

Parent Forum Minutes 24th April 2017

Parent reps from each class met with Mrs Griffiths. Questions and suggestions had been emailed to them, and also placed in the suggestion box available at the coffee morning.

The following issues were discussed:

- **Pick up**

Parents raised the issue of congestion in the hall at the end of the day, and asked whether classes having different finish times would ease the overcrowding.

Mrs Griffiths agreed that the hall does get very busy at the end of the day, but pointed out that different finishing times for the younger and older classes would be unlikely to solve the problem, since many carers and children would end up waiting in the hall for older siblings to finish.

After discussion, the following decisions were made:

- ✓ The benches could be moved slightly further back, to allow more room for parents
- ✓ Mrs Griffiths would remind teaching staff to bring their classes down on time.
- ✓ Parents would help the problem by using the anticlockwise system, leaving prams and scooters outside where possible, and leaving the hall swiftly, talking to other parents outside rather than in the hall.
- ✓ Where possible, on days with cake sales, the children will leave through the playground.

- **Easter Holidays**

Parents raised the issue of the Easter holiday this year, with the school returning so soon after the Easter weekend, and wondered why this had happened this year.

Mrs Griffiths explained that suggested term dates are given to schools well in advance by the Local Authority. Any proposed changes are discussed with the Governing Body. The Local Authority's suggested dates were used this year. Governors discussed the return to school directly after the Easter holiday and agreed to use an INSET day on Tuesday 18th to help families returning from abroad. The situation is unlikely to happen often since Easter fell particularly late this year.

- **Owl and Owlets scheme**

Parents positively remarked on the Owl and Owlet initiative and requested an end of year party for Reception and Year 6 before the older children leave for secondary school.

Mrs Griffiths explained that there would be a special activity for the Owls and Owlets before Year 6 left. It would not necessarily be a party, but might be an afternoon of games or a shared picnic at lunchtime.

- **Table manners**

Parents raised the issue of table manners at lunchtime. They asked whether a staff rota could be set up for monitoring table manners, and felt this was a skill just as important as the National Curriculum.

Mrs Griffiths agreed that table manners were very important, and explained that lunchtime staff do remind children about good manners. Last year the school council ran a table manners poster competition. She went on to explain that because the children eat a packed lunch at school, many having sandwiches without the need for cutlery, the best people to teach children about table manners are parents at mealtimes each morning and evening.

The following decision was made:

✓ Mrs Griffiths would ask the Year 6 House captains to organise certificates for children with good table manners

- **Languages**

Parents asked for clarification of the procedures for language teaching throughout the school.

Mrs Griffiths explained that, in line with the National Curriculum, languages are taught at Key Stage 2. French is taught in Years 3, 4, and 5, and Latin in Year 6. Parents asked whether a native speaker taught French. Mrs Griffiths explained that there are no native French speakers on the staff at the current time. The teacher who currently teaches French has undertaken further study in the language.

- **Longer lunch**

Parents remarked that many children return home with items of lunch uneaten and requested whether the children could be given more time to eat.

Mrs Griffiths explained the arrangements for lunchtime, and that each class gets 25 minutes to eat their food, before crossing the road to St Luke's for playtime. Although lunchtime is a social occasion, the younger classes are asked to eat in silence for the first 10 minutes in order to concentrate on eating their lunch first. In her experience, the children who do not finish their lunch are unlikely to do so with

more time given. Children in the juniors sometimes come to the hall for lunch a little later since their toilets are at either end of the school. She will remind the teachers to finish lessons promptly and ask the children not to dawdle when washing their hands.

- **Lunches**

Parents in one class asked whether the school could change lunch provider, although parents in another class said that lunches had improved.

Mrs Griffiths explained that the school was currently in the middle of a contract with the lunch provider, organised by the Local Authority. She explained that there had been some recent changes to the offer, including bread which was popular with the children. A new kitchenette had been installed in the hall, with a warming cabinet which should help to lessen condensation in the hot lunch containers. It is useful to receive feedback on the menu so that changes can be made when it is next reviewed.

- **Uniform**

Parents requested whether winter uniform can be worn until May half term and summer uniform until October half term, since the weather can be changeable during these periods.

Mrs Griffiths explained that this issue was discussed by the Governing body a few years ago. It was decided that it would be too costly for Reception Parents to buy a summer uniform for just six weeks use, before needing to buy the winter uniform. Parents asked whether the choice could be given to reception parents. Mrs Griffiths agreed to raise this at the next governors' meeting.

- **Early finish at the end of term**

Parents requested whether the last day of each term could finish early at 1.30pm, since this was the case at some other local schools and would help families' travel arrangements.

Mrs Griffiths agreed that this would certainly have some benefits although may not be helpful for parents who work full time. There is the risk that a few families may decide to take the whole day off of school instead, which would have a detrimental effect on the school's attendance figures. It would be something that the whole school community would need to consult on to make a decision that is best for the majority.

The following decision was made

✓ Mrs Griffiths would discuss this at the next governors' meeting and begin the process of consulting with the school community.

- **Parents parking**

Parents were still concerned about the number of families parking on the zigzags, especially in the mornings.

The following decisions were made:

✓ Mrs Griffiths will add another reminder to the newsletter

✓ The school will request traffic monitoring by the parking enforcement team at the local authority

- **Corebooks**

Parents requested book lists for the children.

Mrs Griffiths encouraged the use of the following website:

www.clpe.org.uk/corebooks. She will add this information to the newsletter and school website.

- **Curriculum and homework**

Some questions were raised about the curriculum and homework.

Mrs Griffiths explained that these questions should be raised directly with the class teacher. The curriculum is available on the school website along with the school's homework policy.

The school would like to find out the following at the next forum:

What training and curriculum workshops would parents like to have next academic year?