

Parent Forum minutes from 5th Dec 2025

Title of Meeting	Date of Meeting
Parent Forum Meeting	05 December 2025
Start Time	Venue
08:45am	Bishop Perrin School
Attendees	Apologies
Class reps for YR, 1, 3, 5, 6	Kereice (Yr 2) Year 4 class rep
Chair	
Kereice Heaven	

Update on School Funding (RM)

Finances are tight in all schools. Govt pays a sum for each child registered in the school. Diocese is responsible for funding capital spend on BUILDINGS only and school have to contribute 10% (BP make up this 10% from [Governors Maintenance Fund](#) or out of school budget from govt). If parents can make the donation to the GMF, it will help ease some of the pressure on the school budget.

Intakes into infant classes are dropping around the country as birth rates decline. It is forecast that the intake into classes across the borough Reception in 2028/29 will be lower by 8% than from 2023 / 24 intake.

Budget planning – which is up to 3 years ahead – needs to accommodate possibility of lower pupil numbers in the future – leading to less income.

Catering concerns:

‘Quality appears to be declining, presentation is off putting. Quantity is significantly reducing! Perhaps dinners should be ordered in advance to help the kitchen prepare quantities etc. I have had at least 10 parents from year 3 raise the same issue! Also, often by the time the class get their food it is cold. So this is resulting in pupils not eating and ending their school day ravenous. Snack allowance is too restricting also. Many children like cereal bars etc. and these are not permitted.’

The school meals are provided by large outside catering company that provides school meals to numerous schools locally. 2 inspections over the last year or so have both provided positive results, with one scoring 5*.

There are always at least 2 hot options available – one of which is vegetarian/ vegan.

Baked potatoes are always on offer, salad bar is also on offer daily – YR 5 pupils work on a rota to help younger pupils to help themselves.

Temperature of food is tightly controlled by the school cook.

The staff know the children very well and are very attentive, they know them by name, know what they like, encourage them to eat different foods.

Possibility to investigate – bread slices and cheese slices as an option for pupils to make a sandwich themselves.

Snacks: Cereal bars are difficult to manage as they often contain nuts, sesame and coconut, all of which are allowed in accordance with policy. Nut and other allergies are a very serious concern, and the school have a duty of care to those pupils who have an allergy to make the school as safe a space as possible.

Hydration:

‘Encourage children to remain adequately hydrated by providing regular water breaks throughout the day, ensuring all students are drinking sufficient amounts. Introduce a designated ‘Daily Hydrate’ time to support this practice.’

There are 2 breaks in the school day for hydration / toileting, and teachers manage the need for access to water or visiting the toilet during lesson time. Pupils are reminded that break time is the opportunity to have a drink / go to the toilet to minimise disruption and maximise learning during lesson time. Older pupils have water bottles accessible at their desk. Younger pupils have bottles accessible in the classroom. Children with medical needs that require support for drinking water / toileting will be managed on an individual basis.

Pick up

‘Establish orderly queues at pick-up to enhance efficiency and safety, while enabling parents with additional childcare responsibilities (e.g., collecting a sibling from another school) to collect their child promptly, particularly when they are the first to arrive.’

If a child is ready to leave then they are called forward at pick up if the parent is visible to the staff releasing the children at the end of the day. If a parent is there but the child is not ready, then the child will not be called forward to passed to the parent until they are ready. It is very helpful to staff if parents and adults collecting children make sure they can be seen by the teacher at dismissal time to assist the process'

Playground safety:

‘Ensure that adequate staff supervision is maintained in the playground at all times in accordance with school policy, with particular attention given to higher-risk areas such as climbing frames. Consider staggering lunchtime for infants and juniors to reduce congestion and minimise the risk of serious injury.’

School policies on school website: [Supervision and Playtime policy](#).

4 staff members at lunch time. 2 staff members at playtime in the morning. Playground divided into 4 zones for supervision purposes, with staff allotted to each zone. Lunch times are staggered. Staffing is reviewed first thing in the morning every day before the children arrive in school, to ensure adequate supervision is maintained.

In wet weather, classrooms are allocated for different activities. Film, board games, colouring, etc. with a staff member allocated to each classroom for supervision.

‘The playground is in desperate need of a provision for wet weather. On too many occasions the playground is flooding. Bearing in mind we have no other open space option this is not helpful to allow children much needed physical exercise. Constant jet washing is clearly not helping!’

Puddles in the playground – jet washing helps with removing clogging elements that stop draining of the rain water. Site manager has been doing this over the past week and continues monitor and there is a

noticeable improvement. The surface was upgraded approx. 10-15 years ago. Quotes will be obtained for new resurfacing, however, monies to do this work will have to come out of either school budget, SA fund contribution or fundraising as this is not a building project so Diocese is not allocated to fund this type of work (see earlier note about funding for schools).

Communications:

'It would be really helpful if communication could be clearer and sent out earlier, especially when things are being sent home or when events such as the nativity play are coming up. Sometimes the information arrives quite late, and it can be difficult to prepare or support our child properly. Improved notice and clearer updates would make a big difference for parents.'

On a positive note, the newsletter is great and informative on news, updates and dates.'

The Nativity play date has been communicated with parents since the beginning of the autumn term: Headteacher's presentation to parents, class teachers' presentation to parents, in the newsletter key dates for a number of weeks, it was on an information slide displayed in the hall during parents evening.

Nativity arrangements are deliberately kept as simple as possible, so do not require lots of input from parents and this information is in the newsletter.

The newsletter has notifications of upcoming activities, trips etc. Reception children do have weekly emails sent out of upcoming items. In Yr1 and above, children are encouraged to write in homework diaries and newsletter has more information.

Big spend school trips – Yr 5 + Yr 6 – communications about these are sent out at the start of the relevant school year. Will look at communicating with Yr3 + 4 so that parents have the opportunity to process the information well before the relevant school year for the trip – may not have up to date costs but an awareness of upcoming big trips can be passed on.

Wrap-Around Care

Breakfast club

'When will the free breakfast club be starting at the school? We understand that the UK government is rolling out a national free breakfast club programme for all state primary schools in phases, so we like to know when our school is expected to take part?'

The Govt roll out of free breakfast clubs has started. There is a focus on areas of the country currently where there is high proportion of pupils having free school meals initially before it is rolled out to all the country. This is controlled by the Government, not schools. The next round of schools receiving the grant to provide is schools with 40% or more FSM – BP does not fall into this category. When the school receives notification that we qualify for the free breakfast club provision, they will notify parents.

KOOSA: Koosa is a private company providing both breakfast club and afterschool care.

In years prior to pandemic, BP children had breakfast club at Heathfield school and BP pupils were then walked over to BP in time for start of class. BP then started it's own breakfast club at BP.

During the pandemic school closures, there was no breakfast club available.

After pandemic, BP returned to offering an in-house breakfast club for a couple of years. Paid a member of staff to be in attendance and provide food. Take up was not large as lot of parents were still working from home. When this staff member moved on, several rounds of recruitment for a replacement were not successful so the school was temporarily unable to provide a breakfast club.

Koosa only came on board once LA gave school a grant to support an external agency as Koosa require a min. of 10 children every day to run a Breakfast club at a school which we rarely get.

'It's a huge concern with Koosa kids after school clubs. I work in a way that it is hard to understand what the next week looks like. I typically try to book for Koosa on Saturday or Sunday of the week and it has been consistently booked out. It's happening several times and not just for me- more mums have flagged it too. It's not too cheap to book for the entire term. Hence the worry. It has to be allowed for adhoc basis. Pls can you flag in the forum. Thanks'

After school care is often oversubscribed. Places get booked up quickly. A conversation will be had with Koosa about increasing numbers of children places available but as they are an independent company who hire the school facilities to run their after-school care provision, the school does not have a say in how the club is run or how numbers are managed. Koosa will have a restriction on numbers to ensure they meet staff / children's ratios and taking into consideration the space that is available to them for safety reasons.

Coats at lunchtime:

'Kids are told to take their coats to the lunch hall, and some are told to either wear or sit on them so they can go play straight away. Surely coats must get dirty so if possible, the kids could just grab them from their classrooms or if they move the coat pegs in the hallway outside their classrooms. I can't imagine how tight it must be for them at lunch time if some are wearing them especially now, they are wearing a padded coat.'

Children should not be wearing their coats whilst eating lunch. The recommendations are that the children either sit on their coat or put their coat at the side of the lunch hall whilst they eat their lunch. Classrooms are NOT supervised during the lunchtime as staff are either eating their own lunch or on duty on the playground or lunch hall. Children are not allowed to go into classrooms to retrieve items for this reason.

Spelling:

'For spelling it would be helpful if they select 5 a week to focus on at home which would be very helpful like on a piece of paper.'

Learning spellings by rote has been shown it be ineffective in long-term memory recall. It can be used to pass a test in the short term but research has shown that use of words learnt in this manner are often not recalled when used in other ways such as creative writing. Instead, children have daily short spelling sessions, focused on learning and applying spelling rules, patterns and phonics knowledge, and will learn 2 – 3 'tricky' words by rote (words that don't fit a particular rule or pattern).

Show and tell / Black History Month:

'Show and tell/cultural days/ Black history month celebrations/recognition - some schools do Show and Tell or activities on a weekly basis or once a month where they can stand up and talk in front of the class which would help with their confidence.'

Also, cultural days/black history month celebrations school wide recognition would support children of colour feel more included in British culture within the school setting, improve confidence and representation of their home lives in school.'

Reception class have 'Show and Tell'. As children pass through the school over the years they are given many other opportunities to give presentations to their peers and other audiences. There is also a drive to increase oratory skills being added to the curriculum in progress.

Black History Month is celebrated through Collective Worship and through classroom learning activities.

The curriculum was reviewed to ensure that the representation across all subjects is reflective of different races and cultures, particular attention paid to the role models that the children learn about in different subjects and in collective worship.

In history, learning is planned to include opportunities to learn that Britain has always had a diverse population, with learning about migration across British history built into learning activities.

Careful consideration is given to the images used in learning resources and images to ensure they are representative of our school community.

Practice reading books are selected to be representative of the whole school community through: books featuring neurodiverse characters; books featuring characters with different physical abilities; books featuring positive female role models and real life stories of pioneering women; books with a range of family structures; real-life experiences and stories from a range of ethnic and social backgrounds; books highlighting a range of cultures and experiences from around the world; books that support mental health and wellbeing.

Books in the library are carefully selected to ensure children from different ethnic and social background have books and stories relatable to their experience, as are the key texts that children read in class as part of their English lessons.

World Book Day books are carefully selected to be representational.

If a family feels that their child's experience is not represented within the learning and provision in school, they are encouraged to share this with Miss Macklearn so we can seek to rectify this.

Road safety:

There have been a number of incidents around the roads surrounding Bishop Perrin in the last few weeks where there could have been a very serious accident or two. In some instances, BP parents have been involved. Parent reps are asked to remind parents that the highway code is still in play when you may be late – please avoid parking across driveways, on double yellow lines, keep an eye on the speed of the car etc.

Parents are also asked not to stand at chat at the zebra crossing..... stand well back if you want to talk to somebody and also keep an eye on your younger children.

Online reading books:

'We are struggling with the online reading books. We bought a new iPad to be able to access these, but still find the text small and the feel so different to reading a real book. After we finished reading, my son immediately wants to go onto another screen-based activity, and we already struggle with limiting screen time for our boys. I completely understand that there will be budget issues and issues with books not being returned, but if there was a way to send real reading books home, this would be so much better for our family. Are new books to send home something that that we could fundraise for if needed?'

Children who use online reading books for practise reading. These books are selected by the teacher – 5 to 10 mins max reading a day in YR / KS1. The class use hardcopy books in class so the online home reading is a replication of what is being read in class. Designed so that words are already known to the child and they are repeating to parents what should already be practised in class.

The way the phonics scheme is set up, is so that children are assigned a reading practice book based on the sounds they have learnt so far, and the book they have been reading in class. This can potentially mean requiring 36 copies of each book in the phonics series (150 titles – cost approximately £4 – 8 each).

This is a funding issue which fundraising can only go some way to fix, as reading books that are taken home are required to be replenished as they get lost, left at home and damaged.

Online phonics practice books are more financially viable, as it means the multiple copies of books can be assigned to the correct level of the child's reading ability which supports fluency.

The children will have read the hard copy of the book several times already during the week, and we encourage daily practice of only 5 minutes a day. Practise reading should be supplemented with the sharing book that the children bring home from the library each week.

This model allows us to fund physical reading practice books from Year 2 – 6, when the allocation of books does not have to be as precise as in Year R and 1, and does not need to match what they are reading in class

Boxes / year for belongings:

'I had as suggestions were a box for each class to put jumpers, hats etc into in the playground to try to prevent the lost property problems. I did see that something similar has been suggested previously, but I'm not sure if it has been tried already?'

Look at a designated box / year group in the playground for belongings to be placed in during lunch / break so that less is left out in the playground because children have forgotten to pick up their belongings before returning to class.

Other:

'We've been really impressed with the care taken in helping the new Reception children to settle and feel part of the school and we'd like to thank all of the staff for their hard work with this.'