

MINUTES OF SMSA MEETING - October 24th 2012

Present: Annabel Rooney, Laurence Penn, Sally Holyland, Ruth McBurney, Lynne Riley, Sharon Smith, Maria Trinder, Lorna Ross, Kathryn McGeary, Alicia Pivaro, Mr Lanfranchi, Viv Dykslva, Ilaria Miller, Sue O'Neill, Karel McNamee, Moya Malekin, Rachel Maynard, Lucy Tudor, Ciara Kalmus, Clare Leach, Carmen Clemente, Amy Brown, Gilda Williams Rical

Apologies: Jenny Taylor, Claudia Wordsworth, Karen Revel-Chion, Toria Palmer, Kate Waine, Julia Weiner, Jessica Worthington.

NB: Help required or reps action – see yellow highlighter

1. Matters arising from last minutes - Lynne Riley

Class calendar - Last month said if anyone was interested in helping with the calendars to let Lynne know. But despite there being clear interest at the last meeting, no one has offered to help. Ruth is happy to do it but she needs help with marshaling and getting the classes organized.

Last time we did the calendars cost was £6.00 only just broke even. We will probably sell about 250. We are probably too late for the Christmas fair but could produce them on an order only basis.

Ruth will e-mail the reps and if there is enough help the calendar will happen. Need about 2 or 3 helpers per class.

2. Treasurers Finance Update Karel McNamee.

Karel has sent out an updated spreadsheet setting out each class' cake sale balances. If anyone has any questions ask Karel.

At present we have available funds of £43,621. Of which we owe the school £3,400 and commitments to IT project £10,000 and trollies £7,000.

We have £22,000 approximately available to spend.

3. Governors' updates – no Governors were able to attend, but the following update has been provided:

Security Fence - the landscaping of the fence is scheduled to happen November 5th - if not, it will be very soon after this date. The only exception to this is the tree planting - as it is not the 'right season' yet. The gate in the top playground will be installed later this month. We are seeking planning permission for a secure gate across the lane.

Ofsted- the school has had a visit from its school improvement partner this term and has given the staff and governors pointers as to what Ofsted will be looking for if they come to inspect us. It has been over five years since our last inspection, so we know we need to get ready, although no date has been set. It is worth parents noting that the Ofsted framework has changed over the last five years. The standards have

become much tougher, with far fewer schools getting an 'Outstanding' grade. St Michael's achieved 'Outstanding' last time and although we would all love to get that grade again, we need to be aware that we may only get a 'Good'. However, these days Good really does mean Good! Please be assured that everyone is working as hard as they can for the children at the school, but the bar really has been raised.

Head Teacher appointment - the selection process for a substantive Headteacher is taking place this month. Parents will be notified of the outcome in due course.

4. Wish Lists and discussion

Tony Lanfranchi

The SENCO team, who do not have regular cake sales, have requested -

- Puppets to help nurture those children with emotional and social difficulties. Each cost £52.00 and they would like 2. Mrs Ross agreeing that they are a good idea. Children respond well to puppets.
- Update of software called Clicker 6 (£300). This is a very good package for early readers. The software license that we have for 10 computers has run out.
- Software To Type (£250). The license is for 10 computers and last for 2 years.
- They would like two laptops. Mr Lanfranchi explaining that in every year there are two or three children really struggling with their writing and the laptops can really help. Amy Brown who works at Google suggests that her company might be willing to donate laptops. She will check and get back to Mr Lanfranchi. Another possibility would be to ask parents to donate old laptops. The SMSA could pay for them to be wiped.

Yes to the puppets and the two software programs - total £654. We will wait before deciding about the laptops.

Amanda Sapsed from Year 1 has requested some visual aids for the outside areas. Coloured letters and sounds come to £460. They are plastic coated and you stick them on the walls (passing round pictures). They are to brighten up the area and make it language rich.

It is suggested that we wait before incurring this expenditure because the SMSA are planning to support changes to the area and replace the play equipment etc. The SMSA appreciate that the area needs to be refurbished and we are looking into it.

Request from nursery for a camera and CD player. They need a camera for lesson observations. A lot of cameras have been purchased in recent years and so before agreeing to this expenditure it is agreed that there should be a camera and CD player audit. Also any expenditure under £300 should really be paid for out of the cake sale money. Perhaps we could ask parents for donations of old working CD players and cameras.

5 Sponsorship

Kate Waine/Jessica Worthington

Both send their apologies. Jessica would like to make a plea for boards. If you are happy to have an estate agents board outside your house in the run up to school events please E-mail Jessica (Jessica_ferrandiz@yahoo.co.uk).

TMD estate agents have sponsored Bonfire Night, the Christmas Fair and the Summer Fair over the last year.

Also a reminder about Singing in the Rain tickets. Top price theatre tickets at a cut down price for performance on 19th November 2012. For every ticket sold SMSA will get £5.00. A separate e-mail has been sent out about this. There will be more events coming through.

6. Library update

Julia Weiner

Library Report from Julia. - We have lots of donations so many thanks to Karen Revel-Chion, Tessa Cows and others. We have sorted through and given away a lot of the old non-fiction so Julia will be hoping to build up these areas soon. Thanks to Andrea Lynagh and Patricia Cabredo for their help with this. Finally, Julia has visited almost all classes - just Year 3 to go and found large amounts of library books in almost all, most of which had not been issued. Teachers will be asked to take out books in the usual way so we can keep track of where things are. Julia is making up cards for all staff members who will be able to borrow 10 books each.

7. Garden update

Alicia Pivaro/T Lanfranchi

Alicia introducing Lucy Tudor whose daughter has just started in Nursery. She is a landscape gardener by profession and is working closely with Alicia and Mr Lanfranchi. They have done a site survey with Troy and are now putting together ideas, which will then result in a consultation process. This will also involve the school and governors.

Lucy has contacted the RHS who do schemes for school gardens. The more of their stages we achieve the more free stuff they give out. At the moment we are at stage 3 - which is great. Also the more competitions we can enter the more free stuff we could get.

The school would like to plant 1,000 bulbs. Lucy is trying to get them for trade cost which will be about £150.00. The children can sell the flowers along with the herbs. Also discussing whether to charge for the gardening club, say £10 for the term, and whether we could put a call out for old garden tools.

Troy has asked for £345 to clean out the ponds. Agreed.

The garden is definitely going to be a big and exciting project. There needs to be a separate meeting about it to prepare a Brief of what is needed followed by a Consultation and Presentation.

There will be planting in the nursery playground just after half term.

The Noticeboards in the top playground were raised as a problem because there have been several accidents. Padding will be put on the corners.

After discussion it was decided that it would be a good idea to have a "Bring a (living) Bulb Day". The bulbs will be distributed to the classes to be planted. Agreeing date of Monday 12th November 2012.

Ms Ross suggests another sponsored event run by the school council for playground equipment. It was such a success when it was done two years ago. Ideas will be discussed at the school council tomorrow.

8. SMSA Website & shopping

Laurence Penn

There will be a push after half term on the shopping site. There will be stickers and pens. Fliers will be handed out to remind people to use the website in the run up to Christmas.

9. Review of recent events:

New parents evening Oct 4 - Went well however there was a low turnout. This was thought to be because a lot of the children in nursery have siblings.

New to you sale Oct 6 - Raised approximately £700. Many people who came to the sale were not parents. Thanks to Caroline Bystrom. Would do it again!

10. Forthcoming events/important dates:

➤ Fireworks Night (Nov 9th)

Laurence Penn

Tickets on sale on the first Tuesday after half term (6th November) from 8.00 am in the office and in the top playground in the afternoon from 3pm. As in previous years there is to be a limit of 6 tickets per person. Price £7.50 for adults and £5.00 for a child ticket.

OK for help on the bar. Ok for wardens. Year 2 always builds the Guy. Alicia agreeing to sort out the music.

➤ Battle of the Bands (Nov 24th)

Kath McGeary

Is progressing. We have 5 bands. No teacher band but a teachers' dance will take place while votes are being counted. Need someone to do the lights. Is there anyone who was trained in the lights? Kath to ask Sarah Rayment.

Could do with one or two more 'Rock Chicks'. Had four in the past. Rock Chicks walk around selling votes.

Tickets are £15 includes a curry. See You Tube, Face Book for SMSA Battle of the Bands 2010.

Could do with a Stage Manager to open curtains and make sure everything is running Ok. If you can sing harmonies contact Kath. Her band needs some backing singers.

We have sponsorship for the Battle of the Bands. Will start selling tickets right after Bonfire Night.

Do stage coach know that they can't use the junior hall after 12 on the Saturday? Mrs Ross to check.

➤ Xmas Fair (Sunday Dec 2nd) Ruth McB (An E-mail will be sent out about the Fair on Fri.)

11. AOB

- Childcare vouchers can be used to pay for afterschool clubs. School to circulate note about it.
- After school care at Highgate Primary. Council is starting to limit the number from other schools. There is a problem with providing a pick up service. Is there a demand? Parents to be asked who uses it, or who would be interested in using it. Mrs Ross will find out what has happened to the service and if there are any spaces. Laurence to look into doing a survey on the SMSA website.
- Lunches – a general discussion about the school dinners and queries about portion size being too small. Children are complaining about being hungry. Also concerns voiced about choice – eg – if not vegetarian can't have the veggie option.
- Purchase of a Gazebo for cake sales (approximately £55.00) - approved.
- Purchase of a Coffee Machine for use at school events – approved.

The next SMSA meeting will be held on November 15th (Thursday). Earn free money for the school by using the SMSA website (www.thesmsa.co.uk) shopping link to shop at the top brands