

# **Parents' Forum**

## **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010**

### **Attendees:**

Mrs Whittington, Mr Garner, Vanessa Marston (Sycamore), Tracy Lowden (Cherry), Nicky Hart (Holly), Elaine Prodger (Hawthorn), Mary Nash (Sequoia), Heather Smith (Cedar), Kelly Clare (Ash), Gayle Keenan, Gillian Bowers, Selina Miskell (Oak),

**Apologies:** Emma Thompson (Elm), Emily Wright (Willow)

### **1. Use of Parents Forum**

Mrs Whittington and Mr Garner re-iterated that Parents Forum was to raise general school issues and not to target specific issues. If a parent has a concern over a specific area of the curriculum or their individual child the first point for raising this is with the class teacher. The class teacher is much more likely to be able to discuss the issue and resolve in a timelier manner if raised on an individual basis.

There is a general feeling from the staff that the first time they hear any concerns is when it is addressed at parent forum.

It was noted that staff do a good job and that it is a shame that this issue is causing bad feeling.

### **2. Parent Forum Reps**

For continuity purposes for both the school and parents there was a suggestion that the position could possibly become a 2 year position.

### **3. Year 6 Project Work**

Several parents commented that there was a lot of work involved in the previous project and there was confusion over how the work was to be handed in.

Mrs Whittington has said in discussion with the Year 6 Teachers the next project won't be as involved and that the defined format/rules for the project were flexible.

### **4. Hawthorn Class late coming out**

This is not because they are dismissed any later than other classes but because the children themselves are slower than other classes getting ready to leave.

### **5. School Play**

Concern raised that the main parts had gone to high achievers. This is not the case. In fact a lot of time was spent discussing how to cast the parts and there are many children who have previously not had main parts in other years/activities, who now do. Also there are other aspects e.g. lighting, scenery, props and costumes that some children were happier to be involved in.

### **6. Lunchtime Play**

Concern that there were 4 or fewer midday supervisors.

There are no qualifications required to cover lunch. In total there are 8 staff, including 1 member of the SLT, who cover the lunch hour. 4 are present at 12pm for years 6, 5, 4, and 3, with 4 others remaining in the hall. For reception children, 1 dedicated member will leave the hall with the first group of finishers and the 2<sup>nd</sup>

member of staff will go to the playground once all children have finished. All children are monitored as much as possible to ensure they have eaten. If a parent has a concern over their child not eating please raise this with your class teacher who will ensure your child is monitored more closely.

### **7. Sports Day**

Please note that children will be wearing their house colours again this year. If you are struggling to find a T shirt please speak to Mr Garner who should be able to provide a coloured bib.

### **8. KS1 & KS2 Sports Day**

Is there a possibility the days aren't consecutive as this can cause problems for working parents if they have children in both KS1 & KS2.

It is too complicated logistically with regard to equipment setting up etc to have it spread over 2 separate weeks.

### **9. Moving Class**

Concern over children choosing who they would like to be in a class with.

Mrs Whittington said that half want their child to choose, half don't, therefore this practice will continue and is used along with teacher discretion to work out the class.

### **10. Move from Reception to Yr 1**

There will be a meeting for the current Reception parents before the end of this term to discuss the move from EYFS to the National Curriculum to help smooth the transition for the children involved.

### **11. Reception using Playground from 8.30am**

All reception children will start to use the playground immediately after half term rather than being dropped off outside the class. Two members of the Reception team will be in the playground to help for the first few weeks. Mrs Whittington will look into Yr 6 also helping with this move.

### **12. Verbal requests v. Formal Communication**

If teachers make verbal requests to their class (e.g. a reminder about PE kit etc) this usually follows a previous written communication from the school. Teachers of younger children wouldn't expect this to be the only message home.

### **13. School Trips**

There was a concern that the school trips were getting more expensive and was this linked to fewer parents contributing.

The cost of a trip is divided by the number of children going on the trip. The auditing system dictates that the school cannot ask for a donation based on how many people might contribute. If the cost of the trip is more expensive it is because the trip itself costs more than the previous one.

### **14. Parents Evening**

Due to the over run suggestion was for 15 min appointments.

This would mean 3 evenings had to be given over for this. Both parents and teachers to make a concerted effort to keep to 10mins as these appointments are for the general progress of your child. If you have specific concerns please arrange a convenient

time with your teacher to review these.

### **15. Bike to School Week**

Not a very conducive event for the younger children to take part in. Suggestion that one pavement to be used by cyclists and the other for walkers / scooters. STC will look into this.

### **16. Yr 1 Maths homework**

Concern that it was very parent intensive rather than relying on the child to practice what they had learnt from class.

If there are individual concerns please speak to the class teacher. Additionally it was noted that at this age it was quite likely that parents would be sitting with their children anyway.

### **17. Drinking Water - Reception**

Concern children were not drinking enough by some parents.

All children are made to sit down in both morning & afternoon break and lunchtime with their water bottle, so this is not the case.

### **18. Minutes from Parents Forum**

There was a request for these to be emailed to parents.

Again, the Forum feeling was that all minutes are posted and accessible on the school website for those who wish to read them.

### **19. Supporting Charity Events**

The concern is not over the financial aspect of supporting these events but the time spent by the children out of the curriculum.

The time spent on such events is minimal and is always linked to the national curriculum.

### **20. Emergency Contact for Residential Trips**

There was a request for parents to have an emergency contact number for someone on the trip in case a family need to get hold of their child.

Mrs Whittington is the emergency contact for all residential trips and her number is published to those when such a trip is undertaken.

### **21. Uniform Sizing**

The sizing of the uniform doesn't seem to be proportional.

Mrs Whittington will look into this.

Due to timings Mary was not able to raise her questions.