

## **Parents' Forum Meeting**

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016 9am

### **Agenda:**

Post Ofsted Plan

Review of the year

14 parents attended the meeting with Mr Goddard (Headteacher) and Ms Beckett (Deputy Headteacher)

### **1) Update Post Ofsted**

#### **Key Ofsted Issues:**

***Giving those pupils who have difficulties with spelling, greater opportunities to practise their skills.***

The school have introduced a number of different strategies to improve spelling and these now need to embed – this was recognised by Ofsted. These strategies include:

- The introduction of No Nonsense spelling (a scheme to be used alongside spelling investigations and spelling lessons from Year 2 and above);
- More consistent approaches to spelling lessons and how spellings are sent home to practise;
- The use of polishing pens to encourage the children to improve and edit their work, including identifying and correcting their own spelling errors – this was acknowledged as positive practice when Year 2 and Year 6 writing moderation took place.
- Providing year group spellings on phase pages of the website.
- Classes having words of the day and children being given house point incentives if they correctly use those words in their writing.
- Children logging and learning from their spelling errors – personalised spellings being learnt – either as part of homework with older classes or in school, with support, for younger children.

We encourage children to be adventurous with their vocabulary choices and not to stick to safe words that they know how to spell.

Teaching of phonics is now firmly embedded – evidenced by the number of children passing their phonics screening in Year 1 this year (78%). We continue to work with those children for whom phonics is not successful in supporting their reading and decoding, use targeted interventions and seek alternate strategies for them to read. (E.g. visual approaches.)

We also will be raising the profile of reading next year to benefit all children, but in particular those who do not read at home by:

- Introducing a new initiative to encourage reading – an incentive scheme (RED TED) to borrow and read books. This will be launched at the start of Term 2 2016. The scheme will run in addition to those books children bring home to read for homework. More information will follow in Term 1.
- Using parent helpers to read with children.

- Using trained reading volunteers, through Beanstalk, to target children who will benefit from reading with someone.

***Checking those children who have special educational needs or disability always have work of the right difficulty.***

Miss Hindley has been appointed as the new SENCO and will be supporting the teaching and learning of SEN children and monitoring the work children with SEN are given in class.

***Closing remaining gaps in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others.***

This is a national priority from the Government.

Our challenge is to ensure that the children who do well continue to do so, whilst ensuring that the disadvantaged children make even better progress.

We will be working to ensure all groups of learners, at all levels, are being provided with challenges.

**2) Other issues raised by parents attending:**

Commentary from the school in green.

Supervision at playtimes, particularly on the field.

All staff on duty, including midday meal supervisors, have designated areas to patrol.

Every lunchtime there is a member of SLT and a Middle Leader who can be contacted by walkie-talkie if needed by a dinner supervisor.

Measures have been put in place, following raised concerns from the children through the School Council about behaviour in the wooded area. They felt strongly that not all children should be stopped from playing in the wooded area of the field as it is a lovely resource, however, all children have been informed that if there is someone misbehaving in this area, they must tell an adult. Any children not behaving appropriately will have the privilege of playing on the field removed and will need to spend their remaining break-time (at least) on the playground.

SLT are aware of the issues being raised and these are being constantly reviewed.

Dinner supervisors have had behaviour management training, which will be repeated in September. The names of children who may be particularly vulnerable are shared with dinner supervisors and adults on duty, in order to pre-empt any potential difficulties. The dinner supervisors also have laminated cards of the first three colours on the Behaviour chart (see explanation further down) to inform class teachers of any behaviour incidents at lunchtime.

We regularly educate the children, through assemblies, about how to use the play spaces safely and also how to deal with anything which could be perceived as bullying.

It was asked whether we have buddying systems in place.

Every year we have Peer Mediators trained in Year 6. Every year this has been successful and well received by the children. However, this year has not been particularly successful with this cohort of

Year 6. We have listened to the children's views and will train next year's Year 6s, learning from the issues raised about this year's mediators.

#### Communication about the class structures

Meetings to discuss views about potential class structures were well received, as was the opportunity to email Mr Goddard with any particular views in advance. However, some parents present felt parents should have been told which class their children were to be in, before the children. Others raised whether concerns about the classes came from the parents or the children.

The school feel strongly that the children should be the first to know. We make the class swap a special event in order to keep the children positive about the experience of moving into a different year group. If parents were told first, Mr Goddard was sure a number of parents would want to change any decision about where their child was being placed.

Parents said that they had not received a parentmail informing them of which class their child was going to be in this year.

This has not happened for the past two years as the time it takes to send 250+ individual parentmails produces an excessive workload and has to be balanced with the highly pressurised time of year for our Office team. On the day of the class swap, every child was given a note to give to their parents to explain which class they were going to be in.

It was suggested that a photo of the teacher and the name of the class be sent or displayed.

We like this idea and will consider it for next year, as we recognise that not all parents know who each of the teachers are. We will also consider a suggestion which was made about whether a class list could be displayed so parents could see who else was in their child's class to be positive with their child about who they were in the class with. We would not be able to send this electronically, however, due to data protection, which we appreciate would be less helpful for working parents who are unable to get to the school to see the lists.

#### School reports

Some parents felt that the reports did not give the opportunity for the teacher to show how well they knew each child – e.g. particular passions or interests that they may have. Others felt that the reports were detailed and gave them accurate and useful information.

The school have to balance the workload of teachers in producing reports – they are very time consuming and we aim to ensure that teachers put the most time and detail into the most informative aspects of the report. There is a statutory requirement to inform parents how their child is doing – the attainment part for non – core subjects meets this requirement. The effort grade is not part of the statutory requirement. We prefer to ensure that there is detailed information against the objectives for maths and English and choose to add the general comment section (not a statutory requirement), which we believe tells parents what they need to know about their child's performance in school. We have to balance the requirements of what we have to report with what we want to tell you.

It was requested that additional guidance is given to parents to explain the information sent out about Year 2 and 6 for statutory assessments.

The reporting format for statutory assessments is provided by the Government. Next year we can add guidance with a supplementary sheet

## Parentmails

Some parents felt that the number of parentmails and the lack of subject headings mean that it is hard to locate and go back to check particular information and that it was easy to miss relevant information. Also, sometimes the information does not always get sent to the relevant sibling.

We have an equal number of complaints as we do contented parents about how and how often we send out parentmails. Comments and preferences in the past led us to mainly send emails together at the end of the week to reduce the number of pieces of information sent home.

Parentmails should also all go on the website although this is not always possible where individual last minute class messages are sent out.

We also clarified that, whilst social media (e.g. Facebook) allows parents to communicate to one another, sometimes Chinese Whispers can occur when parents check and clarify with one another. We always invite parents, who would like any information clarifying, to contact the office to check the details first hand.

A parent commented that homework does not always appear on the website (acknowledging that this is useful if their child forgets to bring their homework home.)

We apologise! It is expected that homework is saved onto the phase page of the website. We do monitor this periodically to check that this occurs. However, we do not check this weekly and human error can (and has) occurred. We will remind staff.

## A query was raised about the point at which parents are informed about behaviour incidents

The behaviour chart was explained:

- Blue (warning) and Yellow (time to consider actions) are dealt with by the Class Teacher or dinner supervisors.
- Orange (loss of privileges – loss of playtime or reward time) – SLT are informed.
- Red – Child is removed from the classroom or playground.
- Purple – Time in the Cooler (a lunchtime detention) – for repeated behaviours or a sudden extreme behaviour.

We acknowledge that for some children being moved to blue is devastating and for others, this means less. However, we ask teachers to use their judgement about informing parents from orange. The blue and yellow stages are between the child and the adult in school, as these are not officially punishments. If a child is in the Cooler, parents will be sent a slip detailing why. We will consider the request that KS1 parents are told the day before they are in the Cooler, so parents are prepared and can support and explain the school's decision.

## A request that parents are informed if there is a different person teaching in their child's class for a longer period of time (e.g. student teachers)

This is a very reasonable request! We would need to handle it sensitively, if it is a student teacher, because if the children were aware that the adult was training, some children would respond to them differently. However, we can easily inform parents if someone additional is teaching the class and for how long in these circumstances.

*Many thanks to all the supportive and constructive parents who attended the meeting. We really value your feedback.*

*S. Beckett*

*July 2016*