

Wednesday 10 July 2008 @ 6pm

## Jack & Jill Nursery Parents' Forum

### Minutes

Present: Staff – Kim, Elizabeth, Melanie, Jill  
Parents – Chrissie (3-5 + 1-2), Moira (3-5), Louise (3-5), Pauline and Richard (2-3)

Apologies received from several parents, hoping to attend next meeting.

### Previous Minutes

Kim thanked everyone for coming and ensured that everyone had taken a copy of the minutes of the first Forum meeting (14/05/08). She then recapped the main points covered in the previous meeting.

These were:

- **Aims for the Parents' Forum** – these have been adopted, with the additional aim of providing an opportunity for parents to meet each other. This was something that only became apparent after the meeting had taken place and parents had provided feedback. The Aims have been displayed on the Forum noticeboard.
- **Policy statements for the new 3-18 curriculum** and the discussion arising from this
- **Fundraising** – Kim reported that we have had an excellent response to our fundraising this term with the final total being £1184.71! The majority of this has been used to fund the Summer Trip to Kelburn Country Park and we have approximately £250 remaining.
- **Summer Programme** – in response to parent requests at the last meeting, this fundraising money will be used to support a programme of outings during the period of the school summer holidays, providing a chance to go further afield or to take part in activities that we do not usually do in term time. A copy of the programme will be put up on the board for parents.
- **Free things** – we have placed an order using our Tesco Computers for Schools vouchers. Elizabeth also reported that she had looked into the Sainsbury's Active Kids scheme, after a parent had provided vouchers. We would not be able to place an order this year, with the number of vouchers received, but she would try to register and bank them for next year.

### Action Points

Several action points had been listed at the end of the previous minutes. Kim reported back on progress made:

- **Nursery Mission Statement and Aims** have been revised, taking into account the suggestions made by parents that we include support for spontaneous learning and both curricula that we use: the 3-18

Curriculum and Birth to Three Matters. The revised Mission Statement is now on display by the Staff and Training noticeboard and a copy is also on the Forum noticeboard.

- **Daily feedback system for the 3-5 group** – the 3-5 staff have been trialling the use of a whiteboard to record information about the eating and activities of the children in the 3-5 group. So far the feedback has been positive. Kim asked the parents present for their opinions and the response was also positive. One parent reported that she had found the board very useful as a prompt: when she saw that her daughter had not eaten a snack, she was able to ask staff for more information and find out why. One parent asked whether the staff were finding the codes tricky to use, but Melanie reported that they had got used to the system now. Kim asked for any suggestions for improvements or modifications and there was general agreement that a slightly bigger board would be good. One parent commented that she had really liked the mind map with the children's own comments about 'what I have done today'. Staff explained that these mind maps are often made at the end of the day but have previously only been displayed on the door of the room upstairs. They agreed to attach the mind maps to the board whenever they have been made.
- **Summer activity programme** – see notes above
- **Contact details for school leavers** – STILL TO ACTION

### **Agenda**

Kim explained that as the Forum agenda was to be dictated by parents, a sheet had been put up on the Forum Noticeboard for parents to add items, however nothing had been added. She asked whether there were any items or issues which parents wished to discuss, but none were volunteered.

### **Behaviour Management**

Kim suggested that we might discuss the issue of behaviour management, as several parents have raised it with her on other occasions. She explained that we were hoping to produce a leaflet summarising Jack and Jill's Behaviour Policy, in the same style as our Child Protection Information Leaflet. She asked parents whether this leaflet had been interesting or helpful for parents and if they felt that this was a good format to use. There was general agreement that it had been helpful and that it would be useful.

Kim proposed that we discuss the nursery's behaviour management policy and that any suggestions made by parents could be incorporated into a revised policy and the leaflet.

Kim explained that staff had received **behaviour management training** from Alan McGinlay of the Positive Behaviour Team. He had also provided a session for parents which one parent had attended. The parent who had attended had feedback that she had found the information interesting, but actually more directly relevant to her teenage daughter.

Kim gave everyone a copy of the current **behaviour management policy** and read it through. She asked for feedback, questions or current areas of concern. One parent replied that she felt that the policy showed the things that parents know they should do but find hard to put into practise.

**Parents responded that they felt that they had problems with**

- applying rules consistently
- sharing responsibility with another parent as it makes it harder to achieve consistency, children played one parent off against the other
- tantrums
- children not doing as they are told – perhaps as a result of being too lenient when the children were younger
- tantrums possibly caused by transitions, eg. moving house, starting school
- children not sleeping well and refusing to go to sleep
- problem situations eg. hairwashing, visiting doctor
- tantrums affecting siblings – learning and copying negative behaviour

There was a general discussion about the various issues that individual parents were facing that everyone joined in with.

Transition to School

One parent asked about the transition to school and the way in which the nursery supports the children at this time. Kim and Elizabeth explained that we send a transition letter to the school suggesting various options for making contact, we can take the children to visit their school or the teacher might come out to see the child at nursery, transition records are sent to the school by the nursery in every case, including a comment from the parent and child as well as the keyworker's observations. Kim explained that the new curriculum places a strong emphasis on ensuring that transitions are as smooth as possible.

Kim summarised some of the **new techniques for dealing with negative behaviour** that Alan McGinlay had suggested including:

- don't ask WHY? – ask any other question, talk about how everyone feels
- don't give ultimatums that you can't follow through
- do give simple choices

One parent said that she had found that negotiation really did work, but could be hard work.

We also discussed the difficulties of dealing with negative behaviour as a parent, who is often involved in the fight, rather than as nursery staff who are usually mediating between children, and of the time needed to carry out negotiation and talk about feelings, which is not always available. Kim pointed out that the negotiation process does get easier as children become familiar with the idea and develop the skills to express themselves. She also reminded everyone that some behaviour issues were inevitable and were a natural part of the child's development.

Parents were keen to know about the techniques which worked with their children in nursery, and it was agreed that we would include examples of the questions that staff are using in the leaflet so that they can continue with this approach at home.

### Dance classes

During the discussion, one parent also asked whether anyone knew of any dance classes happening locally, as she was hoping to enrol her daughter. Some suggestions were offered and the merits of dance and other physical activity classes were discussed, including positive changes in behaviour.

### Date of next Forum meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be early September after the start of term.

### Action Points

- Purchase Larger Whiteboard and Permanent Marker Pen - KR
- Review Behaviour Management Policy and produce Info Leaflet - KR
- Organise contact details for the 3 – 5's who are leaving - EB
- Gather Dance Class Information - KR
- Display Summer Programme on Forum Info Board for Parents - EB
- Schedule Next Meeting - KR