

8th December 2014

Dear parents and carers,

As mentioned to you in the letter dated 14th November from Robert Neill (Chair of Governors who is currently out of the country), it was a condition of planning permission being granted, for the change of use of 11, Solebay Street from a warehouse to a two-form entry primary School, that within 3 months of the school opening (i.e. by 9th December 2014), we review, complete and submit to the local planning authority the School's Travel Plan (STP).

The STP covers a number of initiatives concerned with encouraging safe and healthy means of travel, in particular initiatives to encourage pupils to walk, cycle and use public transport and to reduce the use of cars to travel to and from School. This is necessary to comply with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets' [LBTH] requirements and Government policy.

Also part of the STP has involved re-examining all of the risks associated with: (1) the current drop-off and collection arrangements and (2) drop-off and collection at the School's entrances.

During this process we have met on three occasions a group of parents and carers and have listened to their views and we have received a petition signed by a number of you. We have met Local Authority officers responsible respectively for School Travel Plans and for Transport & Highways (one meeting with the officers was attended by the group of parents and carers) and we have talked to rangers in Mile End Park. We conducted surveys involving pupils and staff respectively and we have received your written comments regarding any travel or transport issues, for which many thanks. We have met with the local police, representatives of local businesses and residents' associations, contacted the Head of Arts and Parks at Mile End Park and carried out significant research.

Two risk assessments for drop off and collection either in the park or at School have also been completed. Both include steps that can reasonably be taken to reduce any of the identified risks.

I can report that the Local Governing Body [LGB], which now includes 3 Governors who are parents, met and approved our finalised STP and risk assessments, after long and detailed discussions at our specially convened meeting held on Wednesday 3rd December.

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The drop off and collection arrangements option selected was to continue with our present system in the park but we will continue, in liaison with LBTH, to implement further measures to mitigate any areas of concern that remain outstanding. Our decision took into consideration the two risk assessments, all of the consultations mentioned above and other extensive research that has been carried out. As mentioned in correspondence previously, the safety of our pupils, your children, is paramount and was at the forefront of Governors' minds when making this decision.

This plan will now be submitted to the local planning department for final approval.

The constituent parts of a working party were also agreed on Wednesday. This will be formed of pupils, staff, parents / carers and Governors and specifics as to how these places will be filled will be discussed at our next LGB meeting taking place on 15th December. The role of the working party will be to ensure that the details of our STP are successfully implemented; we monitor its success and outcomes, will communicate this to interested parties and revise the plan accordingly as needs be.

A meeting with parents and carers will be arranged for January, the precise date and time to be agreed at our meeting being held on 15th December, to explain all of this in more detail and to give you all the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns that you might still have.

In the meantime, if you would like a copy of the STP &/or the risk assessments please contact the school administration office who will be happy to assist. These documents will also be published on the school website, www.solebayacademy.paradigmtrust.org, in due course.

Yours faithfully,


Jeff Martin
Vice Chair of Governors