

Notes from Parents' Forum

28th November 2018

Coffee Mornings

Parents requested that coffee mornings be on a variety of days of the week to include parents who work on Tuesdays. Mrs Griffiths agreed that this was a good idea and would make some changes to the calendar in the New Year.

Lunchtime

Again, the issue of longer lunchtimes was raised. As before, 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.

After school care

Parents wondered whether the school would consider wrap around care. Due to the lack of space, the school has to make decisions about the opportunities offered at either end of the school day. It is felt that the wide variety of clubs offered, together with the facility for drop off from 8.30 was beneficial to a larger number of parents than wraparound care alone.

School photos

Parents asked whether school photographs could be a choice between colour and black and white. Mrs Griffiths agreed that before the next individual photographs, the school photographer would be consulted about parents suggestions.

Full time sports teacher

A parent requested whether the school would consider hiring a full time sports teacher. The school does not have the finances to support this, but works in partnership with a sports coaching company to support sports provision.

Pupil of the week certificates

A parent wondered why their children's certificates had not been signed. Mrs Griffiths explained that pupils of the week are supposed to visit her office to have their certificates filled in. The children can attend at any time.

Flu Vaccinations

A parent pointed out that the flu vaccinations are very late in the season. Mrs Griffiths will raise this with the school nurse.

Football

Some parents were concerned about the competitiveness of football at lunch break leading to unsportsmanlike behaviour. Mrs Griffiths agreed to raise this with Mr Alton, head of sports and P.E.

Class readers

Parents wondered why the 'reading age' of some class texts was lower than the books that are recommended as individual readers. Mrs Griffiths explained that the school uses a variety of texts during English lessons, so that the children can practice skills such as inference, deduction and character analysis. There is a benefit to using simpler texts on occasion, and sometimes children in Year 6 use picture books with no words at all! The school uses the 'Centre for Literacy in Primary Education' to support the choice of high quality children's literature.

Emergency procedures

Some parents were concerned that they were not immediately contacted by the school regarding the situation that happened in the local area last month, to let them know that the children were safe and well. Mrs Griffiths explained that while the school can understand that parents will

have been distressed as they approached the school building that day, to see such a large police presence, due to the fact that we did not hear of the event until 3.15, our first priority was to assess the situation, take care of the children who lived in the immediate vicinity, and inform staff of what was happening in order that the dismissal of the children could be conducted as smoothly as possible. Please be assured that had the incident happened earlier, we would have made parents aware.

Communication

Parents are concerned about the number of whatsapp messages on the class chats as they are detracting from essential information. Mrs Griffiths and reps agreed to draft a school 'class communication protocol' for implementation in January.

Secondary transfer

Some parents in younger classes asked for a list of schools that our children attend for secondary. Mrs Griffiths explained that detailed meetings and paperwork pertaining to secondary transfer are shared at the beginning of Year 5. To provide this information any earlier would perpetuate the culture of panic over secondary transfer that is causing such anxiety among parents and children, and this is not something she wishes to encourage.

Homework

Parents commented on the frequency of homework. Mrs Griffiths explained that the school's position on homework was detailed in the homework policy which could be found on the school website. Parent questionnaires show that some parents want more homework, and some less. Some say homework is too hard, and others say it is too easy. This leads Mrs Griffiths to believe that the school has struck a happy medium!

School Lunch

Parents requested a lunch taster, which Mrs Griffiths will pass on to the caterer. The caterer is now providing water beakers and cups.

Uniform Sales

The process for second hand uniform was explained, including the process for reuniting lost property with its owner before items are sold to others.

Arrival at school

It was requested that children shake hands with the adult on the gate in the morning, as they do at hometime. Mrs Griffiths agreed that this was a good idea and she would pass this on to staff.