



Parent Forum Meeting

Autumn Term - 27th September 2016

Present: *Kirsty Taylor, Amy Conway, Helen Walbank, Kimberley Yardley, Deborah Halliwell, Jennifer Dixon, Kaye Gray*

Item 1: Parental Inclusion

- Discussion regarding timings of Harvest/Christmas performances concluded that there was not one 'winning' solution to fit all parents/carers and that school tried to meet the needs of the majority.
- It was queried whether all performances could be held in one day – this would be impractical due to the timings of the school day, e.g. dinner times, break times. It may also be difficult for parents with younger children and no childcare arrangements, if they have numerous children in different year groups and needed to attend consecutive performances. It was also noted that while the order plays may suit some parents due to the classes their children are in, it may not suit others.
- There was the suggestion of holding fewer performances so there were not too many evening performances – unfortunately, due to pupil and parent numbers, the size of the hall and health/safety, we could not combine the upper and lower Junior performances and ensure all children had a sufficient role.
- Reasons for holding performances during school time rather than in evenings were outlined: children with pinnacle roles failing to attend during previous evening performances; children being too tired due to late nights; the wellbeing and safety of staff who already work considerably long hours after school and some who live a significant travelling distance from school; the important use of teacher time outside of school on tasks which will benefit the children's learning and experience in lessons.
- The school used to hold two performances for each key stage (one during the day and one in the evening) but this was too onerous for the children, who became fed up and didn't enjoy it, and also the staff.
- School appreciates that school-time events/performances are difficult for working parents, which is why we give as much notice as possible, e.g. Christmas performance dates being sent out in September.
- School used to record performances and so absent parents could still see them, but times have changed and we have several pupils who are not allowed to share images of themselves, hence no longer making this a viable option. 'Tapestry' was suggested (a resource used in Early Learners and other Early Years settings) – Mrs Gray will look into this. It provides secure group access for members only.
- Parents were asked if there were any other ways the school could be more inclusive of them and whether there were any ideas they had seen in other settings which worked well. A discussion regarding injury slips was held – it was clarified that our policy is that if there was an accident which was out of the 'norm' occurred (e.g. not a minor



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graze from a football skid) in which a child received a visible wound, parents were phoned to alert them. Mrs Gray will remind staff of this policy. School does not send home injury slips (apart from the Reception Class) as these can be lost and seem impersonal when involving a hurt child. Parents asked whether Parent Mail, which they held in high regard, could be used as way of alerting them if staff couldn't make contact via phone – Mrs Gray will ask the office staff whether this is possible. Feedback from Class Dojo, which is being used in Year 4, was really positive and parents with children in other classes, voiced they would like this as a way of hearing about how their child is getting on in school as well as seeing it as a good way to encourage positive behaviour. It was commented that the school has a good 'open door' and it is 'very inclusive.'

Item 2: Parental Code of Conduct

- The purpose of a 'code' was discussed – support for all parties: parents, children and staff – and it was explained that many schools within the cluster have adopted/are adopting one. It was noted that we are fortunate to have a supportive relationship between school and home but that a 'code' would provide a useful point of reference if an issue was to arise.
- Discussion over the title used concluded that 'agreement' or 'partnership' were more positive than 'code of conduct.' It was noted that the school has a warm, family-like feel, which should be reflected.
- Samples from local schools as well as those further afield were circulated and discussed. Parents preferred the bullet point format which they felt was concise and more likely to be read/absorbed. Parents preferred the positively worded document which focused on 'dos' rather than 'don'ts.'
- Discussion about social media took place and how difficult it is to 'police' this. It was suggested that a clearer explanation regarding the use of photos could be given as some parents may not realise it is for the safety of some children – perhaps this could be included in the literature distributed to new parents/carers entering the school/the home-school agreement? Discussion about the use of social media to air complaints was raised – this has happened when the individual posting comments has made no attempt to raise and resolve the issue with a member of staff in school which is unconstructive and hurtful. The possibility of a post box was considered so that parents could post issues, but after further discussion, it seemed that the school's open door ethos made it clear to parents they could approach/telephone staff if they wanted to.
- Discussion regarding dogs on the school grounds took place – previously, it had been arranged so that dogs are tied up in the fenced area at the front of the school to avoid a congregation at the entrance of the gates. However, some children now use this area to store bikes/scooters. The possibility of dogs being tied up around the corner was suggested – Mrs Gray will look into this.