for the year groups to mix with each other, Reception and Year 1 in particular benefit from this in terms of aiding their development. Also, that any health and safety issues (such as injuries) were not as a result of congestion but more because of the oddly shaped playground.

Gavin spoke about how a bid to redevelop the pond area had been accepted and work would begin next term or possibly over the Easter holidays. The area will be levelled so that the children can use the space, wild flowers and a grass will be planted as well as a fast growing plant along the fence all the way up to the Reception entrance to create privacy. He assured the forum that these would be already established fast growing plants in order to provide immediate coverage as there were some strong concerns about the public currently being able to see through the fence into the playground.

The PTA said they would contact the Trees for schools to see if we were eligible

A parent asked why there was lego and hula hoops being left in the current pond area. Gavin explained that the area was out of bounds to children for health and safety issues and he would speak to the site manager about keeping it clear.

It was asked why the school is not applying to charities for funding or asking local builders and businesses to work or help the school for free.

Gavin explained that schools who get money have set their PTAs up as a charity and have appointed a governor to be involved with this. It involves a lot of paperwork and time however.

A parent then offered to provide the school with links and names of people and companies who would be willing to help, as a member of the PTA they also volunteered to help drum up free resources from local businesses and asked for an official letter from the school to support this. Gavin confirmed he would happily arrange for one to be written.

The PTA also agreed to contact Lidl again as last time they tried they were told the completion of the new store was too far away but the opening is now imminent.

Continuing on the subject of funding for the school Gavin spoke about how he has asked the head of Lambeth LEA to provide money to transform the office entrance to the school. Most schools have a doored

entrance between the office/reception area and the school rather than the free flow entrance Crown Lane has. As several parents have expressed concerns about the safety aspect of this free flow access the LEA have listened and are looking into it.

There has also been a request to the LEA for funding for improvements to the playground and the covered area, also for repainting the exteriors of the school.

It was asked if the repainting would come out of the school budget and Gavin explained that there is money set aside in the budget for maintenance but that Lambeth also send inspectors out to school annually to assess need, this is done on a priority system though (such as heating) and so we are not high enough priority. Lambeth have also been subject to enormous cuts which has an impact.

A parent commented that many schools have a business manager to complete bids and source funding and could Crown Lane do the same. Gavin explained that due to budget restrictions it was not possible to have our own business manager but that we do use a lady from Lambeth to help complete bids, although we do have to pay each time she is used. He is talking to Lambeth about getting someone to help us with this. It was asked if someone at school could do it but it was explained that it is far too time consuming for any current member of staff.

It was then suggested hiring someone on a commission only basis as a way of incentivising them. The school could not however afford the consultancy fee for this and it is not possible to take the fee out of any successful bids as all the money must be guaranteed to be used for the bid purpose. The majority of bids are also heavily data based and it could be difficult for an external person to work with the school data. Gavin did agree to ask Lambeth about the logistics of this to see if it could work in principal.

As more questions regarding the specific costs and funding were asked Gavin said he will produce a statistics page which details what the school would ideally like and the cost of each. This could help when seeking funding and local support.

There were many parents/carers keen to support with securing funding for the school. A parent requested that once a week, after school, a fundraising committee for parents could take place and asked if the school could offer free ACE club places for those children for the duration of the meeting. Gavin agreed that this was a definite possibility but that he would need to know numbers and dates in advance in order to provide adequate staffing cover at ACE. An alternative venue of the Lodge was also proposed as the children can play safely there. It was agreed that the committee would be more effective if only 3 or 4 parents were involved.

8.	Any other business	As time did not allow for any other business, Jen asked that any subjects or concerns anyone wished to raise at future meetings could be emailed to her at parentforum@crownlane.lambeth.sch.uk
9.	Thank you for attending	

Can you help a Lambeth family?



Home-Start Lambeth is looking for volunteers to support local families

Home-Start Lambeth trains volunteers to work with families with young children and give practical and emotional support to manage and resolve problems. The family may need support due to:

- feeling isolated in their communities
- finding it hard to cope because of their own or their children's illness
- struggling with parenting
- suffering a bereavement
- have experienced domestic violence or other trauma
- struggling to cope with the demands of caring for twins or triplets

Volunteers visit families for 2-3 hours per week, using their own parenting, grandparenting or caring experiences to find solutions. This might be through listening to the parent, reading with the children or helping the family go out to the park.

Volunteers are given a free high-quality training course to develop their skills and prepare them for the things they may encounter with their family. They make new friends, obtain good experience to add to their CV and have a lot of fun too.

A volunteer says - "I really enjoyed my time with Home-Start Lambeth and found it an invaluable experience. The training was excellent and prepared me well for visiting my family".

A family says - "The support I received from Home-Start has been a great experience. I have learnt skills in managing my children's behaviour, also its good to communicate with a supportive and understanding person. I've gained confidence and I was very happy with the result."

For more information, contact Home-Start Lambeth on (020) 79249292 or info@homestartlambeth.co.uk or visit our website www.homestartlambeth.co.uk and click on 'Being a Volunteer'

Charity number: 1112014. All volunteers will be DBS checked.