

CALDERSTONES PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of meeting Wednesday 22 April 2009 – Resource room, Quarry Wing,
Harthill Road. 7.30 p.m.

1. Welcome and introductions

Minutes of previous meeting and Matters arising:

6(iii) Homework for lower sets/homework policy: Mr Davies to report back at next meeting on homework expectations for departments. Parents expressed concern that lower sets may not share the same expectations of homework as higher sets, also that homework varied greatly within, as well as between, departments. Mr Davies is keen to discuss this with staff, in order that there is more transparency and consistency.

2. Head's Report:

- i) The Head commended all those involved in the recent successful production of 'Bugsy Malone'. Pupils and staff had gained hugely from the sell out performances, in terms of confidence, relationships between year groups, and engagement. The 'Open the Door' company worked with the school, but a growing number of staff and pupils now feel confident enough not to depend as heavily on the company next year. It was especially good for public relations, as the 3 local feeder primary children had the play performed for them, as well as hundreds of parents and friends of the school. A couple of parents were concerned that the 'auditioning' required by the company may have been offputting and excluding for some children; however, the school will be able to modify and adapt all practices next year.
- ii) The Head reported a successful skiing trip to Austria. (These are announced in each year group's assembly).
- iii) Exam season is upon us. The Head announced the leave of absence arrangements for Years 11, 12 and 13, as well as year 9 timetable for tests.
- iv) A successful prom for Year 11 was being held at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool.
- v) Mr Davies reported that there were new staffing needs, in anticipation of departing staff. The school is presently fully staffed, but changes to Year Head roles for Years 12 and 13, as well as Year 8, were announced.
- vi) New Year 7 children will be welcomed into school on Wednesday 1 July 2009.
- vii) The new website for the school will be able to incorporate a Parents' Forum (new name for Parents' Association) page, and arrangements are in place for this.

3. Governor's Report: No Governor present

4. Parents' enquiries:

- i) **Graffiti worries:** last month's graffiti was an isolated incident, removed instantly and reported to the local authority. The graffiti appeared to have been done late in the night, on the school's outer wall, making it less likely it was a 'school-based' incident.
- ii) **Review of Pathway system.** In reply to one parent's request for review of the pathway system introduced for year 10 three years ago, Mr Davies and Mr Steel confirmed that the curriculum committee had studied the summer 2008 GCSE results with great care, to ensure that the system of Pathways 1, 2 and 3, was effective. Their findings report that the system was a success, as children in Pathway 2 seemed to work better with fewer GCSE's to cope with, and the increased time on Maths and English provided for in Pathway 2 has improved those children's overall success in these key areas. Other departments had expressed approval, as they had more time to engage with GCSE coursework in lessons, (now that students in P2 had fewer subjects, and therefore more timetabled time for their chosen subjects). Boys and girls in Pathway 3 were able to begin Modern apprenticeship schemes this year, and feedback from these vocationally based pathways was good, as children work between school and college.

One parent was worried about impact of the pathway system on children's esteem.

5. 200 Club Draw:

Winners for February and March were picked, and lucky winners will be informed by post.

6. **Social events:**

Parents present were keen to repeat the success of previous Calderstones Parents' socials. A number of options were discussed, with a Quiz being the favourite, although our regular venue of Sefton Park Cricket club is not available over high season. It was agreed that the secretary will ask for help and practical arrangements via email, to a greater number of parents, with a possible July date (post exams) in mind.

7. **Next meeting:**

Thursday 25 June 2009, 7.30 p.m. at Conference Room, Quarry Wing, Calderstones School, Harthill Road.