

Parent Forum – Meeting Minutes
14th October 2016 9am

Attendees:

Fiona Adams (FKA)
Lou Trim (LT)
Sheila Slattery (SS)
Karen Richards, Chair of Governors (KR)
Hannah Rook (HR) (Minute taking)

Also attended:

Gill Ewing (GE)
Debbie Ursell (DU)
And parents

Aim:

To meet with parents to discuss any issues and look at new ways of working together for the benefit of the school community as a whole. This forms part of the Ofsted focus area, to develop parental engagement and community input. These forums will be termly and findings will be communicated to parents via the school website.

Focus Areas highlighted by parents as per survey distributed to parents prior to the forum:

School Travel Plan – Road safety

Break/Lunch time activities – Are there sufficient activities for children who don't want to play football?

Assembly/Prompt finish – regular late finishing

KS2 Reading – How do parents support KS2 readers?

Children Eating Lunch in classrooms – is this essential?

Tapestry – Is this something we can get across the whole school?

Head Injury – Head injury bracelets/new ways to communicate injuries

Pick up calls – How to communicate changes to pick up protocols

Mixed-age classes – How does this advantage the children?

Tapestry - use for after-school clubs?

Rise and Shine

Early Morning Reading

Giving children more responsibility

Communication – what are the best ways to communicate with parents?

Attendance

School Travel Plan

Parking remains to be an issue for the school and of significant focus for us all. Desi Llaneza-Brown (a parent in attendance at the Forum) has kindly volunteered to join the STP and will be responsible for reporting issues directly to our local PCSO/Hampshire Police. The School Travel Plan team is also made up of:

Sarah Pitt – Responsible for communication with Council

Gill Ewing – Responsible for communication with School/Parents

Over the past few months, the STP Team have requested two things from the council:

- 1) Additional yellow lines in the immediate vicinity
- 2) Improvement to virtual pavement

The yellow lines are the priority to the council but this is a slow process and will take time. This will need to go to consultation with the neighbours.

The STP Team are looking into the possibility of shared driveway parking. However, there are insurance implications which need to be clarified.

We urge parents to continue to report those who park inconsiderately. This year's Junior Safety Team will be up and running soon.

We would like to mention that neighbours have commented on the improvement to the situation and the reduction in parking issues. Longfield Road residents have also commented on the noticeable improvement. The office also noted that we haven't had any neighbour complaints for several months so would like to thank parents for being considerate of our neighbours.

Break/lunchtimes

A parent had questioned what activities there were for children who were not interested in playing football/running around.

It is proven that occupied children are more engaged and better behaved. Running and football are popular at break time but the school fully appreciates that not all children have an interest in this and some may not have the confidence to ask to join in.

We have an excellent lunchtime supervisory team who provide a wealth of activities, both physical and of a quieter nature. Activities on offer include (but are not limited to) the following: Hoops, ball games, zip wire, teddy bears picnic, chalk pavements, art and craft, car and train sets, Lego, board games, den building, books and even playing with cardboard boxes (used to create forts, schools and any other role play)! There really is something for everyone.

A survey was carried out to pupils recently on how they rated lunchtime and 100% rated it very good or excellent.

The lunchtime team have requested more bouncy hoppers, matting and giant Jenga which are all now available. The next item we are looking at is a sandpit. We even have a shoe lace tying activity going on where children receive a certificate once they have learnt to tie their shoe laces!

We would always welcome any further ideas from parents and pupils...and donations are always welcome!

Assembly/Finishing on time

The school accepts that sometimes we do run over time for assembly which then makes the pupils late out of their classroom and for this we apologise. In future we will ensure that we finish assembly on time so that children can be let out promptly at the end of the day.

KS2 Reading

A parent asked for details on how to support KS2 Reading, following the extensive support required in KS1.

The teacher hears your KS2 child read every week and will challenge them with a level that is slightly above their reading capabilities in order to stretch them. At home, they should be reading for pleasure. If more than 1 error in every 10 words occurs then the book may be too difficult. All children should be reading to an adult every night.

Children eating lunch in classrooms

As a school, we appreciate that this isn't ideal but unfortunately due to space constraints, it is absolutely necessary. We try our best but we are limited due to space and supervision levels

required across all areas. Playtime is an essential part of the children's day so we stagger lunchtime so everyone has space and time outside to run around, play with their friends and burn some energy.

Tapestry

A parent asked if it was possible to have Tapestry updates across all year groups. Unfortunately this is not possible due to cost and time constraints. Mrs Adams mentioned the possibility of using a Twitter on a wider scale but this wasn't of interest to the parents in attendance at the Forum.

Head injuries

A parent suggested the use of head injury bracelets (something that they saw in another setting). We now use labels on collars and a red letter goes home for any head injuries. The bracelet is something that we will look into but we are concerned that head injuries may be seen as "appealing" if it meant a bracelet was given! Mrs Adams suggested a stamp on the hand (which would then be seen at any after school clubs, where a change into PE/sports kit is required) and the parents were very keen on this idea.

Action : School to look into the cost of bracelets and any impact there may be with the use of stamps (some parents may not be happy for this to be used on their child).

Pick up calls

A parent questioned the procedure for changes to pick up protocols and what we do if we do not recognise a person picking up a child.

We ask that all changes to pick ups are communicated to the office by telephone, email or in person by midday. Where possible, please advise the teacher on your child's door. If a change to pick up is made by phone, if the office do not recognise the voice, we will ask for the name of the child and confirmation of other personal details that we have on file..

If the person picking up has never been to the school, we request that they come to the office with identification and we will escort them to the child, or request that the child is brought to the office for collection.

We would like to point out that teachers are very on top of this and always ensure children are handed over safely.

Mixed-age classes

A parent questioned how mixed-age classes work.

The new National Curriculum English and Maths are both set for mixed-age classes. The teachers pitch the work to different ages and abilities very well. Children are up-levelled across the school so everyone is challenge beyond their capabilities when appropriate. Those lower ability children are seen as striving to meet their targets and those with higher abilities look at depending their knowledge. Teachers and TAs are continually assessing work and children get feedback all the time. At least 3 levels or differentiation are available in each lesson to cover all abilities and sometimes more.

Those in Year 3 with higher ability are more challenged as they can do Year 4 work and the same in Y1/2 and Y5/6. The children of higher ability enjoy helping the younger ones and the younger/lower ability children are encouraged to strive to the next level.

Tapestry at After-school clubs

A parent asked if this was possible. Unfortunately this is not possible due to time and cost constraints. School club leads are always happy to give feedback and the parents at the forum were happy with this and do not feel anything else is needed – if there were an issue, parents are confident that this would be communicated efficiently.

Rise and Shine

A parent expressed a concern with Rise and Shine and the procedure for allowing entry into children's classrooms. Although pupils are allowed into class at 8.40 every other day, on Wednesdays, until recently, pupils were not allowed entry into class until 8.50. However, we appreciate that this is not always convenient to working parents so have changed the procedure. If you are a working parent who needs to drop off at 8.40, your child will be allowed to go into their class (Upper Juniors can remain on the playground as they are deemed responsible enough to do this) and a "Move and Groove" session will be provided in one of the classes for their year group.

The main problem that we have with Rise and Shine is children being reluctant to join in...because their parents don't like to join in! Some children aren't keen on being watched so please support us and get involved!

A parent asked if it was possible for Rise and Shine to be at a different time (i.e. After school) on occasions but unfortunately this is not possible due to other clubs. It is successful in the mornings and has a strong sense of community feel and is a popular initiative. A parent asked if it was possible for parents to come in to take part in the Daily Mile with their children and Mrs Adams will look into this.

Action: Mrs Adams to look into adult participation in the Daily Mile.

Early morning reading

A parent asked if it was possible to come and read with their children before or after school in the school environment.

Reading is a huge priority for the school and we are always keen to encourage reading.

Mornings are difficult due to other clubs taking place and a lack of space. Afternoons could be a possibility and we may be able to open the library to parents and children for reading and book changing at the end of the school day. It may be of interest to some parents, more for KS1 but it could be a little chaotic with siblings too!

Mrs Adams stated that we still need more parent volunteers to read with pupils in class every day. Sessions are.....with the possibility of afternoons if mornings are difficult.

Action: look into after school reading

Giving children more responsibilities

A parent asked if children could be given more responsibility.

We were very surprised by this as children are given lots of different responsibilities, both of a low level nature and more responsible roles where appropriate. We encourage all children to take on responsibility as this improves confidence.

Communication

Mrs Adams spoke to the parents regarding communication and the issues we face as a school regarding parental engagement. We have tried all forms of communication but struggle to ever get more than a handful of responses. The parents at the forum were surprised by this and suggested class reps in order to have a parent point of contact for each class group.

A parent suggested that there is possibly a lack of understanding on what role the Governors play within school and therefore parents may be reluctant to answer surveys. A parent suggested no news is good news and that if parents weren't happy, they would tell us.

The parents at the forum are happy with the level of communication received from the school in the form of newsletters and emails and would rather receive reminders than not at all. The reminders are important as people aren't always in a position to write down important dates if they open the newsletter on their phones, whilst on the move so we will continue with these.

A parent questioned whether we can monitor the number of "hits" to assess the number of people who read the newsletter. This will be looked into but it's unlikely as this is stored as a page *within* the website.

We will shortly be launching our school app where information can be accessed - the parents at the forum were very happy with this new development.

Action Look into monitoring the number of hits on the newsletter

Attendance

Mrs Adams stated that this remains our biggest issue as a school. For example, you are a girl at Hordle Primary, you are 8 times more likely than National Average to be a persistent absentee. If you are an FSM pupil, you are 5 times more likely. Girls absence, in particular, remains our top priority. Catching up missed learning is very difficult and leads to children losing confidence. Mrs Adams wanted to explain to the parents that morning sessions in school are the most critical to learning – mornings are where key English and Maths learning takes place and when this is missed, pupils struggle.

This area is something that we most need to communicate to parents if we are to improve on these areas.

Summary

Parents at the forum felt that it was a positive and useful experience. They feel that they get a good level of communication from the school and that the school team knows their children well. The forum is a good tool for discussing ideas and concerns in a constructive manner and would encourage other parents to get involved.

Meeting ended at 11.20am