

BSPS SCHOOL COUNCIL REPORT

The School Council (SC) met on 31 October 2017. We were joined by 12 parents who asked to attend the SC meeting in order to discuss a letter sent to SC on 26 October 2017, which was co-signed by a group of parents. That letter outlined parent concerns over the outsourcing of the Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) program to Camp Australia.

The visitors spoke about their disappointment with the SC's decision-making process. They also pinpointed some specific apprehensions about the chosen provider, Camp Australia.

SC explained why the decision had to be made quickly and the process it undertook in coming to its unanimous decision (to outsource the operations of OSHC to Camp Australia). The decision was made after extensive and robust discussions within SC. Most of the parent members of the SC have children enrolled in the OSHC program and ultimately everybody wants the same result: the best possible OSHC service for our children at BSPS, and one which does not detract from the core functions and responsibilities of BSPS's teachers and leadership staff.

In relation to the negative press about Camp Australia that has caused some consternation among parents, SC assured the visitors that it sought information about Camp Australia from the Department of Education and Training. SC also trawled through a large amount of quality ratings published on ACECQA's website and made enquiries to other schools using this provider. Furthermore, SC asked Camp Australia to respond in writing to the concerns about the allegations against them. In the end, SC was satisfied that, on balance, and having thoroughly considered the options and the evidence, it was appropriate in the circumstances to outsource the OSHC operations to Camp Australia.

Following the SC meeting, we held two events at BSPS at which representatives from Camp Australia attended to answer questions from parents and carers:

- ◆ An extraordinary OSHC sub-committee meeting on 9 November at 6.15pm; and
- ◆ A general information and Q&A session on 14 November at 6 pm.

SC wishes to take this opportunity to clarify the following points for all parents and carers who may be considering enrolling children in the OSHC program:

- 1.** Our contract with Camp Australia is for 12 months. At the end of that period, there is an option to renew the contract for three years or to terminate it. Renewal will be dependent on a review and we invite all interested parties to be actively involved in that review.
- 2.** It has always been a top priority for SC that our highly valued OSHC staff be retained as much as possible. It was critical to our decision that Camp Australia made offers of employment to all existing staff which were on no less favourable terms than what the staff currently had. However, ultimately no one can be forced to accept a position with a different employer – every person has the right to choose what's best for them.
- 3.** The OSHC sub-committee will continue to run and will be responsible for monitoring the program. A report will be prepared in the middle of next year to assist the review process. Parents that have an interest in becoming involved with supporting and overseeing the program are encouraged to join the ongoing OSHC sub-committee.
- 4.** Camp Australia's operations at BSPS commence next Monday, 4 December 2018.
- 5.** There will be **no** increase to before-care and after-care fees (other than CPI)
- 6.** There will be a holiday program at BSPS from Monday, 15 January 2018 until Thursday, 25 January 2018.

In future we intend to publish a SC report following every SC meeting in order to keep everyone abreast of the issues being discussed. In the next newsletter, we will go through the key activities of each of the sub-committees.

We are always happy to have visitors attend SC meetings. If you would like to come and observe a meeting, please email us via the school.

***Warm regards to all, Gabrielle Marchetti
on behalf of all the SC***