



# Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026



**Present:** Katie Rudge, Lucy Stanley, Serena Gahir, Susan Knott, Kelly Markey, Claire Bartlett, Clare Taylor.

**Apologies:** Emma Richards Emma Welsh and Diana Nickless

**Chaired by:** Lucy Stanley. **SMT:** Claire Mannion. **PC Lead:** Harriet Gill. **Minutes:** Claire Mansfield

## Points raised by Parents:

### **Homework Survey**

There have been 350 responses and comments from parents. For completeness the teaching staff have also been sent a survey. SMT have researched different ways of setting homework using a variety of platforms and methods. The aim is to be consistent, however, cohorts may differ depending on their curriculum and learning stage. As soon as the data has been analysed it will be shared.

### **Children are using their jumpers as whiteboard rubbers**

It was agreed this maybe a case of two sides to every story. Every class should have a white board rubber, it's just easier for the children to use their sleeve! School will check that there is indeed at least one rubber in each class and place an order if there is a shortage. Children will be discouraged if seen using their sleeve.

### **Desk moves**

A Year 3 parent raised the question about children being moved around the room and thought that this was excessive. There are many reasons a child may be moved, they may learn better sitting in a different location or next to a different child. SMT will explore.

### **Fidget Toys**

It has been observed by parents that children are bringing fidget toys from home. This is not permitted in school as the toys may be inappropriate or dangerous. The Inclusion and Pastoral Teams may allow specific children to have a fidget toy but those will be provided by school. School has previously explained the policy on children bringing in items from home to parents, including fidget toys, that letter will be sent to all again to ensure clarity.

### **School Lunches, Kitchen Hygiene and UPFs**

School Lunch related questions arise often during PC meetings. Both kitchens have recently received a routine visit from the Environmental Health Department and been graded with number 5 for hygiene. A parent has raised a concern about UPFs in school lunches, another about a shortage of baked beans. Solihull Catering Services and our Kitchen Staff must adhere to national school food standards. The links below have been shared on the Weekly News. Parents can see the three weekly menus on the school website with dates and detailed explanation of each menu option. Children are permitted to bring a packed lunch to school.

**Menu & Nutrition:** [School meals - food standards - GOV.UK](#)

**Solihull Catering Services:** [Solihull Catering Services - Solihull Catering Services](#)

**Government Guidelines:** [School food standards practical guide - GOV.UK](#)

**Menus are shared on DPS website via Quick Links** [Dorridge Primary School - School Meals](#)

### **School Ties and KS2 Winter Uniform**

The Uniform Specification is published on the school website and shared with parents in their Welcome Pack when children start at DPS. KS2 children are to wear a tie with their winter uniform and are not permitted to wear a polo shirt. It has been reported that there are some inconsistencies in school and some children are still wearing the summer uniform or coming to school in a shirt without a tie. SMT are aware of this discrepancy and have already purchased a stock of spare ties for children to borrow if needed. The PTA funded this purchase. Parents and school can work together to ensure uniform standards are upheld.

### **Discussion about Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy during lessons**

Parents were disappointed to discover that parts of the reading curriculum in class, particularly in Year 5 and 6, prompts discussion about 'magic and believing'. Recommended text for Year 6 includes a character who had an experience where the Tooth Fairy didn't come and they then questioned whether it was just the parents. The discussion in class which followed was child-led, centring on the tooth fairy and how others had also had parents who had forgotten. There was no planning in place to focus on this part of the text or have a discussion this way - it developed organically from children's contributions in class. Children also shared that they were in Year 3 and 4 when they realised these things were not real, and then the teacher talked to them about how important it was to believe in things and develop the imagination. Year 6 Teaching Staff say that in their experience most children have reached their own conclusion by Year 6. Consideration needs to be given to children feeling embarrassed or being teased when reaching secondary school if they do not know. School completely understands that parents would like to be the ones that have this discussion with their own child.

### **New Pedestrian Crossing on Poplar Road**

Parents have raised their concerns both via the PC and the school office about the location of the new zebra crossing. Previously manned by Rick Edwards, Lollipop Man, it is situated very close to the Mill Lane junction. Parents enquired whether the location had been discussed with school. The response has been that school were unaware of the Council's intention of putting a crossing there until Mr Edwards informed us of his 'forced' retirement. Mr and Mrs Edwards were welcomed into school for an assembly to thank Mr Edwards for his service to Dorridge School and the wider community.

### **Preloved Uniform Sales**

Parents are grateful for the opportunity to buy preloved uniform and would welcome more regular sales. There is a new Preloved Team of parent volunteers in place. They are catching up with email orders and organising a sale for next week.

PC and School Office can also assist.

### **TTRS Scores are being published in the Weekly News**

There are conflicting opinions over the renewed focus on Times Tables Rock Stars. Some parents are finding the competitive nature of this maths drive overwhelming and too competitive among peers and siblings. Other are of the view that there is nothing wrong with some healthy competition. The scores shared are simply about participation not achievement. Children are encouraged to 'have a go'. If every child in the class logs in they get 100%.

Each log in has a timestamp and it has been spotted that some children are on TTRS as late as 11.30pm – or could this be a competitive parent?! **Parents are also concerned about an increase of screentime at home and could parents be guided on the suggested frequency for TTRS use.** Response from SMT was that children only need a few minutes to practise and one a week is sufficient. Weekend if preferred. Times tables are also taught in class.

### **Dojo Prizes and Rewards**

There is generally really good feedback about Dojo and how the reward scheme is used. There has been a request via PC for the list of prizes for children and the reasons why children are given them to be shared with parents. Perception is that there is an inconsistent approach with prizes and some children are given a prize for effort rather than for points achieved. SMT responded by saying there is not a list of prizes, rewards vary across classes and year groups as they reflect the class's interests. If the list was set it would reduce impact. Prizes are supplemented by the teachers themselves out of their own pockets. They are not always physical prizes. Children may want to be rewarded by being allowed to wear their slippers in school all day or have lunch with their teacher. Dojos are awarded for reflecting the school values, effort and achievement.

### **KS1 Playground – are there any plans for something similar to the Hive in KS2 for the KS1 children?**

No. There are lots of structured activities for KS1 pupils, including role play, small world toys, jigsaws etc in the quiet area. KS2 Play Leads are also due to start every lunchtime, initially with Y2, to encourage children to play different kind of games. KS1 playground has recently had new activity trail markings on the playground. General feeling in school is that there is not a need for a Hive equivalent in KS1- children need to be encouraged to be running around, and enjoying the outdoor space.

### **Awareness about KS2 children changing for events and clubs**

Parents raised concerns around children getting changed in classrooms for events and clubs. Teachers and Sports Coaches will be reminded of the importance of closing blinds and doors when children are getting changed. Boys and girls need to be offered separate spaces.

### **Year 6 Substitute Teacher**

Parents with feedback about teaching staff should contact the Year leader directly by email. Individual concerns can be addressed by the teaching staff. PC is not the correct platform.

### **Can Lunchtime Football be banned in KS2?**

Parents of children who choose not to play football feel that they are isolated on the playground. School employs a Sports Coaching Team who organise activities at lunchtime. These will also include other sports, for example, basketball, skipping, 4 Square. If children would prefer not to get involved in sport they need to adapt, find something else to do and play with other children. This point may have been raised by a Year 4 parent. Year 4 is particularly 'boy heavy' so perception maybe that a lot of Year 4 children play football. This is tricky but unavoidable given the ratios of boys to girls. The Hive provides a quiet space for children who would prefer to read or do a craft during their break. Mrs Nankivell runs Choir Club at Lunchtime, Mrs Scott meets with the School Council and Mrs Brookson meets with the ECO Council. There is also a Girl Power Club open to some children.

### **Year 6 Goodnight Mr Tom**

A concern about the sensitive content in the story of Goodnight Mr Tom was raised by a Year 6 parent. Goodnight Mr Tom is part of the reading curriculum for Year 6 and has been for the during the past 20 years and continues to be. To support their learning children also watch the film. During the PC meeting parents were encouraged to consult the website for more information about Reading Lists and the English curriculum. On closer inspection some of these lists are in need of updating. Teaching staff and the school office are working together and in the process of amending the Reading Lists and updating the website.

### **Parents PG FILM Consent and Use of Films in the Curriculum**

At our school, films are sometimes used selectively and purposefully to support learning as part of a planned, age-appropriate curriculum. Teachers will put a note on Dojo to give parents the opportunity to contact school should they wish for their child not to be included when the class will be watching a PG film.

#### **Any film shown:**

- Has a clear educational purpose
- Is carefully matched to the age and maturity of the children
- Is previewed by staff in advance
- Supports learning in areas such as English, history, PSHE, values, and wellbeing
- Some films used with older pupils may carry a PG (Parental Guidance) rating. This means that while the content is suitable for children, some themes may benefit from adult explanation and discussion.

#### **In Key Stage 2, films are often used to help pupils:**

- develop empathy and emotional literacy
- understand historical events and social issues
- explore themes such as resilience, loss, courage, and moral choice
- engage deeply with high-quality texts studied in class

Sensitive themes are always handled thoughtfully and professionally, with opportunities for discussion and support. Where appropriate, parents are informed in advance, and alternative arrangements can be made if needed. We believe it is important to prepare children for the world they live in, helping them to build understanding, resilience, and compassion within a safe and supportive school environment.

School applies the rule of Loco Parentis, "in the place of a parent," referring to a legal concept where a person or institution assumes the rights, duties, and responsibilities of a parent for a minor, even if they aren't the biological or adoptive parent. This applies to individuals like teachers, guardians, or organisations like schools that are entrusted with a child's care, granting them authority to act in the child's best interest for their safety and well-being.

**Next meeting: Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at pm.**