



## **Dawpool C of E Parent Forum**

**Minutes: 25th February 2026 2.30pm**

### **Apologies:**

RA, JA, LB.

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- **Welcome from Helen Griffiths Headteacher**

Debbi Jeffry RPJ3 Group

- **Introductions of staff and parent representatives**

BR Yr1

AS: F2

KO: Yr3, F2

## **2. Parent Forum Overview & Policy Sharing**

- **Aims and objectives**

HG stated that The Parent Forum aims:

- To work in partnership with the school to create a welcoming school which is inclusive for all parents
- To promote partnership between the school, its staff, its pupils, PTA, Governors and all parents
- To develop and engage in activities which support the education, welfare and personal development of the pupils
- To identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils.

- **Roles and expectations of members**

HG shared the code of conduct from the Terms of Reference

HG stated that the Parent Forum will ideally be made of one to two representatives from each class.

Each term there will be a different topic for discussion with the purpose of collaboration to recognise positives and make improvements. HG will email over the Terms of Reference.

- **How feedback will be gathered and shared**

Parent Forum representatives will be given an agenda prior to meetings and their role is to gather the views of parents in their class.

Parent representatives will share positive feedback then questions or ideas for improvements.

### **3. School Meals – Whole School Overview**

- **Current school meals provision**

Following feedback from parents, HG shared that she had a meeting with the school catering manager and representatives from RPJ3 Facilities and Foodservice Consultancy. During the meeting the current menu was reviewed for nutritional value. As a result, changes have been made to the school menu which indicate the ingredients included for all meals in the hope that this provides parents with more nutritional value and information about food sources.

Parent representatives shared that this has been a positive and welcomed change.

Could the menu include photographs which are more reflective of the food?

DJ - absolutely. We will into taking photographs of the actual food which can be uploaded to the menus.

How often do the menus change?

DJ- school changes menus seasonally. The ideal is for children to design the menu - the most popular dishes become the menu cycle,

Could samples of menu dishes be given to the children, especially new dishes.

It was agreed this can be done. The possibility of classroom sessions for food education and children being involved in food preparation was discussed as a future plan. HG shared that the longer term plan is that children will be growing some of the food they eat at school.

### **Catering provider overview**

DJ shared the following information:

School catering has many agendas to fulfil. Including:

- Children have to eat and enjoy the food they are offered
- Nutritionally balanced to promote healthy eating and a balanced diet
- It has to be financially viable, balancing ingredient and menu choices with affordability

School does inhouse catering and menus are checked by RPJ3. Food served is predominantly: local, from the north-west, fresh products and cooked from scratch. The team provides safe, nutritious, healthy meals which are cost effective. It is important that the children enjoy their dinners and have a positive experience and that staff enjoy their job. Staff have to get to know individual personalities and preferences to build trust and relationships with children to encourage them to try new foods.

Key priorities each day are food safety hygiene and allergens.

Sadly money influences provision. School meals are under funded. School gets funding equivalent to £2.51 per child for school meals. The national cost of a school meal is £3.03, locally the cost is £2.96 so school have to subsidise.

## **4. Year Group Discussion: Positive Views/praise & Discussion Points (Discussion Prompts)**

- **What works well about school meals?**
- **What do children enjoy most?**
- **Positive feedback children share at home**
- **Accessibility and choice**

- **Any suggestions for further improvement**

## **F2**

A Google Teams link was sent to parents via WhatsApp. There were 10 responses out of 23.

### **Praise**

What do you feel works well with the current lunches?

- Salad bar
- Excellent variety, child enjoys lunch in daily basis and apparently the best part of school
- Recent changes whereby descriptions are more comprehensive has enabled conversation with my child regarding what meal they select
- Options of food
- Options of fruit
- No fizzy drinks
- Good selection of meals
- 100% meat being used
- A lovely range of fresh fruits
- Children seem to be excited to eat and I do feel like there is a genuine want to provide good options that the children will both eat and enjoy
- My child is a fussy eater so I like that they see their peers eating to encourage them to enjoy their food also
- My kids generally enjoy their school meals, and the options available. Having been along to the Valentine's

### **Feedback**

What improvements would you suggest?

Feedback of how much / if my child has eaten lunch.

This is difficult to do for every child. However if there is a medical need, or food needs monitoring then parents can contact staff and this can be arranged, If staff had concerns, they inform parents.

I think given the age of the kids in F2 it's hard for them to understand healthy choices. I think there should be the option for parents to choose the meals via an app so that we can choose and have discussions with them at home about what

the best choice for them is. Instead of just hearing they've had a cheese panini on repeat/Parent choice/Parents being able to choose meals on their child's behalf to ensure they don't eat the same meal every day.

School have just moved to Compass so this is a feature that could possibly be introduced as the software is rolled out. DJ explained that this can result in children not eating the food parents have selected for them.

I think the default drink option should be water, I don't agree that juice should be offered every day.

We want to ensure that children are hydrated but will look at ways to ensure sugar is reduced.

None - excellent choices for a primary school

Plain yoghurt with compote not flavoured yoghurt with artificial sweeteners

DJ said the removal/reducing sweet yogurt Easiyo yogurt will be introduced in the near future which is freshly made yogurt from cultures. Currently we also have Greek yoghurt as an option.

Clarification on sugar content in desserts. More awareness on salt content and %fat

This can be explored in menu enhancements.

Less food high in saturated fat / processed food ie sausage rolls and bacon topping and pepperoni on pizza

This can be explored in future menu plans. The bacon topping and pepperoni are currently an additional extra.

More complete meals like the curry and Bolognese. Home cooked/cooked from scratch meals

These are made in house and can certainly be added into menus. Batch cooking is important from a nutritional point of view. Food is cooked from scratch eg pizzas have a wholemeal homemade base with a sauce which again is homemade using lentils, tomatoes and vegetables.

More themed days to encourage kids to try food that they may not otherwise have access to .

We can look at the menu to incorporate a themed day per half term.

Would be great to have an opportunity to choose or at least see what menu choice was made - a 4 year old doesn't give the most reliable of feedback and there seems to be a way they can choose to have the same option from the deli like a panini or wrap every day.

We could look at offering these only once a week in Early Years.

Hot plain pasta available every day for fussy eaters

Pasta is available everyday and can be served warm or cold.

No added sugar cordial available to drink Branded ketchup 50% less sugar and salt Heinz (child suggestion)

Condiments are not currently branded due to costs however they are reduced sugar and salt.

I'm happy with the choices at the moment.

My kids would love to see the return of roast dinners. They always really looked forward to Wednesdays, and it is a great, balanced option. Also, they used to love salmon on a Friday as another option to fish fingers

This can be incorporated into the autumn/winter menu as with it warming up this is not usually as popular. Salmon was agreed to be added to the menu.

## **Y3**

### **Praise**

#### **What works well with school meals**

- Having the option of an on the day hot meal. Child is packed lunch but occasionally the wheels fall off in the morning so knowing she can have a hot dinner has been reassuring
- Already on the menu 'Home made cakes with added veg/ fruit' – excellent idea
- Attended Valentines lunch and the food was delicious, and the fruit was very nicely presented. We really appreciate it's an option- the boys do eat something each day.

- We appreciate that they can adapt some of the meals to allergies and they get some alternative puddings in for child when they can't have what's on offer.

### **What children enjoy most**

- Roast dinners – generally very well enjoyed
- Both kids have enjoyed the fish and chip Friday.
- Kids enjoyed the special meals that they had occasionally like mexican day
- American burger day
- Enjoy fish and chips, curry and paninis and some of the pasta dishes

### **Suggestions for further improvement.**

Choices are limited for children with multiple dietary requirements. Parent would like more access to gluten free meals and puddings. Suggestions - Bean burgers, veggie chilli, hidden veg pasta sauce etc. And more dairy free puddings. 'Despite what I've said re healthy eating, 7 year olds don't want fruit when her pals are having a biscuit or a cake. Can the biscuits or cakes be made dairy free'?

It would be good to have more meals available for those with allergies. It would be good to have a soy free alternative. If they stocked grated dairy/soy free cheese he would be more likely to have the pasta or they could easily do free-from alternative to pizza and cheese paninis. They could ask those with allergies for orders earlier that week to prevent waste.

We will look into this as they try and offer the same as the main menu.

The kids have paninis a lot. We don't mind this but our concern would be if they are having much salad/veg/fruit - whether anything automatically or if it's something that's offered as an extra and regularly turned down. Also whether there is much variety in what is offered as fruit, veg etc..

There is a range of different fresh fruit and veg offered daily. DJ suggested we could take paninis off the KS1 menu.

Parents would like the ability to choose for their children – to avoid them eating the same foods (everyday especially for the younger kids)

(See response above)

Perhaps vegetarian meals a few days/ week as a standard and plenty of the meals could be made vegetarian. Meat free days (Bean chilli; Lentil stew)

This could be incorporated into future menus and will be discussed with the catering team.

Alternative fish options rather than fish fingers e.g salmon

(See response above)

Don't need the salty bacon topping on the mac and cheese

Many children enjoy this optional extra but it could be removed.

Tortilla chips (are they unsalted) ? fat content

They are unsalted.

Fibre content – can we use wholegrain rice/ pasta / bread as the norm/ wholegrain crackers; 50/50 bread

DAJ said Wholegrain/brown rice will be tried on the menu,

Pizza – Mozzarella cheese - lower fat content ? salt content of this meal

Nutritional values for the weekly menu are within guidelines.

Dairy free pudds which are also high fibre e.g flapjacks/ added nuts and seeds (linseed/ chia seeds) ; Oat cookies

We are not able to add nuts and seeds due to allergies however we can explore ways to increase fibre in puddings.

Crudités for deli bar

This is already available. Selections change regularly.

Choose low salt sauces/ gravy etc

This already happens.

### Other parent comments

I struggle a bit with the claim they are a healthy eating school, with a healthy lunch box policy yet it isn't to my knowledge monitored or encouraged. My kids

don't eat much UPFs so I get nagged that so and so have crisps and chocolate biscuits in their lunch box so why can't I.

We will be reviewing packed lunches.

At the Valentine's lunch the child was asked if they would like Veg – perhaps veg should come as a standard

We have to be careful not to put children off eating. Children are always encouraged and gently persuaded.

Alternative themed days 'hummus and breadsticks/ chopped veg with dips (salsa/ soured cream) or starter rather than puddings along with cheese and crackers

This is a good idea. We have a themed day coming up for World Book Day. For future themed days we could offer a starter rather than desert.

Encourage children to try other fruit and veg in the classroom – Year 3's making their own sandwiches – encourage them to taste foods that they might not usually have access to.

This is something we are already planning so that children have the opportunity to try new foods. The design technology curriculum also allows opportunities for this.

Parents don't know what their children have to eat during wrap around care.

School Food Guidelines apply After School Club. We can provide menus for the After School club.

## **5. Next Steps & Future Forum Priorities**

- **How feedback will be used**

Feedback will be shared with the catering team and used in menu reviews with RPJ3.

- **Discuss possible future discussion themes**

- **Confirm communication methods**

Minutes, agenda and terms of reference will be added to the school website. This will be published in the Dawpool News.

**6. Any Other Business**

**7. Close and Thank You**