

Murrayfield Academy Council

8 June 2021 at 9:15am

Via Google Meet

Attendees: Claire Willis (Headteacher)
Jo Pike – Academy Council member - Chair
Louise Leah – Academy Council Member – Minutes
Jo Brown – Academy Council Member
4 other parents

The Chair welcomed parents to the meeting. This meeting will also be held on Thursday at 6pm to accommodate parents wishes to have a later meeting time (minutes below)

Swimming Pool

Claire reported that, unfortunately, the pool is leaking a substantial amount of water - $\frac{3}{4}$ of the pool water is escaping somewhere. The school have commissioned a survey and are awaiting the official report. Initially, it looks like the grouting is coming away. A more intensive report will be done to see if it can be repaired or if it is possible to add another 'shell' within the existing pool. Unfortunately, any work will be very costly. The current expenditure is £15,000 for the survey and report, then the cost of repairing structural issues. Also, the pressure pump is not working. The Trust are considering options and are keen to get this resolved. Claire is confident that the Trust will be able to fund the repairs. Claire and the Principle of Pipers Vale, are looking into hiring a coach and taking the children swimming at Fore Street. Parents were pleased to hear that the school are being proactive to get it resolved. It was felt that if the school was a Suffolk County Council school, the pool would have been condemned so parents were pleased that the school were doing all they can to save it.

Coming in, and Leaving the School Site

Parents were pleased that the school had listened to parents about the bottleneck at the gate and the cones work really well at exit. Parents are queuing really early in the morning and at end of the day by the back gate and down the road. Parents have seen cars doing a 3-point turn on the blind corner. Claire reported that Public Engagement Officers occasionally monitor the situation but this is a limited resource so we are on a rota with other schools in the area. Claire asked how parents felt about the one-way system in the long term, when restrictions were eased completely. Did parents want to keep the one-way system or go back to how it was before? Of those present, some would like to keep the one-day, some want car park gate open and some want to enter/leave via either gate. We discussed how to get an overall consensus among the majority of parents.

Communications

The meeting discussed how to ensure that all parents are receiving communications (i.e. school Facebook page, parents Facebook page, Parentmail texts, letters home, website). Claire is going to ask the Student Leadership team to create a Google Form for parents to complete, to check they are receiving information from school. Parentmail texts are only going to one mobile number per child and parents asked if these can go to both parents. Claire expressed that she will look into whether the system can accommodate this.

Parents Evening

Parents have been invited to book a parent evening slot via an online booking system. Parents reported that this worked really well and parents have made appointments. These will be held as video calls Claire said that teachers will be using 'Visualisers' to show parents examples of their children's work. Parents asked if this will continue in the future, even when restrictions are lifted completely. Claire said that the school could consider a mix of both virtual meetings and face to face. It was agreed that this question would be added to the Google form that the Student Leadership Team are creating, to ask parents what they think.

Year 6 Leavers – Prom, photos, hoodies, transition

Year 6 have been given the option to buy leavers hoodies and parents can pay on Sims Pay. Parents reported that this system worked really well. Claire commented that the students have been so resilient and Year 6 received the second highest result in the Trust for exceeding the expected standard for writing. The hoodies will be blue. Last year, Jo Brown had their child's fellow pupils' first names embroidered onto the hoodie. Jo kindly offered to post a photo on the 'Parents of Murrayfield' facebook page and can put anyone who is interested in touch with the lady who can quote for this.

Induction for Reception and Nursery

Claire reported successful recruitment in Reception. They had expected 38 children but have 48 children so early years is now nearly full. Claire put in a bid to the Ipswich Opportunity Fund for an 'Early Years Transition Lead' role at the school. This post-holder would work with families and go into nurseries to aid transition into Murrayfield. Claire was successful with this bid and secured £10,000 for this role. The school have a part time member of staff, who is interested in taking on this role as extra hours, and this will begin in September. Letters and booklets have gone to parents of children in Nursery and Reception. A colour brochure is planned. The school have offered appointments, after school, for families to come and visit to meet staff. There will also be telephone calls to families and videos of the classrooms. There will also be extra meetings for those who want it to aid their decision. The Student Leadership team have created welcome videos for new children to see the school. Claire reported that Year 1 is currently full, Year 3 only has 3 places available. The school is currently 77% full which is amazing.

Raising profile of school

Parents were pleased to hear how well the school is doing and questioned how we can raise the profile of the school and get rid of the old reputation. Claire is working on a project to celebrate Hero's in the Community. Claire is really impressed by the extra-curricular activities that the children participate in, such as 2 students who have won a regatta in sailing. Student Leadership team are taking a lead with this and how we can celebrate successes.

Old Memories of school

Parents suggested that perhaps the Student Leadership Team could capture memories and photos of the school as many parents attended there. A parent suggested that the 'Ipswich Remembers' Facebook page may be a place to start. Claire will consider suggesting this.

Anniversary of Amanda's Passing

A parent mentioned that it was the anniversary of Amanda's passing and was there any plans to commemorate her contribution to Murrayfield. Claire reported that there is a photo above the reception hatch which we believe were the family wishes.

Media Coverage of the school

Parents suggested inviting the Ipswich Star to do an article on how far the school have come. Claire has been proactive in contacting the press and there have been 3 articles recently (regarding remote learning, successful learning etc). Ipswich Star will soon be doing an article on the School Leadership Team so watch this space.

Leap Pad – Specialist Education Unit

Claire updated parents on the new Specialist Education Unit at Murrayfield called Leap Pad, which opened in September 2020. This is for children who have communication and interaction additional needs, speech and language needs and/or Autism. The Unit has 3 Teaching Assistant's, a Lead Teacher and a newly appointed teacher. The feedback from parents of children at the unit has been positive. The unit caters for Key stage 2 (Years 3-6) with the majority of children in Year 3. There are 2 classes, with an overall capacity of 18 students. 15 places are currently filled. One student has recently achieved 'exceeding' in reading, and one has achieved 'expected' in writing, which is great progress compared to where they were previously. Parents asked if it would be opened up to Early Years pupils. Claire reported that the Early Years unit is at Pipers Vale, while Key stage 2 is at Murrayfield. The school was assessed for Local Authority Quality Assurance and the school was really pleased with the positive outcome. Diane Rochford, did a review of the school before lockdown and found that the school is truly inclusive, with interventions being offered at the point of need. The school also have two members of staff who are trained in Emotional Literacy.

Mental Health

Parents asked what mental health support is available at the school. Claire reported that the school has a 3-tiered system.

- Tier 1 – Consists of individual staff doing intervention/support with identified pupils, including social, emotional support and staff can recognise signs of those who are struggling.
- Tier 2 – The school has a Learning Mentor and ELSA – who support children in school or can access external support such as school nursing, Nurture groups etc.
- Tier 3 – These children may need psychological or psychiatric intervention. The school can buy services from a qualified external company which the School can refer to.

The school also strives to promote positive mental health, such as - yellow dressing up day, SHINE promoted throughout school etc. The school has two members of staff who run SWIRL (Social Wellbeing Emotional Resilience Learning). Parents were impressed with the amount of support for pupils.

Sports Day

Claire explained that Sport Day will be held outdoors at Ipswich Academy – The theme is 'It's a Knockout' and 'Murrayfield's Strongest Pupil', with events such as car lifting (not a real car), tyre flipping, welly throwing, and sumo wrestling suits. A proposed date is 14 July. Claire will be contacting the media to cover this event, as another opportunity to raise the profile of the school. Parents thought this sounded like really good fun.

The meeting was closed and parents were encouraged to attend future meetings to raise any concerns they have and to hear about what is happening in school. The parents present felt that the school are very proactive in addressing issues so want feedback from parents to continue the great work that the school are doing.

Murrayfield Academy Council

10 June 2021 at 6pm

Via Google Meet

Attendees: Claire Willis (Headteacher) - Chair
Louise Leah – Academy Council Member - Minutes
Jo Brown – Academy Council Member
4 parents

Swimming Pool Update – Following the previous Academy Council meeting, Claire reported today that she had received information from the survey this week - the Surveyor isn't worried and believes that the pool can be saved. Radar equipment will be used to assess where the damage is underground. It appears that the water is escaping but leaving the site via drains. A fibreglass shell may need to be put into the existing pool. Swimming may not be possible until September at the earliest, but it is positive news that there is a chance that it can be saved.

Covid Routines and Procedures

Claire updated parents on the current situation with the schools response to the pandemic. She was pleased to report that the school have not had any positive cases since December. The school are adhering to government guidelines with regular cleaning, one way systems, bubbles etc and parents were pleased to hear that pupils and staff have been safeguarded in this way. Claire thanked parents for their patience with the one-way system in the playground. Parents were asked if they would like to keep the one-way system after restrictions are completed lifted – 2 voted to keep one way system, 1 voted for either system. The School Leadership Team met this morning and are putting together a Google Form to ask for the general consensus from all parents and also to ask how parents want to get information about school matters (newsletter, Facebook page, Website). A parent questioned how we can contact the Student Leadership Team with suggestions. Claire suggested parents use the info@murrayfieldprimary.co.uk email address and then emails will be forwarded to Student Leadership Team.

Leap Pad

A parent questioned how we can encourage parents of Leap Pad pupils to be included in the Murrayfield Community. Claire responded that they receive all the communications and it would be good to have representation at these meetings. Even though Leap Pad pupils are part of an individual unit, they are encouraged to feel part of the whole school community. The pupils access music lessons and PE in the same areas as other pupils. Year 6 have a buddy system with the Leap Pad pupils (before lockdown).

Sports Day

Parents liked the sound of the sports day planned (see above) and are looking forward to it.

Parents Evening

This is planned for 7 and 8 July – Parents have been invited to book a virtual appointment. Parents didn't report any issues with accessing this system.

Engagement and Communication

Parents reported that the school have communicated effectively with parents. Parentmail texts can be hit and miss but all parents present did receive a Parentmail about these meetings

A parent did query if Parentmail can send messages to more than one parent. Claire is going to look into this to see if both parents can receive texts messages.

Celebrations

The school want to recognise achievements of pupils outside school life. Parents suggested they could send in photos or certificates of children's achievements. It was suggested that the children could participate in Litter Picking and could invite 'Rubbish Walks' to come along to Sports Day. The man dresses up in a costume that looks like he is riding a Raptor Dinosaur and it was suggested that he could be the school mascot, to encourage the message of looking after our environment. The school are involved in gardening projects. Jo Brown offered that she may have some plants etc to donate.

AOB

Assessments and Curriculum

Claire reported that the Spring term assessments didn't take place, as pupils had only just returned after lockdown. Teachers will be looking at pupil work books, the results of tests carried out in summer term and assessments that are happening next week. Claire was really pleased with progress of pupils, despite a difficult year. The school are looking at plugging gaps in children's learning. Some year groups have been split into small groups to target learning. Additional adults have been brought in to work individually with children. Year 6 scored the second highest result for exceeding in writing across the Trust. Year 1 made 32% increase in phonics and Year 2 made a 13% increase in phonics.