

Minutes from school council meeting held on the 6th February 2025

Pupils in attendance – LNe, RPe, EBi, CPr, LMP, BHop. RCa, PWa, ACI, EMI

Apologies – TLA, JEv (offsite)

Staff in attendance – BBa,

Governors – N/A

Agenda (actions in red)

Welcome – Ambassadors Welcome, LMP, EMI and ACIa.

Previous actions

ICT – At the last meeting 24th May 2024, CPr class were still experiencing problems with their computers. All ambassadors reported the positive change in speed and accessibility.

RPe did say that there are many games that are now blocked but understood the reasoning.

BB took this opportunity to educate the pupils on the filtering and monitoring processes.

LN is the 1 ambassador who takes time to explore Elmwood School Website and was able to talk about policies (thank you Levi)

Staffing – Emotion Coaching was raised at the last meeting as EB felt new staff required some training.

Since this, all staff have accessed sessions with Lana Tolley (play therapist) who has supported us all to understand emotions further, to share details of the ‘window of tolerance’ which is now displayed within the nurture base; we have also had further emotion coaching training during our team teach days before Christmas and more recently, the ADHD foundation attended on the 27th January 2025.

Mrs Francis’s previous timetable changes also supported staff to learn from each other.

Timetable 2024/2025 supports resilience for pupils and prevents saturation as staff are moved around more rather than being assigned to one class all day. Pupils are managing change and are being exposed to more adults.

EB has noticed that all staff in nurture are now using emotion coaching language.

PE – Ambassadors noted Miss Diponio has now left. They were made aware of PE interviews. This allowed the ambassadors to share good practice. They discussed Mr Hawkes attention to detail and next steps and how this supported their learning within the subject of PE.

Mixed Group Teaching

Ambassadors are playing football with younger pupils within the school, and they are managing this well. Some pupils support younger pupils in bases academically.

Dawn – Do pupils want to be Under the Spotlight in the Newsletter?

This is now something that is a feature, but not all ambassadors were aware of the newsletter.

BB will support pupils to read the newsletter – a copy will be taken into each class by BB rather than pass to staff at briefing (Dawn will print the copies for BB)

Pupil Request

As RP felt the pupils sometimes used this time to get out of work. BB explained the new resources in nurture which are also being introduced into transition.

Pupil request is utilised, an organising activity (games in place) followed by a calming activity. BB spoke about regulation and co-regulation and the training from the ADHD foundation.

A sense of fairness

Assembly took place (Mr Cross) on our school values, this led to a discussion about pupil request and individual needs. Our school values are embedded, our interventions for each pupil may be different and this is ok.

Attendance

Last meeting PW had spoken about attendance and points; he was frustrated that someone is not automatically in rep. Ambassadors spoke about attendance having a reason, sometimes something may be out of a pupil's control – is it right to penalise a pupil if something is out of their control? Led to an interesting discussion.

Morning routine

Last meeting ambassadors spoke about the importance of exercise in the morning to support well-being.

Miss Diponio brought in activities which have continued in some form. This has been well received

Play therapy

TLA wanted the play therapy to take place in a different place due to noise – due to space, this cannot happen.

Today's Agenda

Presentation of work – how can it be improved? (LCr question to ambassadors)

All ambassadors acknowledged the consistency of handwriting and how this is well practiced however they do not always transfer the skill.

CP – I always ensure my final piece of work in English is written with pride; draft is less clear due to timescales and knowing he is will redraft.

RP – more praise in other lessons when presentation is good.

Subject teacher – spend a moment at the start of a lesson focusing language on presentation. Improvements to be celebrated.

Mentoring – focus can be academic to include presentation; staff can ask a pupil to show their best piece of work during the week.

Teaching Assistants – to review presentation as they sit with pupils.

Note – LN spoke about preparation for adulthood. He had enjoyed the lessons he was part of as Mrs Francis not only spoke about presentation of work but how you present yourself.

BB reiterated the importance of this. Gave example of applying for a job, the person interviewing may have seen you half an hour ago behaving a certain way.

BB also spoke about social media being checked when applying for a job and the importance of presenting yourself in the correct way when online (this created an interesting conversation)

Assembly – Mental Health (pupils)

LD asked me to speak with ambassadors about how the questions could be asked/presented.
Requires details before the end of March

RP, CP, EB and LMP are happy to present in front of the pupils – (BB emailed Mr Bowen to ask if he can combine this with some sort of Speaking and Listening evidence)

EM and ACL are happy to do a video with LD during mentoring.

LN has the questions and is happy to present.

RCa – will answer the questions (written form) and he is happy to share his answers with whole school if someone reads them out.

Possible Questions – Possible Questions:

How do Elmwood as a school look after your mental health?

What do you do to show care for self?

What do you feel Elmwood School could do to improve how we help pupils with their mental health?

How do you cope with situations that affect your mental health?

Are there any aspects of school that you find stressful or overwhelming?

How do you overcome obstacles or challenges at school?

What do you do to make you feel happy?

What do you do to make you feel calm?

Can you share a time when you felt supported by someone at Elmwood?

Can you describe a moment in school when you felt proud of yourself?

LN, RP, EB all spoke about how school go above and beyond to support mental health.

LN said he would like external agencies to experience MISP as this is so positive for pupils' well-being.

Geography

RCa - some of my class have found it difficult, it is new, and this is not only because it is Geography; my class take time to adjust to staff and new subjects, or anything that is competitive. I feel they are accessing it more and settling and contributing. Personally, I am enjoying it.

LN - I really enjoy Geography, and I want to take it as a GCSE. I am looking forward to knowing who from year 9 will join us. It is good to have knowledge from others and to see what they can

offer/contribute. I feel I excel in this subject. 1 pupil in the group has struggles with Geography however he is now engaged. LN thinks it was more a fear of the unknown.

Next Meeting

Ambassadors understood council meetings have been put on hold due to the change within the family support team which has restricted the time BB has had to conduct meetings. There have also been interviews which have impacted upon the time together as the ambassador's support with interviews. We have reached an agreement to have more meetings per term but short meetings, specific agenda focus.