

Parent Forum Minutes-18.11.21

In attendance

School

Mrs Luck-Davies (HT)

Miss Page (DHT)

Governors

Mrs Newman (CoG)

Mr Halliday (VCoG)

Parents

Mrs Sartori

Mrs McCarthy

Mrs Heath

Mrs Easey

Mrs Tagliavini

Mrs Hunt

Mrs Farrington

Mrs Bannister

Mrs Leeks (emailed in items for discussion)

GoRead App

TS queried the use of the GoRead app and it's suitability for all families to access. Could parents use a written reading log?

Mrs Luck-Davies felt that feedback from a lot of parents regarding the GoRead app had been very positive and had reduced paperwork at home. The app also helps to reduce teacher work load in the classroom and makes the management of checking reading at home much more streamlined. The preference as a school would be to use the app wherever possible. However, if any families were really struggling to manage the app at home and log reading - a compromise could be reached by contacting the class teacher and discussing it further.

Other parents were happy with using the app and discussed its benefits. CM highlighted that despite taking time to get used to it- she was finding it a helpful tool.

BL- via email- liked the app for logging books and it only takes 30 seconds of time to log on and update. 'Less paperwork in the house, the better'.

Most parents agreed that reading ribbons and extra playtime were a good incentive to encourage children to read more.

Discovery class- thanks

CM passed on her thanks to Mrs Luck-Davies for stepping in to teach Discovery during the summer term and also now teaching in Pippin class. Feedback from children was very positive. Parents appreciated the continuity and security of having known school staff to teach the children during a time of uncertainty.

School Trips

TS asked about school trips and whether they would be resuming. MLD said that it had been more difficult than first thought for the usual school events to be up and running again as normal. The children has enjoyed the Little City/VR and art sessions delivered in the summer term. A whole school panto trip has been booked (courtesy of FOBS) for December. Looking forward to the new year to hopefully look into more trips out.

Discussion was had around the Christmas play/Christingle and whether parents would be invited to watch. MLD said that unfortunately audiences would not be invited into the school and the moment and the school is erring on the side of caution. Performances would be filmed (wherever possible) like last year and put into the website.

GH praised the school on being the only school in the local area not to have not yet suffered a COVID outbreak. She and others in the meeting thanked the school staff for keeping everyone safe.

Reports

JL queried whether reports could have more personalisation to them. Discussion around including more elements of personalisation to reflect personality of children. MLD explained how the report cards worked and why certain information was included in each report/ keeping the information sent to parents as up to date as possible - all whilst keeping work load for teachers manageable. The statutory requirement is that parents only need to receive 1 annual report per academic year.

Mrs F commented that from her previous experience in another school, Bradfield 'go above and beyond' their reporting to parents and allowed parents to pick up quickly if there were any issues that needed dealing with quickly. Other parents were in agreement.

Parents highlighted that the last report of the year has more detail included, they were happy with the reports and the information included.

Parents Evening

Appreciation shared by parents regarding the way the school had been conducting parents evenings (during lockdown and now back in school). Parents thought that all staff knew their children very well. Teachers were praised for accommodating parents different needs - telephoning where necessary, catching up with missed appointments/ job share teachers meeting together etc. Parents would like to continue with the 'hybrid' model of virtual/face to face meetings in the future.

New staff

Appreciation for Mrs D'Silva-Cocker highlighted by CM and other parents - really happy with her appointment - 'came at the right time, with the right attitude and hit the ground running'. Children are very happy, she is lovely, down to earth and listens to issues, really understanding of being a parent'. A well done expressed by parents to MLD for recruiting her during a difficult time.

School communications

Discussion around how to keep parents informed of what is going on in school. Reminders for Poppy/Pudsey money/lunch menus-week etc./school photos. Termly diary dates are on newsletter, agreed it would be helpful for parents to include weekly lunch menu. Look at ways to share dates etc. with parents - utilising Parentmail- but being mindful of staff workload and the time taken to do this on a regular basis. Newsletter- parental query about content. MLD explained that the newsletter was dual purpose- it is shared with children as part of the Celebration Assembly each week-and is then sent home to parents. Children enjoy the league tables and the level of healthy competition it encourages. EP reminded parents that MLD writes the content of the newsletter on a weekly basis and that she had been teaching in class for the past 3 weeks. Workload of staff has to be considered. Parents discussed the use of Tapestry in EYFS - very impressed with the content and being able to see what their children are doing in school.

Sports/PE

TS-Sports coaches are amazing and children love the variety of sports offered. This is money well invested- coaches are kind, professional and young. Children are engaged in the sessions. General parental agreement on this point. Children have come home enthused by the different activities going on in school- loved the Bollywood dancing led by Mrs Nugent (with boys and girls being equally interested). Forest School remains very popular amongst the children. Mrs D'Silva Cocker's dance sessions in the hall- children absolutely loved. Parents queried when children would be going back to sporting event. MLD explained that these events have been impacted by the COVID restrictions in place now for the past 20 months. Squash for KS2 children is now happening. Discussion had on how children are chosen for sporting activities. In Squash children are chosen by the coaches- they are looking for talent and general attitudes and behaviour. Swimming was discussed- MLD clarified that swimming would take place in the summer term. Priority would be given to those children who could not yet swim 25m (which is the minimum requirement at the end of KS2). The reasoning behind this is due staffing limitations/ cost and pool availability. Parents would receive information nearer the time. MLD highlighted the difficulty the school has in booking a time slot for swimming and competition for spaces is high because of the number of schools wishing to use Dovercourt swimming pool. Mrs Harfield is continually attempting to organise swimming. Discussion on using kit for sports events.

Lunch Menu

Parents very positive of the new menu choices and children were looking forward to the foods available.

School timings

Discussion was held around school timings and the recent change in KS2.

MLD clarified that KS2 now had 45 minutes for lunch - which is in keeping with timings of many other Primary schools. The timings have changed to accommodate being able to deliver the considerable expectations of the newly adapted KS2 curriculum.

Children in KS2 have a lunch break from 12.15-1.00. In this time they have an initial 15 minute play outside, in for lunch at 12.30. They are free to leave the dinner hall at any time once they have finished eating to go back outside to socialise.

Organising lunch in this way also benefits the youngest children. They have a more settled and less stressful time at lunch and are not so overwhelmed by the presence of the older children.

School Therapist

BL highlighted (via email) what a 'huge asset'- Kathy (Nurture Room) is to the school and that it is 'a great thing that the school have recognised the importance of improving mental well-being among the pupils'.

School Trip Instalments

BL (emailed) what a great idea paying in instalments is and a good way to spread the cost for parents.

Agenda items for next meeting- Thursday 16th December (9.00am)

Homework

Open Door

Non-pupil days