

**SEND meeting summary: 09.02.23**

The meeting agenda was set by attendees and others who had some areas that they wanted to be discussed.

1)We began by discussing the whole class behaviour expectations and the importance of making sure that all children weren’t ‘punished’ for the behaviour of some. This is certainly not common practice and staff who attended all agreed that this should never be the case and that this message would be made clear to all staff. We also discussed the importance of making sure that children’s social time isn’t taken away (play times, golden times, etc) and that this should never be a blanket sanction.

2) It was raised that some of our children find it difficult to distinguish between shouting and being told something in a firm manner. We agreed that this was quite common and that there are a number of factors, which mean that some children will deem a staff member to be shouting when in fact they are just being firm. These often include children’s mindsets and levels of how safe they feel and how anxious they may be. We talked about how we could address this, and that perhaps teachers could be as blunt as saying that they are not shouting, but rather just have to tell things like it is at times. Children would perhaps appreciate this clarity.

3) It was raised that perhaps we could integrate the neurodivergent point of view a little more across the school and community. It was agreed that our children have lots of access through various support and resources such as wobble cushions, ear defenders, weighted blankets, chew necklaces, etc. and that our children are tremendously, respectful and understanding of people’s differences. However, it was pointed out that we could still normalise this further, especially perhaps when parents are present, by mentioning more often how some people, adults included, might find things a little bit too loud, or not like the feel of something, and have certain sensitivities that others might not. This is certainly food for thought in making sure that we all feel comfortable, perhaps less marginalised, and that our differences are merely differences that should be normalised rather than be ashamed or embarrassed of.

4) We discussed how beneficial it can be for subtitles to be on videos in order to normalise hearing impairment, but also to improve reading and provide an extra sensory stimulus for our children. We all agreed that this could have quite significant benefits and this will also be discussed with parents and with our IT technician.

5) It was asked whether children and parents could be advised when there are absences of staff and strikes were mentioned. It is incredibly difficult due to the nature of strikes to be able to plan and therefore be able to make children aware of what the changes are. However, it was agreed that there are circumstances where teachers are off on courses, etc. and so children could be made aware of these more readily. Furthermore, despite the difficulties of unplanned, absences and changes, messages can still get through to children and parents on things that might stay the same and maybe be a little bit different. This will be considered moving forwards and again discussed with staff.

6) We talked about midday assistants and consistency needed between practice at lunchtimes, compared to break times and children having clarity on when they can use balls, quiet areas, etc. It was mentioned that excellent discussions have been had with midday staff who showed good understanding of the needs of pupils and how to relate to them under the busy environment of the school playground. We also discussed other staff who come into school, such as music tuition teachers, etc. and that behaviour strategies might be more in line with whole school strategies. Discussions will be had with relevant people regarding this.

7) We talked about the importance of PE and raising heart rate where possible. This led to discussions on the different disciplines of PE and how it isn’t always aerobic based but sometimes anaerobic or strength and flexibility based. It was discussed whether the Daily Mile might be possible a little bit more often, and whilst there are challenges in a packed curriculum and timetable, there are ways in which our children can be more active, and this will be discussed with staff further.

8) We ended by discussing transitions at the end of the year. It was agreed that this is really important to negate any anxieties that children may have. We discussed how we can look at classes being sorted a little bit earlier and teachers and children having more time together before the summer holiday to get to know one another a little bit better. This can then be reinforced after the school holidays. We will be looking at this again closer to the summer.

The importance of making sure that there is real visibility of disability and SEN is something that needs to be talked about further. There is a culture of acceptance of children’s differences and uniqueness within school, but moving forward more can be done to raise the profile of that difference in uniqueness, including visitors and more visible role models. This will be discussed further and consolidated in Neurodiversity Celebration Week which is on the week beginning 13th of March.

As always, thank you to everyone who attended and contributed. If there are any inaccuracies in this summary, please do let us know.