

**MINUTES OF THE PARENT'S FORUM MEETING  
HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2008**

**Attendees:**

Mrs Whittington  
Mrs Williams  
Rachel Desmond (Holly)  
Carolyn McCall (Sycamore)  
Vic McMillan (Pine)  
Anya MacFarlane (Oak)  
Emily Wright (Cedar)  
Vanessa Marston (Beech)  
Gillian Bowers (Cherry)  
Catherine Barlow (Willow)  
Nicky Moss (Juniper)

**Apologies:**

Sam Amend (Chestnut)  
Joy Small (Sequoia)  
Mary Nash (Ash)  
Iwona Batterberry (Pine)

**Matters arising from previous minutes**

1. Dorn Kipping has volunteered to coordinate an 'Items for sale/wanted' bulletin.
2. Burford wristbands have been bought.
3. Teachers have been asked to name letters and keep them aside when children are off sick as some letters aren't reaching home.
4. A letter is to be sent out to Year R parents to confirm that the children can stay in school until 1.30pm on the last day of this term.
5. Year 3 teachers were asked why the children were coming out of school so late; apparently they are being sent out on time but are spending a long time in the cloakrooms chatting and dawdling.
6. Ofsted requirements recommend that Year R children have to use a separate entrance into school from the rest of the school, hence they are not allowed up to the playground at 8.30pm until the second half of the summer term to aid transition into Year 1.

## Matters arising at this meeting

1. Mrs Whittington would like parent reps to email her in advance of the meeting with any specific questions relating to teachers or classes. This will then give her time to speak to the teacher and report the answer back to the forum. Email by Friday morning: [head@burfordschool.co.uk](mailto:head@burfordschool.co.uk).
2. Young, Gifted and Talented scheme – a small group of year 5 and year 6 children who are achieving at substantially higher levels in Maths than their age group are having tuition from a Great Marlow teacher once a week. Mrs Williams is working with a literacy group in Years 5 and 6. As previously discussed, this is not a YGT group but for children who have the potential to achieve level 5 in Year 6. This will move down to Year 4 later in the year.
3. It was asked if the office could acknowledge emails that are sent to them. It was felt that, because of their workload, the office will only reply if necessary. If parents want to know that an email has been read, they can set this up in the options setting of their message. The office also confirmed that they would prefer to be telephoned rather than emailed.
4. The noise level in Sequoia class (Year 5) was commented on as being high by one parent. Mrs Whittington said there was significant improvement this year and Mr Garner is in control of the situation.
5. It was noted that certificates for passing cracking times tables levels have been slow to be given out in some year groups. This is being addressed as it was found that only level 10 and level 20 certificates were being presented to children by mistake.
6. Concerns were expressed about the experience of the new teacher covering maternity leave in Year 1. Currently he is a primary school teacher in Australia and has six years experience. He is very keen and enthusiastic and is coming to the UK on secondment for one year. In a maternity cover position, this is an advantage for the school rather than having to employ a different supply teacher each week
7. It was mentioned that some classes give out two Head Teachers Awards some weeks. This is because a child may be sick one Friday or events such as the Christmas Bazaar are taking place in the hall so there is no assembly. This is then addressed the following week.
8. It was asked if the school council representatives could change every term to give other pupils the opportunity to be on the council. The council decided that representatives would stay on for the whole school year.
9. Burford didn't participate in the recent Anti-Bullying week due to many other activities taking place. To ensure it is high profile for the children, the school will hold something on this

separately in the near future and tie it in with the Healthy Schools initiative. The buddy bench is also in place and children will be reminded of the use of this in assembly.

10. There is concern about how often a Year 5 child should read to an adult. This may be because there is a lack of parent helpers but children should be reading once a week to an adult.
11. Some working parents have asked for the timing of parents evening to change slightly, maybe have an earlier one (3.30 – 6.30) and a later one (6.30 – 9.30). Mrs Whittington felt it unfair to expect the teachers to stay in school until 9.30 in the evening.
12. Christmas cards are late back (expected Monday 8 December) and it was suggested we consider other companies next time.
13. The question was asked about the rationale of holding a Grandparents day for the KS1 Christmas plays as most Grandparents would not want to attend on their own, especially if they are not local. It was suggested that next year, three afternoons will be available offering four tickets per family.
14. Some children have not been given their log in details for the Buck Grid for Learning Module site. Mrs Whittington will look into this as all children should have received it. Hopefully, the teachers will be trained up to use this module site soon so that it can be updated and be in full use by the summer term. The site will have homework details and project work on it.
15. Red books that accompany a child's reading book can be used for general communicating with the teacher but it may not be looked at on a daily basis. For example, books may only be checked when a child reads or needs a new book.
16. There was great concern by some parents that a coach had left the school premises at 3.15pm just as the children were walking down the drive. With a few cars also parked on the verge down the drive, the bus found it quite tight to get down the drive and was very close to the path. If a child had strayed off the path there could have been an accident. It was asked why the coach driver couldn't have been asked to wait five minutes before leaving the school. This is because they have other school runs. The discussion went on to consider the car parking of all staff and safety issues. Mrs Whittington will consider adding a low fence to the path alongside the drive and all the way round the car park. She will also remind parents to keep control of their children as they walk down the driveway.
17. Children in Year R are supplied with aprons for art work but parents can send in old shirts/t-shirts if they want to.
18. Mrs Whittington will make sure there are 'No Smoking' and 'No Dogs' signs are up outside school.

19. Is it possible to consider important dates for other religions, for example, Eid? Mrs Whittington is happy to do this and would like parents to liaise with her so that she knows the dates in advance.
20. The notes from the Maths workshop will be available on Burford's website.
21. It was requested for the board outside Year R to contain information about maths as well as literacy.
22. A plea was made for coordinating events better next year. For example, some working parents have had to come in to school on several occasions this term for a class assembly, the Christmas Bazaar and a Christmas play. Perhaps the class assembly could be in another term? Mrs Whittington will be discussing this with staff.
23. The rules of the colour of girl's tights were asked to be clarified as currently they are wearing red, white and grey. Red tights are not part of the school uniform.
24. Mrs Whittington will remind parents via the newsletter about providing healthy lunch boxes.
25. Feedback is awaited on the quality of the school sweatshirts.

**Date of next meeting:**

Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January at 2pm