

## **Minutes of Inaugural meeting of The Mast Academy Trust Pupil Parliament**

**Date: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

### **Agenda:**

Updates from each school around the work they have been doing in the school council

Update for Mrs Walters, the Trust Operations Officer

Development of actions and priority steps as part of the development of recycling and eco-friendly schools

### **Updates from each school around the work they have been doing in the school council**

#### **Update from Scissett Middle School council:**

Met with catering manager – seen improvements in catering standards. Still some concerns over irregular portion sizes and packaging being used on waffles.

Met with a recycling expert and got some more information. Beginning to gather ideas about how to move forward with recycling

Met with the senior leader regarding rewards. School council collected views of pupils and instigated a vote to ensure the rewards reflect what pupils' value.

There are plans in place to introduce a wormery at school as part of the environmental management of food waste.

#### **Update from Birdsedge First School council:**

The council have created an outside 'calming area' for people who need some time out – ran by pupils.

School have developed the outdoor play area. There is now a new trim trail. There is also a compost and built up vegetable patches. School is welcoming hatching eggs this week and intend to raise the chickens at school in the chicken run.

#### **Update from Shelley First School council:**

School council ran an assembly yesterday to collect pupil ideas around the recycling discussion. The representative shared these ideas with the parliament.

Pupils discussed use of the outdoor area. They have a vegetable patch which they are able to access and use sometimes.

## **Update from Kirkburton Middle School council:**

Members explained how they are working democratically and that there are some final steps which need to happen. They have taken steps to discuss ways in which the selling of plastic bottles could be reduced. They have also been discussing opportunities to increase access for pupils to water fountains as part of this process.

## **Update from Mrs Walters:**

Mrs Walters introduced herself as the Trust's Operation's officer. She explained how she works with staff from the catering team and from the site team and was there to listen to their ideas and find a way forward. She explained that since the last meeting:

- There will be no plain water sold in bottles. Instead the catering team will be creating hydration station in the schools.
- The catering company will still be selling the flavoured water. This is due to business management.

Some discussion followed about the principles of ensuring a cost effective service and that loss of revenue would mean prices would need to go up. The parliament discussed some ideas such as increasing the cost to flavoured water to disincentivise people from buying it. The possibility of having dispensers was also raised as an option or switching to cans which are easier to recycle. Mrs Walters encouraged parliament to continue to look out for new ideas and said she would feed back to the catering manager.

- Paper wastage: Mrs Walters made some suggestions around considering if as well as trying to reduce paper usage, schools could look at the possible use of recycled paper. The parliament agreed this was worth looking at.

## **Development of actions and priority steps as part of the development of recycling and eco-friendly schools**

Parliament members had some time to consider the next steps and agreed the following:

**Building a wormery:** The parliament members discussed the possibility of creating wormeries to reduce the amount of food waste going into land fill. Where this was considered possible, council members agreed to take this back to school councils for further discussions. Parliament members may find the following links helpful:

[Why not have a wormery in your School garden | What to do this Term | School Zone | Gardening with Children](#)

[Eco-Schools - Build a Wormery \(keepscotlandbeautiful.org\)](#)

The parliament also discussed other ways to reduce food waste. One point of discussion was around inconsistent portion sizes in the canteen which can lead to increased waste.

**Increasing the amount of green bins/reducing black bin waste:** There was some discussion regarding the availability of green bins – particularly in outdoor areas. Discussion points included whether black outdoor bins should be removed and there should only be green bins – any further waste should be taken home. Parliament members agreed that waste brought from home or from local shops, was an issue as it is often non-recyclable. Members of parliament from Scissett Middle School agreed to write a letter to parents explaining the parliament’s work and outlining how families can help by reducing the amount of black waste coming into school. MPPs from Kirkburton Middle School agreed to create some information on the same topics for pupils. These will be shared at the next parliament meeting for consideration.

**Reducing paper waste:** There was some discussion about how paper waste could be reduced. MPPs are going to recommend signage near photocopiers reminding staff to keep paper wastage to a minimum by printing double sided and only printing when it is the best option. They also felt it was worth looking at the possibility of moving to recycled paper. MPPs have recommended that the Trust run an Art competition for pupils to create a piece of Art using ‘waste’ from school. The art piece should promote reducing waste in school or reducing energy usage.

### **Reducing energy use:**

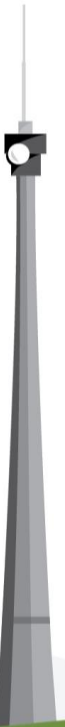
The parliament discussed the increased costs of energy and the cost implications for schools. They also discussed the environmental benefits of reducing energy usage. The parliament agreed this should be a priority. Some members said that in many rooms, they had automatic lights which were controlled by sensors and turned off automatically when someone left the room. They felt this was a positive. Other members talked about a loss of natural light in some rooms - in some cases following roof improvements. They felt it was important to identify these rooms and look at ways to increase natural light to prevent lights being turned on unnecessarily. There was also some discussion about whiteboards and projectors being left on all day and sometimes overnight. Could these be turned off at lunchtimes and at the end of the school day? MPPs decided it was worth launching a ‘turn it off campaign’.

Longer term members of parliament would like the Trust to look at renewable energy sources such as solar panels.

### **Actions:**

MPPs from SMS to draft a letter for parents on the work of the parliament and how parents can support my reducing the amount of black waste coming into school. A draft to be brought to the next meeting for consideration.

MPPs from KMS to create some information for pupils on reducing black waste - could be a leaflet or a mini PowerPoint. A draft to be brought to the next meeting for consideration.



Mrs Walters to meet with catering manager to feed back discussion points, and speak to business managers in school to look at the possibility of moving to recycled paper. Feedback to be given at the next meeting.

Mrs Greenough to launch Art competition and add renewable energy to Trust action plan. Art competition information to be sent out soon.

All MPPs to discuss the following in school councils and with school leaders:

- Signage around photocopiers to try and reduce paper wastage and explore the possibility of using recyclable paper.
- Increasing natural light where possible in darker rooms
- The possibility of a wormery to tackle food waste – if this is viable.
- Creating ideas for a 'turn it off campaign'.
- Look at the viability of providing more recycling bins

## **Pupil Charter:**

The parliament reviewed the minutes recording their recommendations for a Pupil Charter. They had no further additions.

Date of next meeting: to be agreed – it is anticipated this will be in May or June. The location will be Scissett Middle School.