

Parents' Forum minutes from Meeting 1/2016-17: Coffee Morning 12.10.16

Attended: A Jones (Assistant Headteacher KS1), Ciaran Dodd (Years 3 and 5), Petya Ignatova (Reception), Debbie Parks (Year 4), Amanda Ramage (Year 1), Sally McMillan(Reception and Year 2), Ellie Burt (Year 1 and Year 2), Katherine Bale (Year 5), Clare Ragsdale (Reception), Yousif Elagib (Year 1), Zubaida (Years 5 and 6).

Apologies: P Gregson (Year 3) and S McCartney (Year 5).

Meeting started at 9.10am

Welcome from Mrs Jones (Assistant Headteacher KS1) to our new members/ visitors who have come to see how the forum works today. It is really positive to see new faces today and we are really happy to have new and experienced representation from parents and carers across the school.

All present asked everyone to introduce themselves to the forum so that we were aware of which year groups are represented this year.

The aims of the forum were shared- that this group is a way for parents to have an opportunity to voice their feelings/ opinions about issues that affect school life. All parents/ carers are welcome to attend any meeting or can contribute via email or message to the office about any issue they feel needs to be discussed. Also, parent forum members may find themselves approached by other parents who would like to have something discussed by the forum, we welcome this. A Jones will send out the forum agenda a couple of days before the meeting, if you have anything to add to the agenda this can be done via email or on the day of the meeting.

Two of our current members of forum have now stepped up to other positions within school- Ciaran Dodd is now also a school governor and Sally McMillan has recently taken up co-chairpersonship for the school's FOMPS (Friends of Mickleover Primary School), working with Katie Burgess.

Reading Diaries

C Dodd brought up a suggestion from P Gregson, who was unable to attend today, that we make some changes to the school reading diaries. Pam has given us a sample copy of a reading diary from her cousins' school, which has included the common exception words and a grammar/ punctuation/ sentence starters definitions and suggestions list to help parents and children at home. There is also a list of suggestions about what types of comments teachers would like to see in the reading diaries after you have read with your child. These diaries have been professionally printed after having been designed by the school.

Mrs Jones explained that the common exception words, a guide to reading at home with your child have already been added to the reading diaries in Years 1 and 2. E Burt asked if we might be able to add the Year 3/ 4 common exception words in the Year 2 diary for the children who are more able spellers, so that parents have something to work on at home.

Mrs Jones to talk to Mrs Halliday (Assistant Headteacher KS2) to see what we can take from this sample and adapt for our reading diaries, as the guide in the middle pages seems very useful.

A suggestion that perhaps we put the reading objectives for the child's Year group in the front of the diary as well was met with a positive response as parents felt that they might be able to use this to suggest books to their child for reading at home or to help them make comments in the diary to parents.

Writing Targets

Mrs Jones explained that we as a school have changed the way that we set writing targets this year. We have moved to a new process for writing, where children build up a portfolio of evidence for writing which is then assessed. Also, following the response from parents in one of our forum meetings last academic year, where parents were getting very confused with the Big Writing target sheet, Mrs Gerver has organised letters to all parents, which will be coming out tomorrow (13.10.16). This letter sets out all the objectives your child will be working on over the year, with SEND pupils receiving the targets relevant to their stage of learning. This was met with a positive response from all forum members today, as they felt it is much easier to help your child if you know what they are working towards overall. This is echoed in the responses we have received from pupils so far who have been interviewed this week, where they have said that they like knowing all the things they have to work on over the year.

Staff will set one or two targets for each group of children/ or a whole class target each half term- the children will then work towards this over the weeks in their literacy lessons.

Target- Parents' Forum to check that they are happy with the wording of the letters that accompany the objectives sheet, so that we can tweak if need to for next year.

Maths Targets

S McMillan asked about whether staff have any discretion about how they move pupils on with the maths tracker targets, as sometimes having a non-challenging target, just because it is the next on the list, doesn't always motivate pupils. Many of the forum members agreed with this problem. Mrs Jones explained that she will check with Mrs Sharpe and Mrs Harrison our Maths Co-ordinators, but that usually the class teacher has discretion to set the targets.

Parents Workshop

Ciaran explained that there are only two members of Parents' Workshop now, helping staff to get photocopying, laminating etc done for the following week. We had some very kind offers of support from Debbie, Claire, Petya and Amanda to support Ciaran with this work. A request that we move the day that they come in to work was met with good response from all, so after half term the workshop will move to a Tuesday afternoon.

Homework

Can staff just make sure that the homework given isn't too generic for pupils, as there is a risk that there could be homework that is not sufficiently challenging for them? Mrs Jones will pass this on to all staff.

Reports

Next meeting to be partly used to discuss different report formats in preparation for us to simplify the format we currently use. Katherine and Clare have both offered to bring in examples from their children's previous schools to think about.

Information for parents in Reception

Y Elagib explained that his son has just started in school this term in Year 1. How do parents know what to work on with their child over the year and what work can they do at home to help? He suggested specific targets every week for his child. Ciaran explained that this would have a massive impact on workload for staff and that they simply have not got time to do this. Other parents agreed that this would be impossible for staff.

Reception Parents on forum have asked if they might be able to have a communication book or the reading diary a bit earlier so that they can have a brief slip telling them what the children have been learning during the week, as over this first few weeks they have found it hard to not really know what is going on or having somewhere to write notes to the teacher if necessary.

Parents of children in KS1 and KS2 explained that the busy letters that come out from each year group for the half term do actually explain what the children are going to be learning about over the next few weeks. Does this happen in Reception?

Mrs Jones to ask Mrs Whittingham to come and talk to forum next time to think about what we currently do for communication with parents and how we can further develop this.

FOMPS

New chairs are organising to have school fairs on Saturdays from now on. Watch out for improvements in communication on the website and FOMPS facebook page.

School Website

Ciaran raised concern that website, although looking great after the revamp, is still not mobile friendly.

Mrs Powell has explained that school is currently in development negotiations with our website provider about improvements, which include making the website accessible via mobile phones.

Clubs/ extra curricular activities/ before and after school club

New parents to school a bit concerned that we don't have a before and after school club. Some questions from forum about the range of clubs we run over the year, particularly in the Autumn term. Mrs Jones explained that staff members run many of these clubs, and they have to fit in to the timetable for the hall, the weather and having time in the Autumn term to get to know their classes before they start running clubs, but that Mrs Branch (PE Co-ordinator) and she have already contacted the Derby Schools Partnership and Derby Health Service about their 'Health package' offer, which will enable us to expand our work with pupils on weight management, healthy food

choices, yoga/ relaxation etc. We are currently awaiting details of how the new package will work in school.

Mrs Gever has explained that this is in the pipeline for next year, as Silverhill have said that they are now at capacity and will no longer be able to take pupils from Mickleover next year.

Petya has offered to host a German club for pupils next year, Mrs Jones to let Mr Kinton our MFL Co-ordinator know about this, as it may be possible for us to expand our current after school languages provision (Mandarin Club currently running). Parents who are new to school have asked which languages we do here, Mrs Jones explained that all classes in KS2 do French. Some classes have not started MFL lessons yet, as staff have been focusing on the introduction of our new writing process.

All meetings will be held on the first Weds back after each half term.

Next meeting will be held on Wednesday 2nd November at 9.05 am.