

PARENT FORUM MINUTES: 24/01/17

Present:

Representatives for: RWL, 1M, 2CK, 3F, 3O, 4L, 4E and 5H

What does the school do to raise understanding of SEN / disability?

We currently have a resourced provision for the school for 8 children who have ASD and would not otherwise be able access the mainstream system. Most classes therefore have 1 child who is provision based and are very familiar with other children having differing needs. In addition we have a significant number of children with complex health issues and there peers are of their needs.

This is further supported within Assemblies, PSHE Sessions and through books selected for Class Reading. For example one of our Year 4 texts is Wonder, a text about a child who is disfigured.

Charity days are selected by our pupil voice groups rather than the school, reflecting concerns children have and often the current issues of children in their classes.

Can we make sure children wear their jumpers and coats after swimming?

Mr Rhodes has talked to all Year 3 teachers and support staff today and reminded them of expectations that:

- All children are fully in uniform leaving the Leisure Centre.
- All children (with one) are wearing a jumper / coat.
- Additionally children are now kept inside until the coach arrives.

Can the school update some of its non-fiction / library books as many are damaged?

Whilst school finances are restrictive, we use money raised from Travelling Books income in order to replace non-fiction texts. In addition we have spent over £27,000 on phonics books, £16,000 on Big Cat books and £18,000 on Book Corners and Year 6 Reading Rooms, in the last 3 years. We have also financed £3000 worth of new books in 2017 to develop our AIR sessions (accountable independent reading).

Can there be more education for children with regards to foods around the world/different culture? (*This may tackle perceived negativity at lunchtime felt by some packed lunch children*).

We will be talking with staff at Mondays Staff Meeting about this concern and requesting that they address this at a class level. This concern has not been raised by the 3 pupil voice groups and therefore is likely to be isolated to a few pupils, we do however take this very seriously.

Around the time of harvest every year we discuss foods from around the world both in collective worship and via PSHE. In RE we also investigate our differences and celebrate individuality, looking at all major world religions.

Can the schools diary and dates be made available so that parents can automatically download and store the dates in their personal diary rather than having to do each date one by one?

At the moment we do not have a facility to offer this function. We utilise a free icloud account and share this with staff for all events but as this includes meetings with children / parents / social services etc could not be shared. We also have a sync issue with this currently which could lead to parents having dates which are not up to date.

As part of GDPR preparations for May the Trust is looking at a number of data store clients which include shared calendar options. As this is agreed we will look at whether this could include a shared calendar for parents as it is likely to for staff in order to meet changing legal requirements.

Can the school have a back drop/board especially for photos taken at the achievement assembly. This is a safety concern as many children's photos are taken when sitting in the background?

We have recently been given some money by the PTA and Mr Rhodes will talk to the PTA Chair to see whether they are happy for some of the allotted money to be used for this.

Parents have asked for more clarity on photography permissions. Is there another way we could obtain pictures/videos of children's performances? Maybe by paying for these from the school.

Individual Pictures would need to be away from all other children as per the comments in the previous question and as a result video would be impossible as this could not be achieved.

At Hillsgrove we regularly have children who cannot have photographs taken both to protect their safety and sometimes location and to fulfil parent requests. These requests are there to safeguard children and clearly have to take precedence over our desire to offer images as requested.

Some recent events have offered photographs of participating children. It would however be somewhat impossible to offer this facility for all events as we do not have a school photographer on hand and have a reducing staff whose time is already under pressure.

Is there a system that could be put in place to provide more/valuable feedback on children's day to day behaviour/achievements?

Nursery and Reception now offer regular communications with parents, asking for questions and desired information from parents and then monitoring these children a few at a time in order to achieve this.

We have also moved reports to three times a year from 1 and over the last few years introduced meet the teacher events and open mornings, not previously in place. These are aimed at meeting parent requests for further access and information.

To further support this we have weekly achievement Awards Assemblies, use a postcard system (sending these home to recognise wider achievements) and also have weekly Headteacher awards, with rewards given to children and Mr Rhodes meeting with children to celebrate this. Teachers also use contact books, reading records and short notes home in order to communicate regarding progress and behaviour in between.

Are there any opportunities for parents to come in for taster sessions of the new Pabulum menu as this has been changed recently?

Mr Rhodes has asked Pabulum whether they would come along and offer tasters and information at the upcoming Parents Evening and is awaiting their confirmation. We will update as and when this is in place.

Can spelling scores be reported on 2FC papers home?

These have been being monitored weekly since the last parent forum and has been fully in place. If there is an individual case of a child not taking this home, that parent needs to let us know so we can resolve this.

When are Year 2 going on an Educational Visit this year?

It is important that we recognise that educational visits are not all offsite and include educational visits within the school. Year 2 this year have already had a visit from an Author and will be going on an offsite visit later in the year, which is currently being planned.

Can you get the caretaker to check there are sufficient soap supplies in all the toilets, not just at the start of the day, but during the day too please?

We have discussed this with May Harris as they are our cleaning company as responsible for ensuring plenty of stock of consumables in our toilets and wash rooms. We were made aware of this at the start of the month and are hoping this has been addressed fully. The caretaker's role is to check this is in place and we have reminded Keith (the current incumbent) to check this more regularly.

Do parents need to be DBS checked for all visits?

Parents who are taking responsibility for a group within an educational visit would need to be CRB checked as they could not be left with a group without this in place.

What about parents that are already CRB checked, would you like help from them?

Yes, however unless this is an online CRB it would not cover the parent for our school. We need to start to build a register.

Could the school provide some recommended reading for those parents that want to help prepare their children for the 11 plus but that aren't using a tutor. Any particularly good websites as well?

We have been advised in the past by Bexley that we should not be preparing or involving ourselves with the preparation of children for the 11+. The test aims to change yearly in order to reduce the impact of preparation through past papers with the aim that outcomes are based on core intelligence and not on the amount of tutoring and preparation done.

There is a familiarisation paper which the school administers in Year 5 and we advise parents on appropriate preparation at the Year 5 Secondary transfer meeting.

Could we run an additional homework/ study club that focuses on 11 plus maybe just to run for one term to help those kids who do not have/ can't afford a tutor to prepare for the tests?

See answer to previous question.

Some parents are disappointed to see that the Star Train Academy after school classes were only open to Years 1&2. Are there plans to extend to older years?

This is currently only available for KS1 as they offered us the same services for KS2 that we are already offering by another contracted service supplier in this phase. We are assessing their offer over Spring /

Summer term, will discuss this with our pupil voice and assess how we can address this at this point.

Positive Feedback

Better communication about events from school to home via Parentmail messaging as well as letters.

Good range on offer of after school activities.