

Governor Drop in Responses

Friday 11 December, 2015

Concerns raised and school responses -

1) Halal Meat Options

- Call for Halal meat option to be made available 2 days per week.

Actions

- Review voting requirements in detail required to achieve approval of above and consult with school kitchen
- Mike/Yvette (Governors) to meet to discuss with parents
- Background information on what constitutes Halal and operational issues to be circulated to parents ahead of any potential vote

Response

Governors are currently looking into this issue in full detail again - consulting with the Council, the school and other Camden/Islington schools - reviewing in particular what has so far been presumed to be the required voting arrangements for schools wishing to introduce Halal meat, school kitchen arrangements, cost implications etc. We will feed back in detail on this as soon as we are able.

2) Diversity week

- Parents felt there was insufficient forewarning and communication from the school to enable parent preparedness.

Actions

- Flag-up to school that adequate parent notification of such lessons/events must occur
- Will ask school to feed back to Diversity Role models parent comments on some perceived inappropriate content

Response

The school agreed that more information could usefully have been provided - although it had been flagged up in newsletters. Questioning from the children arising from the Diversity Role Models session could also have been handled more appropriately and these issues have been relayed to DRM. The school has taken on board suggestions regarding more warning and information in advance.

3) Bullying

- On-going parent concern about the robustness of current bullying procedures and inconsistency of staff response. Discussion focused largely (though not exclusively) on incidents concerning one anonymous child. Concern that more could be done on looking at emotions behind bullying, developing school culture of kindness and provision of educational psychology support to affected families.

Action

- feedback to PSWB committee which regularly reviews policy and procedures

Response

The school's aim is that the Anti-Bullying policy is consistently applied across the whole school. To this end, whole staff training took place to introduce the updated policy during Autumn 2015. Staff training on anti-bullying is now included in the induction package so that all new staff, regardless of when they start during the academic year, have a good understanding of our approach. In addition, Laurel (Deputy Head) and Barnaby (Year 4 teacher) have been trained by

Kidscape the anti-bullying charity. Kidscape provided lessons and resources for both year 4 classes and a workshop for parents. Anti-bullying assemblies are now shared with the children at least termly and intensively during national anti-bullying week. Phase Leaders take responsibility for bullying within their phases and take very seriously any reports of bullying behaviour. Their support of children and families is monitored with the PSWB Committee on a half termly basis.

As a school we invest a lot in supporting children emotionally and aim to deal sensitively with behaviour incidents, friendship issues and bullying behaviour. We are fortunate to have Tavistock therapists on site to discuss children with or make referrals as appropriate. Our Skills for Life programme offers unique mentoring for over 40 children identified with emotional needs. Our Educational Psychologist is currently delivering workshops for a year 6 class as they prepare for the transition to Secondary School. Kindness is a theme that is often discussed with children and is a good suggestion for a series of assemblies.

4) Outsourcing of PE

- Parent concern that school doesn't have a PE teacher on staff - outsourcing leading to perceived high turnover of inexperienced staff poorly equipped to cope with child behaviour issues appropriately.

Action

- Feed back to school

Response

The school feels current arrangements actually offer many advantages - not least that Haseeb is an asset to the school and has been with the school for four years. Also - through Fit for Sport - the school is actually able to employ two instructors for the price of one teacher. The school agrees that behaviour management has been an issue in the past with some less experienced instructors but that this has been remedied with the introduction of Sammy, Haseeb's Deputy. The Deputy role changes annually only once staff are sufficiently well trained and experienced to take the lead in another setting. Fit for Sport have tremendous capacity to provide additional cover and resources. Occasionally an apprentice will join the team - for a sports

event or to help manage travel or as temporary cover only. All the PE staff are well aware of the school's H & S and behaviour management policies and Mark personally manages the service.

5) Teacher interaction

- General concern raised over some inappropriate use of phones, sharing of music videos etc with children and heavy-handed behavioural management of children by a limited number of staff

Action

- Feed back to school. Parents advised to make a formal complaint if they feel it is warranted.

Response

The school urges that any concerns such as these must be reported through appropriate channels and has flagged up the issue of mobile phone use with staff and will continue to monitor.

6) Reception playground and ongoing demand for cycle/scooter storage

- Strong concern that Reception outdoor provision is poor and the space needs re-working/attention as soon as possible.

Action

- Flag up with Premises committee
- Re-visit provision of on-street cycle parking with Camden if on-site is impossible

Response

Premises committee reassures parents that Reception play area is a 'work in progress'. A few items (eg timber activity equipment stores) have been completed in the last few days. In the

pipeline is a mud kitchen, sandpit, new shed and planting area. Premises suggest re-evaluating the area once current works are completed.

The school judges that provision of cycle/scooter storage is not possible on-site without reducing the children's play area. Off-site provision may be increased with Camden's co-operation and Premises are lobbying Camden to make good on promises to provide additional on-street racks. They will report back on this.

Issues raised outside the GDI questions

1) Quality of presentation of homework - poor photocopies, misspellings etc

Response

The school will continue to highlight this as an issue with staff.

2) Concern about rubbish accumulation in the playground

Response

The school aims to keep on top of playground rubbish (combination of Derek and children helping out).

3) Call for transport arrangements on trips to be more carefully considered to enable decreased journey times

Response

The School has this in hand.

4) Concern over use of coffee cups in the classroom

Response

Staff have been reminded that hot drinks are not permitted outside the staffroom – unless they use the lidded travel cups which are provided.