

## **Parent Forum Minutes – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022**

### **Uniform**

#### **Query:**

*Could the school consider a transitional period for uniform at the beginning of the Summer term and Autumn Term?*

As summer uniform is only worn for one term, children are asked to return to school in the summer term in their summer uniform.

Going forward, a transitional phase could be considered for the start of the Autumn term when it can remain quite warm for winter uniform.

#### **Query:**

*Could there be an alternative coat rather than the duffle coat?*

Our uniform is something that we are very proud of however we are always very aware of ensuring that it remains affordable for families. The PA always ensure that there is a good stock of second hand duffle coats in the uniform sales.

The duffle coat is not compulsory. Children can wear blazers if parents prefer and then wear a bottle green mac on top if it is wet.

A reminder also about the information put in the newsletter about governors approving the use of plain bottle green tracksuit bottoms and macs rather than those with the school logo on.

#### **Query:**

*Sizing queries with Sogans.*

Sogans visit the school in July when we welcome our new Reception intake for their welcome morning or afternoon. They are based in the hall for the whole day so we can certainly have a time slot when other parents can come and try / purchase uniform on that day when Reception parents are not there.

### **After school clubs**

#### **Query:**

*High demand for Italian and French after school clubs.*

The school would be very happy to provide extra language clubs and this is something that will be looked into for the start of the Spring Term. Allocation of rooms is something that needs to be considered carefully due to our limited space. I will be in touch when plans are able to be put in place.

#### **Query:**

*Some parents have shown interest in wanting clubs to run for longer.*

Many of our clubs are run by external companies and so offer a set time for clubs (usually an hour max). This also takes into consideration the focus and engagement children can retain after a long school day.

I am in the process of putting plans in process that may enable the use of the roof playground for after school clubs. However there are various planning phases that have to be approved first. This would enable the school to offer some extra clubs without the problem of lack of indoor space. The school tries to restrict the use of rooms for clubs after school so that each classroom is only used one evening a week. This enables the teachers to complete assessment, planning, and preparation for lessons the following day with minimal disruption.

**Query:**

*Some parents have mentioned that they are on the waiting list for music lessons.*

Good news! I have been in touch with Charlie from Piano Fun Club who has confirmed that he can offer us another day of music lessons in school. He will be in touch with parents on the waiting list with further details as soon as he is able to sort out a timetable.

**Query:**

*Will the school be taking part in sports matches against other schools?*

The borough leagues are starting this week and Oratory is signed up to these. Mr Alton is running the football league and Miss Urbano is running the netball & basketball league, as stipulated in the clubs list.

**Lunches**

**Query:**

*How long are children given to eat lunch and is this enough time?*

Children have half an hour to eat their lunch and for part of this time children are asked to stop talking so that they can focus on getting their lunch eaten. Adults on duty also prompt children to eat their lunch and remind the children to drink water too.

*Numerous questions on school lunches:*

The area manager for the catering company has just changed and they have been into meet with Mrs Steinart, Mrs Paiva and Mrs Browns. He is making some good changes which should really conserve the quality of the food by the time it reaches us. This includes changing the containers that the food is currently in and compartmentalising the food within the container so that it all stays separate. If there is a particular day where your child does not like the food then you are able to change to the alternative selection on that day if you would prefer – please contact the office in this instance.

The school meal plan on the website has now been updated to match what the children are receiving.

Fresh bread is offered to the children on a daily basis as well as their main choice of meal.

## **Homework**

### **Query:**

*Children in Year 4 are receiving weekend homework when they didn't in Year 3.*

As stipulated in the homework policy, Year 4 receive weekend homework in the form of an ongoing project (currently Romans A-Z). They will not have received weekend homework in Year 3 as Year 3 do not receive weekend homework until they begin their First Holy Communion preparation in the Spring term.

### **Query:**

*Maths homework & Times Tables Rockstars queries.*

Times Tables Rock Stars is going to be a real focus in all KS2 classes this year in order to give the children real incentive to use it on a regular basis. We saw a really positive impact in Year 4 last year when they took part in the national Multiplication Tables Check as a result of using Times Tables Rockstars.

Maths homework is something that is being discussed by the Senior Leadership Team in our next meeting and we will inform parents of Maths homework plans going forward soon.

### **Query:**

*Year 1 are only receiving handwriting homework and reading at the moment.*

As stipulated in the homework policy, Year 1 will receive homework twice a week from the Spring term. For this term they will continue to receive their handwriting and reading.

## **Fundraising**

### **Query:**

*What can parents do to help with fundraising for the school?*

The most beneficial thing parents can do if they are able is to regularly donate to the Newman Fund. Information was sent out in the first newsletter of the term to remind parents of this and can also be found on the school website under the 'Parent Involvement' tab ([www.oratory.rbkc.sch.uk/parent-involvement/](http://www.oratory.rbkc.sch.uk/parent-involvement/)). Mrs Paiva will also send the Newman Fund information out to parents again for anyone that missed it.

### **Query:**

*How are funds collected for the Newman Fund spent?*

Further information regarding the Newman Fund, including how to contribute and what it is spent on, will be sent out to all parents by Mrs Paiva. Here is a reminder of how the Newman Fund is spent:

Your contributions are used to sustain our spending on:

- Reading books, and information texts to support curriculum topics
- Furniture for classrooms
- Art materials such as clay, paint, paper, charcoal
- Music specialist teachers from the Tri Borough Music Hub who are experts in their field
- Playground equipment such as cricket bats, netball hoops, and bikes and trikes for Reception
- School trips (which are always subsidised despite parents' contributions)
- Materials for practical science experiments
- Maintenance materials to keep the school bright and clean
- Computer equipment which constantly needs updating
- Speech and language therapy and Educational Psychology services to support learning
- St Luke's playground for lunch playtime to give children space to run and play
- The level of swimming lessons offered (which are higher than many other schools)
- Partnerships with curriculum specialists such as Ivydale Technology (D.T. workshops) and Westminster Archives to enrich subject areas

We are hugely grateful for any contributions that we receive and, as you can see from the list above, it benefits the children immensely.

## **Other**

### **Query:**

*Can children be prepared for the Oratory Senior School banding tests in Year 5?*

The banding tests are nothing that the children will not have seen before and are not something that the children need specifically preparing for. They are purely to ensure that schools take equal numbers of pupils from each band.

### **Query:**

*Is there a different system that could be used rather than queuing at pick up time?*

Inevitably dismissing 210 children at the same time is going to result in a small amount of waiting time. In order to try and minimise waiting time for parents, we are ensuring that the doors open at 3.30pm exactly and are now allowing more parents in the hall at a time to ensure that the queue moves more quickly.

### **Query:**

*Could there be concerts that the children take part in rather than talent shows?*

The summer term Talent Show was organised by School Council and hugely enjoyed by the children. However, this is not an annual event and school council will be organising a different event for the summer term. Music concerts are being

organised with our music teacher, Miss Martin, which parents will be welcome to join. More information with all the details will be sent out later this term.

**Query:**

*Are the speakers in the hall working properly?*

The speakers are due to be serviced very shortly (as one is not working but is easily fixed). We now have a brand new projector in the hall which the PA kindly donated towards which is proving highly trustworthy and excellent quality!

**Query:**

*Is the school deep cleaned?*

The school receives a deep clean during every holiday.

**Query:**

*Have there been any updates regarding having a zebra crossing outside the school?*

I am meeting with our Local Authority governor tomorrow and so will be able to receive the current progress on this and feedback updates.

**Query:**

*Sometimes the Infants don't know why they have received a Superstar.*

If your child comes home with a Superstar certificate this means that they have had an excellent day! There may not be one particular reason but it means that they have consistently followed the rules, tried hard with their work and shown kindness to their classmates resulting in their name being moved onto the Superstar.

**Query:**

*Can dates for social occasions be given in advance?*

All upcoming dates are put on the first page of the weekly newsletter, for example the PA social (9<sup>th</sup> November) and the Infant Nativity play (8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> December) have been in the newsletters since the beginning of term.

**Query:**

*Can sign up sheets for Parents' Evenings be sent out further in advance?*

This is certainly something that can be sent out further in advance to help with planning.