

Parent Forum minutes 28.1.2020

Present: Mrs Gurr, Mrs Jennings, Mrs Harman, Mrs Brown, Miss Ward, Mrs English, Mrs Eggleton, Mrs Craig, Mrs Fraser, Mrs Winwood.

Year 2:

Parents felt it was a long wait outside the Church for the Carol concert and asked if it was possible to have mince pies and coffee. It was agreed that this was something the ISA/JSA could do for each other.

It was asked if Grandparent's morning could be changed to a different time to allow for grandparents who live further away to make it. Mrs Gurr said it was the best time for the school in terms of impact on the day, but reminded people that grandparents can come later as the session is from 8.45-10.30am. They can just come in as they arrive.

It was asked if spellings in year 2 could be differentiated. Mrs Gurr said they are already and this has been checked with Mrs Fairbairn. If parents feel the spellings are too difficult or need more challenge they can speak to the class teacher. It was also agreed that the children can bring home their spelling book so parents can see any they did not achieve and help them further. It has been agreed with Mrs Fairbairn that if the book is lost that parents will need to replace it.

Year 2 parents were delighted with the Bite to eat/Wrap party and the other parents agreed. Mrs Gurr mentioned pictures have been uploaded to the website.

Year 2 parents are loving the topics and the teaching!

It was asked that there is clarification to the children about gym club being one of the lunchtime clubs so they would not get allocated another one. It was agreed that we would call them 'teacher led' not lunchtime clubs.

It was also agreed that there would be information around how the spaces are allocated so that parents can help the children in knowing-particularly the reception children. Mrs Gurr will do this before next club allocation. A general discussion around clubs led to a suggestion by Mrs Gurr that from September, to make things more simple, the year groups have clubs in turn. Year 2 would have clubs in the Autumn term, Year 1 in the Spring term and Reception in the Summer term. Everyone agreed this was a good idea and that every child could then get a club.

It was also suggested that reception could perhaps have a band to wear when it was their club day.

Year 1

Parents asked that in the future could they be given information on what to provide for tournaments. The children came back to school with extremely muddy plimsolls and wet socks. They should have been asked to bring trainers or boots and extra socks. This was noted and agreed.

It was asked who the Parkour sports event was for and Mrs Gurr explained it was an Inclusive event so children would be chosen and informed.

Some parents had indicated that they were not happy with the homework challenges and that other schools provided more homework and more 'appropriate' homework. The parents at the forum all felt that they were completely happy with the current homework. Mrs Gurr pointed out that last year this was discussed at the Parents forum and feedback was that parents liked the format and the challenges. Mrs Gurr then explained that the challenges are put on one sheet so that parents are able to choose one a week. There is a range to suit different children's talents or interests and it states quite clearly that these activities should be extended or adapted by parents to challenge their children.

At our school we educate the whole child. Homework challenges are set that allows for children to collaborate and interact with their parents or siblings, sometimes provides a problem to solve and is related to the topic chosen in school. This way children are more interested and have a real context to work in which develops their learning more appropriately, particularly for this age group. Talking, imagination, creativity and independence are foundations for learning and attitudes which are so important and cannot be underestimated.

Mrs Gurr went on to say that there is a vast amount of research that suggests that homework actually has very little impact on the academic outcomes for children. This is proven in the fact that our outcomes for children are above National and Essex, are improving, and are the same (better in some areas) than an outstanding school mentioned. Our provision and practice bears many outstanding elements.

Mrs Gurr made a point that 'traditional homework' of marked sheets does not help the child in the same way as instant feedback and interaction with others. Mrs Gurr suggested if parents really thought hard they would actually probably be hard pushed to remember homework in their infant years. Traditional homework is still set with daily reading being the most important, spelling and learning of high frequency words, learning to count and times tables, as well as written exercises on the challenge sheets. Additionally, there are more activities and ideas on our website and a huge amount of other websites or books available for parents if they want to do more with their child.

Parents are given fortnightly information about what is being focussed on in English and maths so can support these at home, and a curriculum newsletter is produced giving information about the terms work. With all of this discussed Mrs Gurr concluded that homework will continue to be set as it is. The parent forum agreed with that decision and indeed with the points made.

Mrs Gurr mentioned that homework like sports day splits parents. Some want more some want less. Some want competition some do not. Lastly, Mrs Gurr explained that children who do the homework share it with the class. In reception they are invited to talk to the class while their photo upload is shown. In KS1 they share it on a Friday. The work completed is recorded by teachers and then it is displayed. Children are given a sticker for their effort and achievement.

Reception

Feedback about tapestry is very positive. Parents also enjoyed the road safety talks and asked for the literature to go out to all children.

A parent asked if all letters that went out in book bags could be flagged to parents by parent mail. This was agreed.

Some parents were disappointed about Christmas cards not being given out in school. After discussion it is agreed that next year the ISA will sort and give out all the cards on the last day of term.

Parents who have used Studybugs are happy with it.

A parent asked how the school support mental health. Mrs Gurr listed Zones of regulation, which teaches children to identify their moods and how to react to them, PSHE lessons and circle times, the Children's health project lessons which supports health and fitness e.g. sleep, good diet, physical activity as being essential for us, and that mental health is one of our School Development targets for this year.

Mrs Gurr thanked everyone for attending and their contributions.

The meeting closed at 3.10pm