

Parent's Forum Minutes – Wednesday 9th March 2016

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

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

Welcome from Mr Hazell

Parents were invited to raise any points from the previous minutes which they were given time to read.

- No points were raised

Mrs Allen discussed responses from parents raised at the previous meeting and opened a further discussion

Points raised	Responses from school	Responses from parent
A comment was made that maths is better in year 2 at other local schools:	100% made at least 2 levels of progress from key stage 1 to key stage 2. 85% achieved a 2b+ last year at the end of year 2 The National Average was 82% and the Lambeth average was also 82%.	None given
A question was raised as to why the children watch DVDs on rainy days at lunch time instead of playing games in class	We totally agree that the latter would be preferable this is purely a staffing/funding issue. There is not enough staff working during lunch time to have 1 adult per class and health and safety has to come first.	Parents/carers wanted to ensure that the DVDs which are being watched are rated Universal and were assured that they are. A parent was concerned that her child had been scared by a DVD. Some parents felt that it may be helpful for them to watch Educational DVD and others felt they shouldn't as it is effectively playtime. Many parents agreed that nature programmes may be a good way forward and are happy to provide some.
A parent suggested that parent/carers should be able to attend Mini Olympics	Mini Olympics which includes Nursery to Year 2 is not a 'Sport's Day' it is an opportunity for all the children to get together and go in mixed class teams where the focus is on supporting each other and scoring team points. This takes place in the junior and Olympic playground. Although we understand that it would be nice for parent/carers to watch this event, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not enough space. • If some parent/carers attended and some did not then children would be upset as they are so young there will be an opportunity to watch KS2 sports day at Battersea Park when their child is in years 3-6. 	Parents/carers asked if the events could take place as individual classes however, it was felt that would take away from the encouraged team spirit. Parents also asked whether it could be filmed however, this would potentially raise some safeguarding issues as not all parents/carers want their child to be filmed. A parent asked about having volunteers but this would cause difficulties as only a small number of parents / carers would be able to be chosen and that would be unfair.

<p>A few parents asked for halal meat to be provided</p>	<p>The catering company has to meet the demands of the majority and unfortunately most parent/carers do not want halal meat to be served. It is not cost effective to serve both types of meat and there would also be a risk of cross contamination. There are at least 2 other options each day that do not contain any meat.</p>	<p>Parents/carers were invited to tell the school if they have any strong feelings on this issue</p>
<p>A comment was made that cake and custard is served every day:</p>	<p>This is not the case and a variety of desserts are available including fruit each day. Lunch menus are available on the school website.</p>	<p>Mr Hazell said that he observes lunchtimes and that a child put in a comment that the portion sizes are too small. Mr Hazell said that when he checked, The cake for KS2 was to be cut into 24 portions and 36 portions for KS1. Once this was flagged up, it was rectified. Three dessert choices are usually given.</p>
<p>A question was asked about how to see the minutes from Governors meetings</p>	<p>The minutes are on the website</p>	<p>Parents/carers said that the up to date minutes are not always on the website. They also asked for the agenda to be placed on the website. Mr Hazell explained that we have appointed a new School Business Manager who will be placing information on the website and ensuring that information is updated</p>
<p>It has been noted that there are not enough books and resources for year 1.</p>	<p>Equipment/books are going to be ordered partly coming out of English and Maths budgets and hopefully some money from 'The Friends'</p>	<p>Ms Woodrow has been working in the library however, there are 180 books missing. Correspondence is sent home when books need to be returned. Someone asked if parents/carers can pay to replace books. Mrs Allen explained that although we cannot ask the parents/carers to pay, if they offer to replace a book they will be able to do so. Parents/carers suggested that a note to remind people to return books is placed in the newsletter. Mrs Allen said that it may be good if the books are left in their children's book bags until they are ready to read it so as they do not get lost. Mrs Allen also said that there are enough books in terms of teaching and learning and the money from friends for the new books is so that the children have access to a wider range. Teachers will be responsible for choosing the book for their classes.</p>
<p>A suggestion was made about giving out photos of children in order to support with making friends and building familiarity:</p>	<p>This is unfortunately a child protection issue and we are not allowed to give out photos/names as some parent/carers have expressed the wish that their child's photographic image cannot be shared.</p>	<p>Parents/Carers raised the point that information on the blogs is not password protected and content can be seen by others so why can't photos be given out. Mrs Allen explained that at the start of the year, parents/carers sign consent forms and this is why the information can be placed on blogs. She said that although others may be able to see what is on there, comments cannot be made as they have to be authorised by the class teacher first.</p>

Other points

Changes to the curriculum

Mr Hazell noted that all the children who achieved so highly at the end of KS2 last year had been with us from Nursery / Reception. He said that this year, people have moved on but we are still oversubscribed with a long waiting list. Mr Hazell explained that although it doesn't happen often, when children join the school in year 6 they come in way below expectations and is very difficult for them to bridge the gap by the end of KS2 so they may not be as successful as the children who have been nurtured through the school.

Mr Hazell and Mrs Allen explained that schools no longer work to levels and that the children will now either pass or fail. Expectations are now higher nationally therefore at the end of KS2 where a 4B would have been a pass, it would now be a level 5. It was acknowledged that this places more pressure on the children as expectations are higher but resources are being cut which impacts upon the rest of the school as their expectations nationally are also higher.

Parents feel that they would like to know more about the new curriculum. Mr Hazell said there would be information in the newsletter every 3rd week and he is in the process of publishing the 'how are we doing' booklet. Mrs Allen said the termly reports which are sent out from Year 1 upwards explain the new 'emerging, expected and exceeding' method of assessments.

School Meals

A parent was concerned that her son has pizza and chips and is horrified about the carbs on carbs. It was explained that this only happens on a Friday and that a variety of salad is still available. The parent felt that children should be encouraged to eat healthier and maybe have pizza and salad. Mrs Allen said this only happens one day each week. Mr Hazell said that another school come to see what we provide at Clapham Manor as it is a dining experience. He also said that is not to say that there is no room for improvement. Some parents/carers mentioned obesity but others felt that even if staff suggested to the children that they should take salad, children would say thank you very much but I'm having chips! It was felt that having a variety encouraged choice. Mr Hazell said that we now have a chef in residence who is promoting healthy eating across the school. One parent said that her child was a very fussy eater but now with the range, they now eat everything.

Children being sent to other classes

An observation was made that when a child was sent to another class, they did not have any work to do. She said it was 45 minutes of the child sitting there having nothing to do. It was explained that the school has a ladders of consequences and that on some occasions, it may be necessary to send a child to another room for a short time with some work to do. The parent was invited to speak to Mrs Allen following the meeting regarding this.

Homework

Parents/carers asked if they could have a guide on how to help their children with homework. Mrs Allen said that she has a link to the phonics workshop that is held annually on her blog. She said although various pieces of information has been given out regarding homework, it may be helpful to speak to the individual teacher as expectations are different for each year group. It was felt that it would be helpful if during the parent/carer meetings at the beginning of the year, they should give information about homework such as do year 1 do work independently and should spellings be corrected? Mrs Allen said that this is something that can be implemented. Parents/carers thought it would also be helpful to put this information onto blogs.

Blogs

Parents were asking how popular blogs are. It seems to be unclear but parent reps can be encouraged parents/carers to comment on the blogs. Mrs Allen gave an example where she has asked for comments to be made and no one has done so. Parents felt it may be helpful to carry out a survey to see how blogs are used by parents/carers. It was said that blogs are a good way of getting people to connect with their children by looking at what has been done in the day. It was also stated that some children in older year groups look at the blogs at home independently.

School Website

Parents/carers were invited to inform the office if they feel any improvements can be made.

Chinese lessons

Parents/carers felt that the Mandarin lessons are positive and asked if they will continue. It was explained that this was offered to us by Lambeth Academy. Mr Hazell said that the school budget gets cut by £150,000 each year and we are the only school locally who are completely full. Another local school has had their budget cut by £500,000 so he has to look at the priorities for expenditure. Mr Hazell and Mrs Allen explained that French is being funded for years 3 to 6 but there is not enough to pay from reception onwards.

As we are in cluster, Heathbrook do Spanish but parents/carers decided they wanted French at Clapham Manor. Mr Hazell said that when looking at what provisions other schools have, we do very well here.

Positive comments and next steps

Ms Allen invited parents to write down some of the 'Positives' within the school as well as areas for improvement and place them on the board.

Positives	Areas to consider over the next year
Class 1F blog is great	Understanding of the school priorities and the vision
Child in 1F is very happy, excellent communication with teacher and T.A	Consider continuing with Language learning i.e. if Reception children have started Chinese, this becomes the compulsory Language they continue throughout the school
Teachers in 1G are really encouraging and my daughter is happy	Communication on stats regarding missing books
Chinese lessons are positive Mandarin lessons are appreciated	Is it possible to have no homework on the weekend before the children break up for Christmas
Teacher in 1F is very helpful and supportive	Please continue with the Chinese Language
Clapham Manor School is doing a great job x 2	More information on what the standards/new curriculum means for our children as we go through the years (As a year 2 parent I know what it means for them but not further up the school) It was mentioned that there is a pass/fail in year 6, what does that mean for our children?
School lunches are excellent	A little more notice of event in the newsletter would be good
Blogs are a great window into class activities	Agenda of governors meetings

Closing points

- The parents felt that it is always interesting to have a big picture in mind to see why certain things are being pushed in school
- Mr Hazell said that the vision for the school over the next 5 years has now been completed and the School development Plan will be on the website

The date and time of the next Parent Forum is to be confirmed