

Parent's Forum Minutes – Wednesday 8th November 2017

Attended by parents/carers of children in the following year groups;

Reception (2), Year 1 (4), Year 2 (4), Year 3 (3), Year 4 (0) Year 5 (1), Year 6 (0)

Welcome from Mr Hazell and Mrs Allen

- This is Mr Hazell's last Parent/Carer forum.

Updates from the previous meeting

Espresso

One parent asked if the password could be put in the newsletter again for those who need it. Mrs Allen mentioned that it is on the noticeboard in the foyer as well. A parent recently noticed that there is a timetable with useful dates in the foyer, and that it may be better if the board faced the other way so that it can be seen from outside. A parents asked how they could get their child's Sumdog password. Mrs Allen said that the child's class teacher will have this information.

Staff in playground

As discussed at the previous meeting, it was decided that staff will wear colourful sashes in the playground so that they can be easily identified by the children.

New Reception Class Intake

There were concerns that not enough of the new Reception parents were applying for pupil premium funding. Following an effort to encourage the new Reception intake to apply for pupil premium funding, there are now 20 more children that have been added to pupil premium in Reception.

The good schools guide

Clapham Manor is not currently featured on the Good Schools Guide. Ms Christofi will circulate an email with the link to the Good Schools guide. A parent mentioned that there is one negative review on the website which means we are not listed as a 'good school'. The link will go on to the website.

Points discussed today

Parent reps

There are vacancies for Year 3, 4 and 5 reps. Alex can represent all of Year 1. Rose will represent 3G. The main role of the parent rep is to create and maintain an email list of parents/carers of children in all classes to disseminate information. This could also be done using a WhatsApp group. A parent mentioned that it is often difficult to catch everyone to get their contact information – it is better to do it at the beginning of the year or as part of parent/carers conferences. Someone suggested that a note could be placed in the children's book bags. The more parent/carers contact information available, the better.

Parent survey

The last parent survey was overwhelmingly positive. There were a lot of constructive comments about how homework could be improved but some concerns about bullying. The homework policy will be reviewed by SLT (Senior Leadership Team).

Homework

Mr Hazell said that some parents say they want more homework, but some say they want less. The current policy is consistent across the school.

One parent mentioned that they would like 3 days off per week. One parent of a child in Year 1 said that they would prefer their child to play and enjoy being a child and feels there is too much homework which is onerous, especially if they have after school activities like swimming.

A parent of children in Year 1, 3 and 5 would like the Year 5 child to have more homework as they are not doing something every day – just Sumdog.

At the previous meetings minutes a report was quoted which stated that the impact of homework is minimal. Mrs Allen mentioned that there are many reports which say different things, however we can say that the impact of homework is greatest when it consolidates what is done in class. One parent felt that last year homework was not linked to work in class but it has improved this year.

Another parent said it is hard to get a child into 'homework mode' – 3 sentences can take half an hour to produce. There is a guide of 10 minutes per category for Year 2, 25 minutes in total. It can be a battle.

Homework changes over the year. A parent said that it is useful for parents to know what the child is doing in school and that the blogs are excellent for staying updating, if they are kept up to date.

A parent said that it can be a struggle to complete everything and sometimes there is no positive feedback for the parents to see about homework. There are also mixed messages about whether some homework is compulsory and this is not good for the child.

Mrs Allen said that the teachers have to think about the age and stage of the child. Parents commented that it is good to have some homework that is varied, e.g. investigative rather than writing.

A parent mentioned that sometimes they are not able to leave comments on the blog. Mrs Allen said she will check this with IT.

One parent found it useful to prioritise what their child needs to work on. There are optional pieces of homework – 'Challenges'.

One parent said that if a new concept of maths is on the blog (such as participating) it can be difficult to understand or help your child. Mrs Allen said if you need help you can ask the teacher or do your own research.

A parent said that homework can be enjoyable and a learning process for parents and well as children. There was a homework called Three Little Pigs which encouraged the children to thinking about materials in the home which was very good and had a lasting impact on learning and thinking about your surroundings.

Another parent said it is important to include other subjects other than reading, writing and arithmetic so they have more time for being creative.

Mrs Allen said that there would be no Christmas homework but please speak to teachers.

Aviva project funding

We have applied for funding to develop the growing beds and cooking. We need 1000 votes and have 633 at the moment. Please vote for us online.

Quiz

There will be a quiz for parents/carers on Thursday 7th December in the evening, which will also mark Mr Hazell's departure. Tickets are on sale from today.

Enrichment Clubs

Cooking Club: Parents asked if there are any plans to replace the after school cooking club that was cancelled. Mrs Allen said that this is under review for next term to see if there is another club provider or someone in house who could run a cooking club for the children. Mr Jamois will come in after Christmas and provide his usual excellent cooking tuition during the school day.

Science Club: Something happened in class where the activities were stopped and one of the children did not wish to continue with the club. Review the club - may be an issue with behaviour management, numbers in class.

Dance and Gymnastics are excellent.

Ms Chinnadurai Visiting on 21st November

Ms Chinnadurai, our new Headteacher, will come in on the 21st to discuss about edible playgrounds and to see the School Council, as well as meet with the Inspector and the Governors. It is good for her to have someone to relate to. The SLT (Senior Leadership Team) will visit her current school as well.

Natural Light

A parent said that 1S classroom has bamboo plants in the window at the back and it is blocking the natural light. It would be good if it could be trimmed as it is dark and gloomy in the classroom and they only have artificial light. Mr Hazell mentioned that sometimes blinds are down in the dinner hall and the lights are on. Mr Hazell will check on the natural light in 1S.

Information for New Parents/Carers

A parent mentioned that there is a lack of information for first time experience in school, especially if English is not your first language. They asked where can they get help if they have a particular problem? They would also like to be available to help the school and get involved. There are many different ways that parents/carers are kept informed, such as the Newsletter, Website, asking the teacher, the parent/carer forum, the PTA meeting. Look on doors of classroom for information.

Another parent said that there is a lot of information in the newsletter and it is easy to miss things, as well as letters for various events. A parent mentioned that the Diary of events for the term is very useful, which is also available on the website. Class reps send a reminder of events.

A parent asked if there were video cameras outside the school? There are.

Wellie Walk

This year it will be done with voluntary donations rather than sponsorship as it is a difficult time of year financially. Children are to bring wellies to school. The idea came from School Council. The school has to balance out charities through the year.

Parents/Carers were invited to write comments on post-it notes and sort them into positive and negative:

Positives

Good communication between teachers and parents

Areas for Development

Query about bullying and what steps are taken about reports of bullying

The date and time of the next Parent Forum is Thursday 1st March 2018.