

**Parent Association Meeting
Thursday, 02 October 2014
Agenda**

1. Ice-breaker activity

2. Apologies:

3. Co-chair

4. Updates

- LPPA
- TFL
- Safer Neighbourhoods Team
- Community Support Officer
- Work with Valerie Springer- Safer School Travel Planner
- Maths Makers
- Show My Homework (SMH) – It's Coming
- WOW TV Talks
- Work Experience Placements / Careers Days
- Day-time Cleaners
- Summer Works
- Co-Operative Trust Forum

5. How has the start of the year been?

6. What can we do better?

7. Parent Area of Website

8. Timing of Meetings

8. AOB

Draft Minutes from Meeting of 2 October 2014

Taken by D. Graham (DG), Assistant Head - Communities

Attendance: 21 parents / carers were in attendance. Breakdown for year groups can be found below:

Year 7 x 13

Year 8 x 2

Year 9 x 2

Year 10 x 2

Year 11 x 1

Year 12 x 1

Apologies from Co-Chair: Ms. Natasha Barnes

Attendance was pleasing in light of Ramadan and Navratri celebrations taking place.

Meeting began with ice breaker activity in which parents / carers were asked to introduce selves to at least two other people present.

DG referred to Terms of Reference and purpose of the Parent Association on which all were supportive and in agreement with. In light of co-chair's absence, DG broached the matter of the role of the Co-Chair. All present, most of whom were first time attendees, thought it would be best for Ms. Natasha Barnes to continue in role of Co-Chair. Ms. Barnes is happy to continue in this role, and so this was agreed for this academic year.

DG then proceeded to provide the following updates as listed on agenda:

- LPPA – Leading Parent Partnership Award certification is a priority for the school this academic year and the Parent Association would play a significant part in the school obtaining this Award. DG explained that he would be meeting with Jeanne LeBars from LPPA next week and would feed back to parents at next meeting.
- TFL – Parent Association updated on work of TFL Ambassador Scheme and of the work that the school was engaged in with Valerie Springer, Brent Safer Schools Travel Planner. Engineers have been down to assess whether a zebra crossing should be placed between bus stops on Forty Avenue. The bus company is also looking at putting an empty bus at the bus stop for 3:20 when students are leaving school to ensure they can depart school safely and promptly.
- Community Schools Officer – PC Paul Rogers continues to serve the school as their link officer and would be available to attend a future meeting.
- Maths Makers: Parents were made aware of this exciting new programme being run at PMS. 16 gifted mathematicians from year 11 will support and tutor 28 students from year 8, who are not making desired progress in Maths. Details of how the programme is delivered were provided and parents were advised to visit website for more information on this programme.
- Show My Homework (SMH) – Parents were informed of this new initiative that is to be rolled out from January 2015. (See further comments made by parents below)

- WOW TV Talks – Parents were briefed on this exciting new initiative in which Preston Manor would be first school in the country to become involved.
- Work Experience Placements / Careers Day – Parents were asked if they would be able to contribute work placement opportunities for students as part of their year 10 studies. They were also asked if they would be able to contribute as guest speakers at Career Days held in the school. Two parents are able to come on Career Days (Senior Project Manager for a Construction firm and a Radio and TV Broadcaster).
- Day-time cleaners – parents were informed of the employment of two day time cleaners and the school placing an importance on cleaner and healthier facilities for all of our students. The toilets have been a high priority and are cleaned regularly throughout the day.
- Summer works – parents were briefed on the summer works which were completed over the summer break. These included the installation of new fire doors for the safety of children and staff, a new climbing wall in the Gym, and the updating and decoration of a number of areas within the school.
- Co-operative Trust Forum – parents were invited and encouraged to become members of this relatively new forum.

The meeting was then opened up with the question ‘How has the start of the year been?’. Parents were very positive about the start of the year. In particular, year 7 parents felt pleased with the transition from primary school to secondary school, and felt that their children has settled in well.

Parents were then asked ‘What can we do better’’. The following points were made by parents:

- Lockers. One year 7 parent spoke of his son having back pain from having to carry around a heavy bag of books each day, even whilst playing football as he was fearful of his bag being taken. He stated he did not like this ‘nomadic lifestyle’ and asked if the school had considered lockers. DG responded that this has been an issue at previous meetings, but problems regarding space did not allow for lockers. However, they were assured that this issue would be brought to the attention of leadership team for renewed discussion.
- Aspirational Trips. Several parents felt that there were not enough in the way of aspirational trips offered by the school. Three parents present had children at neighbouring school and cited a number of trips which they felt were valuable. One parent asked whether the school had any relationships with Universities. It was explained that the school had relationships with many of the London universities and had run trips to Oxford and Cambridge in past years. However, parents were given assurances that we would look at number of trips to Universities and see if there was a scope for increasing these type visits.
- Parents wanted clarification on early entry policy for exams. DG stated that he would investigate this matter and that policy would be placed on school website.
- Homework – parents stated they were pleased with idea of Show My Homework. Long standing members of the Association who were present felt that significant progress had been made in this area over the last few years and that this would further enhance improvements.
- Parents expressed concern re: young and new teachers providing too much personal information (e.g. about boyfriends, personal lives, etc.). Several parents supported initial complaint made by a parent and stated that they had similar experiences.
- Year 7 transition – parents pleased – so far.

- Parents raised concern re: graffiti in girl's toilets. DG stated that all graffiti was removed daily from girl's toilets, though it may have been scratched into door / wall which is more difficult to remove.
- One parent highlighted problem of number 18 bus not stopping for students in Harlesden. She had witnessed this on several occasions over the last month. She was advised to contact bus company directly regarding this and to encourage her son to film bus doing this. DG indicated that he would also pass on this information to Valerie Springer at Brent.
- One parent queried why piano lessons had not yet begun on Wednesdays after school. DG stated he would investigate and get back to.
- Parents felt that there could be more after-school clubs run at the school and that these clubs should be made obligatory for all students. The example of a local school which runs to 5pm on most days and makes it obligatory for all students on each of these days was referred to by one parent who thought PM should copy this approach. DG raised issue of some students being carers for younger siblings or for adults in some instances. DG stated school encouraged all students to get involved in extra-curricular activities, but felt making it mandatory would be a negative approach.
- One parent asked about G&T provision. DG explained that school was currently advertising for G&T co-ordinator role. PM has also focused greatly on matching work to the needs of learners and that G&T students should be stretched by teachers in their everyday lessons. Three parents who also had children at neighbouring school felt G&T students were offered greater enrichment opportunities to nurture their gifts and talents, to include working alongside published writers, and going on overnight trips to Cambridge University, theatre visits, having books bought for them, etc..
- Sports Day – parents would like to be invited to attend these in the future and look at ways they might be able to raise money for the school on these occasions.
- Parents were asked if the current time of 630 – 8pm suited best or whether 6 – 730 pm would be better. All present thought the 630 – 8pm time was best.
- The next meeting will take place 4 December 2014, 630pm – 8pm.

D. Graham
October 2014