

St Ursula's Class Reps Meeting – 14th March 2019

Text in black is the original question raised by the Class Reps. Responses are in red text.

1. Communications - first off lots of parents wanted to say that the comms they are happy with the improvement in comms - the text messaging is working really well. There are still a couple of issues:
- Reception - why do they not use dojo like the rest of the school?

Ruth Watts - Regional Co-ordinator

- Really pleased to hear the text messaging is working well.
- Dojo is a free teacher app. The use of the app and others like it are currently under review by E-ACT as an organisation. Apps that do not comply with our IT strategy due to potential risks to IT security may need to be withdrawn to ensure we do not expose ourselves as an organisation to IT security risk. A communication will be issued to all parents in due course following the review.
- Parents can continue to communicate with teachers via the office email and at drop off and pick up etc. Please refer to the Home/ School Communication guidance on the website:

[home-school-communication](#)

- All emails will be forwarded to teachers within office hours – this will help reduce the issue of parent messages impacting on Teachers work/life balance as many Dojo messages are sent “out of hours”

- Emails to the office, while there is now an auto-reply some parents are concerned by the lack of acknowledgement for some of their emails –

Charlotte Mascilo - Operations and SIMS Administrator

- We've been responding to emails as they come in.
- Any 'pick up' passwords we respond to as soon as we can.
- Sometimes we may not always be able to respond to every email but we do always acknowledge.
- The only time there is a delay to responding is in the morning and afternoon drop off/ pick up when we are dealing face to face with parents.
- At the meeting it was agreed text messages should include reference to which child it refers – e.g make sure we reference the year/ class. Check that the Office calls the first point of contact first. Grandparents have been contacted instead of the parent.

2. School dinners - quality/quantity - very inconsistent/food running out/lack of variety of vegetables/Pizza and chicken nuggets did not go down well. organisation of lunch time / children waiting too long for food then rushing it so they get some playtime.

Ali Cooper - Head of Aspens National Accounts attended.

- Parent raised portion sizes for Reception – children saying they are still hungry
- Supply & Demand – parents acknowledge that it is hard to know what children will choose on the day but some food running out so children not perhaps getting a full portion.
- Ali explained that the kitchen always over produce but Ali needs to investigate if and why the kitchen are running out.

- Alison explained Government guidelines on portion sizes and that we need to adhere to this guidance.
- New menu recently introduced which is being monitored through production sheets – this shows what is a “good seller” and the production is adjusted accordingly. Aspens run 2 cycles of the menu and then conversations with the catering manager take place to determine what sells well and the menu can be adjusted to become more bespoke to the school.
- Production sheets are used to find out what sells well and also the catering manager will attend the student council meetings to conference pupils. Feedback forms are also provided and the local Exec Chef will be involved in added value activities such as cooking in classrooms and running Smoothie Bikes. Ali will liaise with the school to arrange dates for these added value activities. The Exec Chef uses these opportunities to gather additional feedback from pupils. Aspens run regular questionnaires. Pupils and parents will get a questionnaire in the next few weeks.
- The “Food schools standard guidance” sets out what schools should serve and the portion sizes.
- Parents asked if it is possible to mix and match so that children can also get food from salad bar. Ali agreed this was possible. Children who have jackets can also have salad bar.
- NR explained the queuing system. Ali will look at the current system today and see if it can be improved. Lunch order queue. Could the queue be reversed every other day?
- Ali will look into the missed deliveries. Discussed processed foods and how we are restricted by government guidelines to only serving processed foods once per week.

Further info from Ali post meeting:

- I fed back to the girls in the kitchen who were keen to confirm that all pupils receive a full jacket potato and that they are all aware that they are able to have salad if they choose.
- I have asked my Development Chef, when he is next on site, to look at alternative ways to serve the salad/jacket potatoes to see if we can facilitate the ease of choice.
- As discussed, I would love to get some dates in for St Ursula’s to hold some added value events – again, I have asked my Development Chef to liaise with you regarding some suitable dates. We would be keen to be involved in student council meetings, parents evenings etc so if you are able to send any forthcoming dates I will try and get some Aspens representation across to the school.

3. Reading/Spellings in class - inconsistent from class to class. year 5 - we seem to be punishing children for not reading every day by keeping them in at break times. Is this a good thing? We are also not rewarding those who do read everyday, no Karate bands are handed out in some classes (they may have outgrown these in any case, but it would be good to be rewarded something to show for their hard work)

Miss Gorra - Deputy Head

- Explained her previous role as Reading Recovery teacher and also that she wrote the E-ACT Reading Strategy.
- JG is currently working on training Staff on how to use the book levels.
- Benchmarking shows teachers what children need to do next.

- After completing 3 of the running records children can move through the book levels.
- JG will issue some more information.
- Every child has very specific areas to work on which will move them through the reading levels.
- Years 1 & 2 have been the area of focus to date (as these are the years children make most progress in reading). EYFS is the next year of focus.
- JG sharing her specialist training with teachers.
- JG's goal is to have teacher read with each child once per week.
- Reading in Year 5 and children reading in their break if not read 5 times. JG confirmed she has spoken to teachers and this is only one or 2 children per week and it has had a very positive effect on those children's reading at home. The Group discussed various established routines at home that may help for children to write in their records themselves if the reading is taking place but is not being written in the RR due to time pressures.
- JH will provide training for volunteer parents who read in school.

4. Josie's Club - Contact number for after 4.30pm for parents who are running late etc / Booking / paying / cancelling Josie's club and breakfast club. There are issues with paying using various payment methods. Enquiries to accounts aren't responded to / followed up and administration is generally unhelpful and. It isn't user friendly.

Josie Durbin – Josie's Club

- Josie just waiting for a SIM card for a phone – the number will be issued asap. In the meantime parents can email Josie regarding late collection: Josie's.club@e-act.org.uk
- Any issues with payment for Josie's Club please contact Josie via email.
- Lisa Bush (Regional Finance manager): The only method we have for breakfast club is childcare vouchers or cash via parent pay. All the CCV suppliers are set up so parents should have no trouble with this. Please email issues to the office who will forward to my team for resolution.
- Cancellations for Josie's club or Holiday Club – please email Josie or Rob Allen direct

5. Year 5 Girls & Boys changing separately for PE (perhaps even all of upper school?)

Rob Allan - PE Lead

- Currently just year 6 change separately. There is no official guideline on this topic. Happy for Year 5 to change separately and this will start with immediate effect.
- Parent asked if we could extend this to Y4. Unfortunately, due to the higher ratio of girls to boys in Y4 and lack of space and female PE staff we cannot currently extend this to Y4

6. School nurse? Any way to help stop spread of nits?

Miss Gorra

- We no longer have a dedicated School Nurse. The service provided by Bristol CC does not cover head lice.
- Ref nits specifically there is guidance on the Gov. UK site:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/head-lice-pediculosis>

- and the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/> :

You can't prevent head lice

There's nothing you can do to prevent head lice.

You can help stop them spreading by wet or dry combing regularly to catch them early.

Do not use medicated lotions and sprays to prevent head lice. They can irritate the scalp.

There's no need for children to stay off school or to wash laundry on a hot wash.

7. Daily Mile - can we look into this?

Rob Allan - PE Lead

- **It's a really good initiative for schools that aren't very active. Here we are a very active school with breakfast clubs, two hours of PE per class and after school club and a daily mile programme isn't really needed.**
- **Again, daily mile is really good for inactive children/schools with weight management issues, a large proportion of our children attend clubs outside of school as well as the sport they participate in during school.**
- **It involves time out of class and therefore reduced learning time.**

8. Can there be more information regarding sanctions eg. Amber warning, what is it and when is it used?

Mrs Reynolds – Interim Headteacher

- **Please see the behaviour policy on the website. We will also include a Link in the Newsletter:**

https://stursulasacademy.e-act.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2018/11/BehaviourGuidance_Nov-2018.pdf

[St. Ursula's Academy](https://stursulasacademy.e-act.org.uk)

stursulasacademy.e-act.org.uk

Create a safe, happy and caring learning environment where children realise their full potential. Teach the importance of respect for others.

9. Appointment of new HT - when will you be advertising/how will the selection process take place/will you involve children/parents?

Ruth Watts – Regional co-ordinator

- **Stephen Luke has confirmed that we will advertise the role internally as we have a strong pool of candidates within the region. The E-ACT Scheme of delegation confirms the Deputy CEO and the RED (Stephen Luke) will interview plus the Chair of the Academy Ambassador Group or another Academy Ambassador.**

10. Volunteer Readers - process taking too long (in some cases people applied months ago and still not heard anything), some parents not sure what's involved in applying/out off as worried it's too complicated.

Charlotte Mascilo - Operations and SIMS Administrator

- **When this was last raised anyone who had an application that was outstanding came and spoke to me.**
- **There are currently no applications outstanding.**
- **The wait is because as part of our safer recruitment/safeguarding we need 2 references and then when these are back we can apply for the DBS. At the moment I only have two volunteers who I am waiting for documents back as no one else has come to me. I have had a few parents who did take volunteer application forms, but never brought them back.**
- **The process for applying is volunteer application form - then references back- DBS needs to be applied for- DBS back and meeting with Nicky/Jillian/Lakmini. It is a longer process but due to safeguarding/safer recruitment this needs to be done.**
- **We would like to have more volunteers (year 3 especially!) It would be best to advise that parents won't be with just their children as we need help throughout the whole school.**

11. Climbing Wall money/Mini Bus - what is happening here? children/parents have no idea where their sponsorship money went

Nicky Reynolds/ PTFA

- **Climbing wall - we are obtaining 3rd Quote. PTFA are supporting in obtaining the quotes**
- **Mini bus - has now been agreed it is being purchased outright rather than via a lease. Again – we are going through the procurement process and obtaining 3 quotes.**

12. Times Table competition - is this going to happen this year?

Ruth Watts

- **Yes ! This will be run as part of the Regional Celebration Event – a teacher from each school will run Times Table Rock Star heats and finalists from each academy will go to our regional event (provisional date of 22 May).**
- **The winner from the regional event will go to the National event in Birmingham on 10th July.**

13. eco friendly practices. Are karate bands necessary? Could they be either collected in at the end of the year and the used or certs given instead? Seems a lot of plastic... Oh and can we not laminate certs.

Mrs Reynolds & Miss Gorra

- **Karate bands are part of our celebration of reading.**
- **JG conferenced the children this week – the children said they had been getting them and they loved them**
- **The group agreed a Karate Band Amnesty at the end of the year and a Book Amnesty !**

- We will swap laminating for using card
- Raffle tickets – draw takes place every Friday in classrooms. The raffle in assembly is a mixture of behaviour and attendance. Consistency of Infinity and Beyond across teachers is being monitored!

14. Outdoor learning - Forest School - do we no longer have a lead teacher for this since Mr Mitten left? Seems a shame to have such a great outdoor space that is not used regularly - could teachers incorporate numeracy/literacy into outdoor activities?

Miss Gorra

- Explained we have 2 x trained Forest School Teachers and the children are taken out on a rota.
- The children are always using the outdoor space even if not undertaking “Forest School” activities.
- We will increase usage of the outdoors areas as the weather improves.

15. WBD donation - some parents felt this was a bit much £2 and also didn't feel it was right to not be consulted about how this money is spent.

Charlotte Mascilo

- We had a few parents email and ring and ask, we explained that it is going back into the school for reading resources and to help with the author.
- We did say the suggested £2 would be great but any money is appreciated if parents can donate.

16. There are fewer afterschool sports clubs running compared to previous years. For example the boys football is now split over 2 sessions Yr1-yr2 and Yr3-yr6. In previous years this was split over 3 sessions (yr1-yr2, Yr3-4 and Yr5-6). There is also a lack of variety - for example, why is hockey not offered?

Rob Allan

- Last year we spread ourselves too thinly after school and really struggled to attend fixtures and competitions as a result.
- This year we've increased the size of the clubs (i.e football now accommodates 40 kids rather than 24) but don't run as many sports as some of them were really poorly attended. We dropped basketball, hockey & multi-sports club as we had such low numbers, it was a waste of resources to run those clubs after a year of trialling it.
- This year we are offering more fixtures alongside clubs so more children will get the chance to play for the school as well.
- We have an aim that every child that attends an after school club will represent the school in a sporting fixture.
- All of the after school sports clubs are free to attend and prior to last year parents had to pay to attend any Shine clubs and very few children then represented the school in fixtures/competitions.
- We have excellent participation figures for after school clubs and representing the school in fixtures that we are happy to share. These figures resulted in us achieving the School Games Mark Gold level last academic year and we will achieve this again this year. This will allow us to be one of the first schools in Bristol to achieve Platinum level next year (you have to achieve gold 3 years in a row to get platinum).

- Discussed more girl focussed sports – e.g. netball and girls cricket. Dance is incorporated into PE sessions. RA explained that numbers for Hockey were too low and that is why we swapped it for another after school sport.
- Girls football on a Friday takes place in the playground – looking to organise fixtures with Badock’s Wood. Perhaps look to badge as “this girl can”.
- Also discussed providing coaching for children who may struggle with sport and not just “gifted and talented”. This is being looked at as it is one of the aims RA.

17. Finally, with Mr Moody and the other members of SLT not at the academy their is a feeling of a loss of a sense of community among the parents. Mr Moody, Mrs PR and Mrs Shaile were always available outside morning and afternoon to talk to/for the children and parents to see they are around (Not just for complaints!) - more SLT presence at drop off and pick up is requested

- Mrs Reynolds and/ or Miss Gorra plus other members of SLT (e.g. Mrs Harkus & Mr Milum) are on the play grounds every morning for parents to speak to
- Mrs Reynolds/ Miss Gorra both attended Christmas fair with their children and Mrs Reynolds is attending the PTFA event on Friday
- Mrs Reynolds hosted a parent drop in – only 2 parents attended.
- Issue of presence on the gate is linked to number of staff available to cover the playgrounds in the morning – this restricts Mrs R and Miss G being on the gate as they are on the playgrounds.
- A consultation re school day will go out before Easter which will provide an opportunity to look at options which may address this.
- Whilst not on the gate either Mrs R and/or Miss G and other members of SLT are always available in the playgrounds in the morning. After school Mrs R and Miss G have staff and parent meetings which make it difficult to be available at 3.30.

18. Rob Allen came along to update the class reps on the Holiday programme and what is available. No set days for specific sports – they offer a mix of sports each day and much depends on the age of children that we have on the day. We will choose appropriate sports and activities to suit age ranges. Parents asked about drop off time – RA explained that you can drop off from 8.15. RA will include this in a briefing note. RA confirmed that STU Holiday club is open to all children not just STU pupils. RA will look to advertise on local FB page BS9 Families. RA to look at providing more info on the specific sports that will take place on the specific days.

19. Other

- RW to look into Parent App on SIMS for booking parents evenings etc
- Homework was discussed. NR/JG explained that research shows homework, with the exception of reading, does not have a notable impact on children’s learning. It was agreed to review homework. Parent reps agreed need to keep reading, times tables and spellings (with the rule). It will be confirmed and communicated to parents.
- Reminder in Bulletin no scooting or biking on the site
- Reminder from the group that if parents wish to suggest something that ptfa funds could be used for, they can email the ptfa or attend the meetings.
- There was a suggestion of putting more positive news in the bulletins such as the worry boxes, sensory room or other initiatives the school are doing that we don't get to hear about. Perhaps teacher of the month nominations or something. Lots of positive stuff can get lost in the noise.