

The Firs Lower School
Parent Forum
Thursday 21st February, 2019



Attendees:- Adam Campbell, Kerry Mercer, Sue A'Court, Helen Rossetti, Gayle Harrison, Leigh Corbett, Caryn Evirgen, Sarah Best, Vicky McQueen, Claire McChristie, Rebecca Ellis, Teja Parbhoo

1. Minutes from previous meeting.

- Everyone agreed the minutes
- AC – The minutes will be emailed out to the parent forum and to be on website once approved. All parents will be emailed the approved minutes.

2. Matters arising.

- Parent Questionnaire – Homework quite a division about what parents expect and this will be discussed at the next meeting
- Following the minutes, It was suggested by a parent that there should be agreed actions– who is going to do it and by when.
- AC discussed a later meeting happening so that other parents could attend if they wish although the general feeling was that the current afternoon slot suited those attending
- List of parents who are on the forum to be displayed on our website – **Action AC**

3. School pick up arrangements.

- AC spoke about the arrangements previous to the ones we have now and said that we changed the previous arrangement as we felt it was unsafe. Parents felt that the school does not accommodate this flow of people. AC spoke of when parents left through the car park area when we had temporary fencing in place and that as it stands at present, with no fencing, it is not an option.
- A parent said that the way we collect the children at the moment is very unsafe. She said that her child had had her head bashed on a wall and a grown had bumped into her child. Parents felt that a one way system would solve this – can we find out how much money it would cost for a fence to make it safe.
- It was suggested that, in the interim, open the gates a little bit earlier 5 minutes apart with staggered finished times. AC said that there would be a problem with this as classes finish at the same time and by opening the gates you haven't got a secure site.
- The school will agree to look into leaving by the car park and how much this will cost.
- All the Parents are very concerned about the present collection arrangements and feel that it is very unsafe.
- It was commented on that by the zebra crossing into our service road, one side of the pavement is lowered but the other isn't which makes it really difficult for buggies and mobility scooters to mount that side of the pavement.
- A parent suggested that the retaining wall by Y3 classrooms could it be moved back a bit to make it wider for parents to walk through. AC said this would be very expensive and the school would not be able to afford this.
- It was suggested that the parents could come in through the Kids' Club area and wait in the KS2 playground.
- AC said that the school would produce a Feasibility study by the next meeting so we can discuss – **Action AC/CB**

4. Christmas performance times

- AC said that we have dress rehearsals in the morning and performances in the afternoon. More and more people would turn up for dress rehearsals and that's why we ticket this now. The parental feedback was that it is not a convenient time for working parents. We thought about running it where the performances would be in the morning and dress rehearsals in the afternoon.
- Parents felt that the timing of the plays was not so much the issue as when the information was passed to parents. They felt the dates for such events were not published early enough and that these should be released in September as working parents need 8 weeks' notice.

Action SAC

- Parents spoke about the expense in buying costumes for performances etc. It was suggested that the PTA have an area on their Facebook page with a list of available costumes. It could be called – 'Costume Swap shop and uniform' Rebecca Ellis would be happy to administer this and AC thanked her for volunteering to do this. Action RE

5. Parent questionnaire

- AC gave them a flavour of what was positive and negative. Overall very positive. 3 areas we need to discuss, homework to be left for a subsequent meeting. Pupil's progress – what can we do to give parents better information.
- One parent said – If you don't have an educational background it's difficult. I asked the class teacher and found it very useful.
- AC spoke of our leaflet he is working on. One parent suggested a social media post where one teacher talks about what they do.
- One parent said that they find the reports vague. Difficult to ascertain where my child is. Found it hard to understand from the reports we receive. Break down the progress more. On track - not on track doesn't really explain why or how parent can help.
- AC said that the government are only interested in the 3 levels. (e.g. WTS, EXS and GDS)
- A parent said that reports should not be a shock if they are not on track you should know about it. KM spoke about the school her son goes to and there is a minus or a plus. AC spoke of the target monitoring meeting being in depth.
- Parents want to know what the next steps are.
- A parent suggested that the parent evening be moved to November – some parents want the early parent evening. It was felt that the early parent evening was good as the teacher gets to know the parent and discuss your child.
- A parent asked that, if your child isn't on track can we have a meeting with the teacher to discuss. A parent suggested that you email the teacher and arrange a meeting. AC suggested that we could have a surgery where we could talk to parents. A parent spoke about drop in sessions from 4-6pm when parents can come in.
- Parents want more information about where their children are and should be standardised throughout the year.
- Action AC – to review the reporting system with SLT and staff for next year

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6. Any future agenda items

- PE –a parent said that PE appears to be cancelled so much. Christmas performances, raining etc. During Christmas performance PE could be outside. Could there be more PE – sports festivals in school.
- Lunchtime – talk about next time – children having packed lunches can't sit with their friends if they are having hot dinner.
- Suggestion box for parent forum where items for the Agenda can be posted.

7. Value of Parent Forum

At the end of the meeting, parents felt that it was a great thing we were doing, having regular parent forum meetings, which give parents the chance to discuss many things with the school. They commented on staff giving up their time to arrange and attend these meetings and what a lovely time they have.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 16th May at 2pm