

Parent Forum 14.10.2016

Welcome to Mrs Wilde who joins as a member of the teaching faculty. Mr Tomson hopes to have a member of staff attending at all parent forums from now on. Welcome to Mrs Acheson who joins as Y3 representative. Mrs Goodson now moves to represent foundation. Our thanks to Mrs Timman who left parent forum at the end of last year and Mrs Stevenson who is no longer able to attend.

Apologies from Mrs Bockmuehl and Mr Mole

In attendance:

Mr Tomson

Mrs Wilde

Mrs Arnott (staff governor)

Mrs Goodson (Foundation)

Mrs Ghose (Y1)

Mrs Trew (Y2)

Mrs Acheson (Y3)

Ms Reddington (Y4)

Mrs Kirkwood (Y5)

Mrs Siddall (Y6)

Points Discussed

1. School goes paper-free (in progress)

School is investigating ways to be more paper free including sign up via school gateway for parents evening slots, clubs and hot meals. School will post these things as items to be bought for 0p (zero payment options) on school gateway. Parents welcomed this idea, in particular acknowledging that this would give parents a receipt for sign up. Mr T stressed that for clubs parents would register a preference only as clubs would then need to be allocated fairly and with ratios in mind.

Parents stressed how keen they are on grouping all school communications into one Friday update. Some parents would like more info in the main body of the email and less applications to open. It was suggested that read only things should be put in the body of the email and attachments be reserved for things that require action.

Parents raised concern that the school would not be paper free if the parents were required to print things at home and this can cause problems for some people. Mr T agreed that if something required printing it should be sent home in book bags.

Mr T explained that there was also the option of notifying parents of things by text but this would cost the school – it is something they are willing to explore if parents think it would be helpful.

2. Matters Arising From Parents Evening

Mr T apologised on behalf of the school for the confusion that was caused to some parents over parents evening and clubs. There was a misunderstanding over which site was offering early or later appointments on a given day. In light of this the school is now pushing forward with online bookings of future parents evening. Mr T expressed his thanks to all those who were able to juggle things at the last minute to support changes to times and stressed that all children were kept safe and looked after despite the confusions. Mr T also requests that parents do not book the same half hour slot for parents evenings on different sites as there is really not enough time to squeeze two consultations and a drive between the two sites into one half hour slot.

There was then a long discussion over the merits of the new system of 3 parents evenings held early in each term to allow parents to plan the progress of their child jointly with teachers, versus the old system of meet the teacher and 2 subsequent parents evenings. It was suggested that for new teachers it would be nice to have something like meet the teacher so parents could meet an otherwise unknown person. On the whole parents welcomed the new system and look forward to two more parents evenings this year.

Parents welcomed the opportunity to come in to school and be shown round by their children. There was some confusion over what happened if children had clubs on the days when

classrooms were open but school was clear that children should be allowed to turn up late for a club if they wanted to show their parents round first.

Mr T announced there may be some open sessions in the future where parents can come in and observe lessons as well as just work on the walls.

3. Sports award and kite mark

School is proud and delighted to be awarded the golf kite mark for sport form AVDC. Special mention to Mrs Arnott, Mr Mould and Mrs Pearce for their hard work. This is in recognition of the high numbers of children we have involved in sports clubs and activities as well as our hugely successful competitive teams in years 5 and 6. Mrs Arnott is keen to build on this work and would like to know what other clubs children would be interested in being a part of as there may be the option now to buy this in from outside agencies. Parents are reminded that the reason the competitive clubs are only open to years 5 and 6 is that the leagues they play in only exist for these age groups.

4. Uniform on Swimming Days

Children to wear normal uniform on days when they are swimming. The only request from school is that girls wear long socks instead of tights. Mrs Wilde has had the pleasure of being present at changing times for swimming and as is reassured that the children are managing very well and there is no need to worry, no time has been lost due to difficulties getting changed. Mrs Wilde is happy to continue monitoring the situation.

5. Breakfast Club Start Time

Parents have requested that breakfast club have an earlier start time. Mr T keen to say this will have major financial and staffing implications but he is happy to take it to senior team to see if it is an option.

6. Sweets and Puddings

Sweets have been discussed a lot in parent forum and it is current school policy that children can bring in sweets on their birthdays for distribution amongst the class but children are always reminded that they are not allowed to eat them at school and must take them home to ask parents when would be a good time to consume these sweet treats. If there is enough will from parents school would be quite happy to ban this practice but the understanding at present is that the majority of parents are in favour of this ritual.

Some parents have reported that their children talk of having three or four helpings of pudding on days when they have not like or eaten their hot lunch. Mr T says that seconds are often up for grabs as school does not like to waste food but he has not heard of thirds and fourths before. He agrees that children should not be gorging on pudding at the expense of their main meal and will talk to the lunchtime staff to explain the issue.

Parents discussed their opinions on hot lunches. Mr T keen to say that as parents pay for food we do have a say in what the provider supplies and he will feed back any and all concerns.

Parents are also able to vote with their feet and stop hot lunches if their children do not like them.

7. Learning Log Homework

This is a recurring discussion at parent forum. It is school policy to use learning log style of homework. Mr T explained that there is no evidence that regular homework makes any difference to children's learning and what school is hoping to tap into with the learning log is evidence to support children learning to manage their own time, meet deadlines, perform information gathering exercises and be creative in their problem solving. Topics are always discussed with the teacher and children should be coming home with ideas and starting points. If not parents can remind their children that they can make notes during class brain storming sessions (children are encouraged to do this by staff) so that they come home with ideas written in their learning logs. Mrs Wilde suggested forming a list of options for parents to help them grasp ways a child might interpret their learning log homework. **Update:** Help for Learning Log

homework is now available in a new section on the school website which offers ideas, photos and suggestions for parents to support and encourage their children.

8. Junior Site Road Crossing

School has explored the option of having a lollipop lady but unless someone is willing to volunteer in this role and undergo training it will not happen. Unfortunately there is not the regular foot traffic to support the process or costs involved.

9. Bus

Contact details for the bus transport service are available on schools key info section of the website. Parents should report their issues directly to the service. Bus drivers should not drive off from a stop if a parent has not arrived to collect their child. Parents are asked to please remind their children to stay on the bus if there is no one at a stop to collect them and be outspoken in telling the bus driver this.

10. After School Club

Survey Monkey has revealed there is still not enough interest to warrant the running of an after school club.

Date of Next Meeting: Friday 9th December, 9am on the Infant site