

PCWG meeting summary 08/02/2019

School streets

Cypress is one of 8 schools who are candidates to become a 'school street' (closed to non-residents' cars during dropoff and pickup times) in the council's next phase. Questionnaires have been sent to all Cypress Road residents to get their views.

Regarding the traffic on Auckland Road and the dangerous crossing, a zebra crossing was mentioned as a potential solution and cameras would be installed as part of the 'school street' to capture cars turning into Cypress Road so may have a calming effect on traffic.

Parent volunteers

Opportunities for parents to volunteer were discussed, including with grounds clearance on the lower school woodlands (parents suggested that holding this after school rather than at the weekend might encourage attendance) and as a 'reading aunties' – more details to follow.

Music

Parents suggested that there should be an update in the next newsletter so everyone is aware of what instruments are taught and how to sign up. The lower school choir was discussed, and parents were positive about this being introduced but concerned about the audition process for younger children - this was due to limits on the number of children who could be supervised by the choir teacher. Parents also commented that they would like to see the update on the PPA schedule for each half term in a future newsletter.

Afterschool stay and play – lower school

Unfortunately damage has been caused to school equipment by unsupervised children, and incidents of dangerous behaviour have been noted by staff. When they spoke to parents about this, they responded very negatively. A code of conduct was reviewed and agreed at the meeting and this will be sent to all parents and displayed on site, to encourage parents to supervise children more closely to ensure we can still enjoy the stay and play facilities, especially in warmer weather.

Communication between parents and teachers about children's learning

A parent asked whether children's books could be sent home at weekends so parents could see their child's work to get a better idea of how they could support them. Leadership felt this was infeasible as the books would be likely to get lost, which would cause problems for teacher assessment and in the event of an Ofsted inspection, but we discussed alternative options and this will be raised at academy council. Leadership will also consider how reading diaries are used which might address this.

Streaming in class

A parent asked about when streaming is used in lower school. Leadership confirmed that this is only in phonics. There is differentiation in tables (where children sit) but this is not formal; tables can change and some teachers ask children to choose where they sit. Normally 2/3rds of the class will have the same teaching but some (for example) may have more challenging extension tasks.

Interventions

A parent had asked about interventions (additional support) in school as their child had previously had some interventions which had now stopped; there is a general review ongoing of the effectiveness of interventions at upper school to make sure that the spending on these is giving the best support available to children, and some interventions may change following this. Parents should discuss with their class teacher and/or the inclusion manager if they have any concerns.

School trips

Parents who had recently attended trips asked whether these could be organised so a single class attended at a time, as it was very difficult to coordinate large groups especially when travelling on public transport. This will be discussed with middle group leaders, and hi-vis jackets will be provided at Cypress as they are at other PAT schools. Another parent suggested using activity sheets to focus children's attention when on visits to make sure they get the most of a learning opportunity, which will be considered.

Leadership Q & A

We are trialling a 'Leadership Q&A' for parents/carers who can't attend the comms meetings, for questions which can be answered by leadership at the meeting itself. Parents can email these to cyp-parentcomms@pegasusacademytrust.org and, where it is felt that this a question that other parents might also like the answer to, the answers will be published on the website along with the update from the comms meeting. Please send in your questions in advance of next week's meeting, and the answers will be published early next term.

Next meetings

Next meeting dates will be 3rd April / 17th May / 28th June.