

Parent Council Minutes 18.11.21

Attendees

Ele Arbuckle – Principal Teacher

Clare Warwick – Acting Head Teacher

Emily Paisley – PC Chair – mum to Eve in Holly class

Chris and Ann Winter – parents to Annabel in nursery

Ahmad Murad – interpreter

Mohammed Alhamo – parent to Hasan (Cedar) and Duaa (Willow)

Eni Adesida – mum to Adi in Pine class

Alexis Leal – mum to Harrison in Holly class

HT Q&A – Clare

- Rebecca (HT) and her boys are doing well.
- Staff are eligible for Covid boosters, they are classed as Social Care. Staff flu vaccines are done.
- A Family Link Worker has been advertised for. Unfortunately, one was appointed but withdrew. We have someone to do the 6-hour transition part of the post (to advocate for families and support them with the transition to adult services) but will re-advertise for the remaining 30 hours.
- A new development officer has been appointed by the council for transition as it's been recognised that there are a number of issues that need addressing. Previous paperwork supplied by YAD Social Work suggests that paperwork should be completed for pupils 12 months before their leaving date, but this isn't the case currently.
- Parents cannot currently visit school to see pupils due to Covid restrictions, they can only visit for meetings and other similar appointments.

Update from City Wide PC Locality Group – Emily

- There are 6 Special Schools represented in the group. They meet 4 times per year. The last meeting was attended by Frank Henderson (City wide transport) and Andrew McWhirter (SW).

Transition:

- The Development Officer for Transition post is now filled. Hopefully now someone will be mapping out what Transition provision is needed from when pupils start P1 and identifying any gaps.
- There was a Disclosure Scotland Documentary on the BBC a few months ago looking at the issues around lack of positive destinations for young adults with disabilities. The member of parliament (Pam Duncan-Glancy) featured is trying to get a bill passed to ensure that someone is appointed to oversee this.

Transport:

- The application process for transport is now online. It almost worked this year but then failed at the last minute due to a technical issue and so necessitated parents completing paper applications.
- Another issue to the service was caused by a few taxi firms bidding for routes and then pulling out at the last minute. These firms have now been blacklisted from future bidding applications. Oaklands families were not as badly affected as at other schools.
- Parents raised the fact that they would prefer more stability and continuity with drivers and escorts. Frank said that this would be looked at with a view to locking contracts in for 3 years. Frank asked for two parents to work with him to ensure transport works more smoothly next year.
- New tech should soon be available which will ping parents to let them know when a bus is on its way.

Section 23:

- Social Work acknowledged that some parents have been experiencing delays of approximately 1 month for Section 23 assessments (assessment for respite funding). They have now caught up with the backlog and individual SWs have more autonomy which is speeding up the process.
- Respite funding can be used for self-directed support, so for someone to come to the family, as well as for placements. Emily/Clare not sure at what age you can first apply for the funding but will find out. Anecdotally it seems that some families have started the process at age 3 but have met resistance from SW re. this.
- You can self-refer by phoning SW Direct or through Health Visitor or by searching for it online.
- Not all parents know what a Section 23 is and so awareness needs to be raised around this. The process needs to be more inclusive, at the moment there is a burden of proof on the families.

Playscheme:

- Parents have had different experiences of Playscheme this year. At least 50% of Oaklands pupils didn't get a decent allocation. Two types of playscheme were run. The first was given in a block of a few weeks. The second was for families who initially had nothing offered but were then offered a few days in an additional hub that was set up, this wasn't enough.
- Pre-Covid, families usually had 3-4weeks of playscheme provision each year. Parents would like to return to a level playing field where everyone has the opportunity to apply. Andrew McWhirter, Social Work rep responsible for playscheme allocation, said that this year hopefully forms will be made available before Christmas so that plans can be made for Easter provision.
- Playscheme is run by a separate company but usually uses the Oaklands building. Transport isn't usually included. Pupils are eligible from P1 but probably need to apply while in nursery to access this.

- The Oaklands Charity bank account has now been set up. There will be a daytime meeting with regard to the charity. Please email Emily if you wish to attend.
- The next PC meeting is proposed for the end of January.
- Emily will send out minutes from this meeting and the Locality meeting.

Actions

- Clare to find out at what age a Section 23 application can be made.
- Emily to send out minutes for meetings and inform parents of next meeting date when confirmed.