

Dear parents/carers,

Please see the attached notes from the first parents forum. Thank you to all those who attended, I hope the notes reflect our discussions and you found the meeting useful. A copy will also be on display in the parents voice board. Please add any suggestions you have in the box.

Best Regards,

Phil Palmer

Parents Forum Meeting

Date: 9/10/13

Present: Jo Becket (Moran), Sue Walker, Lisa Ostrowsky-Weston, Claire Stanley, Zoe Mouter, Alexia Brooks, Sarah Newsham, Julia Davenport, Dawn Coutts, Sally Fletcher, Anna Stephenson

Points arising from the last meeting:

This was the first meeting.

It was established at this meeting that there would be a meeting each half term on a different day so that everybody would have the opportunity to attend at some point during the year. There would not be a committee but that any parent/carer could attend to raise an issue.

I would like to thank everyone who turned up today. I hope everyone felt that this could be a very useful platform for addressing issues that parents/carers have and any misconceptions that can be created by misunderstandings through word of mouth.

The next Parents Forum will be on Friday December 6th at 2.45pm.

Issues:

1. Lunch time.

- Family service – it was stated that lunch can be intimidating and we were asked if the family service does not work. Several points were raised that:
 - The older children were frustrated that they had to serve the younger children and could not go out to play earlier – school stated that a major reason for the family service was to encourage positive relationships between the older and younger children. Also that previously children (especially boys!) would rush their food barely eating anything in their attempt to get outside. We want to establish a time for children to have a proper lunch, a good meal in a social atmosphere. The numbers of children sometimes causes problems but this is only something we can solve permanently in the long term.
 - Some parents who had seen the lunchtime arrangements stated that lunchtimes were indeed much better than they were and work very well.
 - It was stated that sometimes children (especially the younger ones) come with stories of no pudding, their lunch box was never opened, not sitting next to friends. School felt although we take these issues seriously (Mr Palmer will talk to staff and children to make sure these things don't happen) they are often perceptions by children that can be explained. Phil Palmer said that parents/carers are always welcome to come and see for themselves.

2. New groupings

- Classes are now organised without the streamed target groups but with different focussed ability groups in each class with the support of a class Teaching Assistant. This change has meant that some children see themselves in a low ability group and this has affected their confidence. As a school we will address this through the teachers input and the 'respect' for each other's abilities in the code of conduct. School understands that children have different abilities in different areas and that it is important for each child to receive the right match of the work to their ability for them to progress.
- Children are only in these ability groups at certain times and for other parts of the day they are in mixed ability groups.

3. Behaviour

- Parents had noticed a marked improvement in behaviour around the school and in the playground. However we all recognised that there were still improvements to be made. As a school we are focussing on developing positive relationships between the children especially the older with the younger. The 'family service' at lunch is important in developing this, the respect code of conduct and the introduction of the new year 6 'School Leaders/Ambassadors'. It was also acknowledged that there needed to be a consistent approach and expectation from staff and parents. The improvement in behaviour and respect for each other will grow over time and has to be nurtured from the youngest children up through the whole school.
- That children no longer wear earrings shows that they have respect for school, the environment and their safety but especially for themselves, their parents and each other.
- At school we will revisit the 'respect' code of conduct in assemblies, the classroom and around the school, looking especially at the relationships between the children and adults at school.

4. Clubs

- It was requested that there be more clubs at school. The following were mentioned:
 - Lunchtime
 - After school
 - Gardening club – Lisa and Alexia are going to look into members of the village 'Gardening Club' to come to school to help.
 - Chess
 - Drama
 - Art/craft
 - Clubs for girls
 - Homework – several parents asked for a homework club. This is not appropriate at primary school age because the whole point of homework is that they do it at home with their parents/carers. Homework should not have any new teaching points but it should consolidate work in the classroom to share with their parents/carers. Lunch and break times are also needed as a 'break' from work and for children to socialise.
- Phil Palmer said that several clubs were planned to start over the coming year, including those mentioned above.

Next Meeting

If you care about your child's school please attend the next meeting. A date will be in the next newsletter and will cover the following areas (or indeed anything that you would like to raise):

- Worries / concerns
- Curriculum
- Extra-curricular
- School involvement

Remember this is your platform to support and improve the school.