

## **Parent Forum Meeting Minutes**

25/1/17

### **Present:**

3 staff (Carly Edwards, Sarah Beveridge, Lucy Hall)

9 parents (Laura Cannell, Amanda Simpson, Jane Dilworth, Anna Harrison, Rachel Holden, Mrs Sewart, Marina Briggs, Oliver UFS, Kelly Lisle)

### **Termly Reports**

At the last parent forum meeting it was felt that it would be a good idea to have shorter termly reports that would be given out before parent teacher consultations so that they can be discussed and there is a focus on learning.

There had been an issue with the word 'below' to describe attainment. This had been discussed with teachers and it was felt that it was now a very challenging curriculum but the parents would know where their child was and what they could do to support.

Feedback from parents present:

- One parent thought it was great. It was good to be able to see the gaps or any problems and also good things. It was nice to be prepared before parent teacher consultations so that if there was a problem it can be addressed and it doesn't come as a shock. This parent felt that they would like to know if their child was below.
- "working towards" was suggested as an alternative to "below".
- 3 other parents liked to know if their child was below because they could then support their child and also make a decision about whether they need to bring their child with them to the parent teacher consultation or if it wasn't appropriate.

Hopefully parents should see progress across the year.

There were no suggestions for improvements to the termly reports.

### **Communication**

Carly outlined the improvements we have made to the telephone system. We now have a direct line for pupil absence and when school is closed you can leave a message which will be picked up the next morning. We can also take a phone down to nursery should we need to.

Parent mail only reaches parents who are registered so we would encourage all parents to register. We had a new appointment booking system last term for parent teacher consultations which didn't work well so this time we have used parent mail for booking appointments. This seemed to have been working quite well apart from a couple of minor problems which have been sorted out. Letters are readily available on parent mail for you to deal with. We are trying to become paperless and cashless (our bank in Richmond is closing) but we are always available in the office so come in if you need any help and please let us know if there are any problems either with parent pay or parent mail.

During parent teacher consultations there will be a form available for parents to update to ensure all contact details are up to date. We didn't want to send paper copies of these home as there is a risk they could be lost with important information on them.

A parent mentioned a signeasy app which allows you to sign forms online. This could be used if necessary but Carly explained that the parent mail app has a form where the box just gets ticked for permission and no letter/signature/hard copy is needed.

Feedback from parents about communication was positive. They felt it was much better and one parent had noticed a difference between the start of the academic year and now. They are constantly getting messages so they feel informed about things and they liked that newsletters can be easily checked for clarification about things and events.

Class dojo – one parent gets a notification every Friday but when she logs on there is nothing there. SB mentioned Marvellous Me which could be an alternative as she is concerned about the risks attached to communicating with the class teacher through class dojo. Office/Headteacher is not always aware of what is being said. One parent felt that it was useful for working parents to communicate with class teachers as they didn't get in to school before or after the school day. Obviously communication needs to be appropriate through class dojo and will need to be monitored by senior leaders through communication with class teachers. There needs to be a consistent approach in the use of class dojo as some children/classes get a lot and others don't get many.

Generally the feeling was positive about class dojo.

**ACTION:** Discuss consistency with class dojo across all classes with all staff.

Parents felt that the parent teacher consultation appointments were long enough and knew they could make another appointment any time if they had any concerns.

### **Supporting families health and wellbeing**

It is important that parents can come in to school to share any issues you think are important. We are able to talk, listen, support and signpost parents. SB outlined some training the staff have had for health and wellbeing from a nurse and explained that the nurse is coming back to do some work around sleep issues. She is willing to do sessions with parents which the parents present were very positive about and felt would be useful. Some of the issues that might be useful were discussed:

- Eating
- Sleep – and behaviour changes when children are tired
- Children's anxiety
- Self image
- Food

She might also be able to talk to some of the children. 6pm was felt to be a good start time for any sessions.

We have a set of books which parents can borrow.

**ACTION:** SB to contact the nurse to arrange an evening after half term. More details will follow.

### **Outdoor developments**

SB outlined our 3 year development plan which is coming to an end. Hannah Burn has developed a list of 50 things to do before you leave Leyburn.

The plans were shown that the landscape architect had drawn up. Our priority had been to secure the boundaries and this had improved the KS1 playground and staff felt much happier with it. We have used money from Awards for All to develop the EYFS outdoor area which has been improved. We have taken

shrubs out from outside Y5 and 6 and we hope to develop this as an outdoor learning space. We are waiting to have artificial turf put outside Y3. We have repaired the adventure playground but we are waiting to get some more bark chippings or recycled tyre chippings to make it safe. The cost of these needs investigating.

We are making long term improvements but it will take time. If anyone knows of anyone who can help with fencing/raised beds etc it would be much appreciated. Please contact school if you have an ideas or if you are aware of any grants or charities that could be approached for funding.

### **Before and After School Club**

This has become a popular and very useful service. SB read out a statement from Nicky Milton the school bursar about how the funding works and how it cannot be subsidised from the school budget.

Parents felt that there hasn't been much advertising and more people might use the service if they knew the times and cost. We are in the process of purchasing more resources now it is a more permanent service but these need careful consideration as a diverse range needs to be purchased to meet the needs of the different age groups. These also need to be good quality resources so that they last. One parent felt it would be good to have an expansion of what is already going on and try to attract more people.

We have had some problems around staffing but we are now really pleased with the staff that we have got – they do a great job. The website can be changed to advertise it there. We can continue to improve the service. Could the hours be extended by half an hour at each end of the day? Could we enforce paying for sessions even if they don't attend unless enough notice is given for non attendance.

### **ACTIONS:**

- Survey the needs of parents
- Investigate extending the hours in the morning and afternoon
- Advertise the hours and cost of the service more widely
- Purchase new resources

The meeting finished at 6.50pm