



Celebrating learning together in faith, hope and love

Parent Forum Pilot Meeting : Friday 12th July 2019

Attendees:

Adrian Corke (AC) - Headteacher

Charlotte Holder (CH) - Parent Governor

Yin Jones - Parent Representative Y3

Laura Stewart – Parent Representative Y1

Zoe Somolu (ZS) - Foundation Governor

Sarah Dinsdale - Parent Representative YR and Y3

Rachel Arney -Parent Representative Y1

- 1) Introductions were made and ZS provided further detail and explanation about the purpose of the Parent Forum and the importance of getting input from parents to help and support the school.
- 2) Four issues had been raised by the parent representatives as these were discussed.

i) Is BP twinned with another school? If so, how does this benefit children and staff?

AC confirmed there was currently no formal twinning however historically BP had been part of a school exchange programme, organised through the British Council, where a BP teacher visited schools in Namibia and South Africa with reciprocal visits made to BP.

St Edmunds School have asked BP to be involved with Friends of the Holy Land, a Christian-based charity that supports Christians living in the West Bank in Israel. This project is currently being considered by the SLT with regards its feasibility and if agreed, will commence in 2019-20.

NO ACTION.

ii) How can we work together to encourage open, constructive and positive conversations between school and parents, particularly outside of formal opportunities that already exist (recognising time constraints).

The group discussed the importance of informal communication and being able to resolve concerns quickly to ensure they don't escalate. It was noted that the drop off arrangements for Reception allowed useful informal discussion or information exchange with the teacher. AC said that this new arrangement, in place since 2017-18, was as a result of feedback from parents linked to transitioning from nursery settings to school and the congestion for Reception children trying to access the side alley onto the playground in the mornings, which was causing anxiety for both children and parents. AC clarified that it is was not possible to replicate this arrangement for other classes by letting parents into the playground in the morning due to safeguarding issues.

The school offers a number of formal and informal 'touch points' for communications between school and parents throughout the course of the school year. AC explained that whilst BP is only legally required to offer one formal meeting per year for parents to meet with the teachers, Bishop Perrin offered two formal meetings (1 before the Autumn half term and 1 in January/February) to support communication between parents and teachers. Additionally, in response to feedback from parents, the Open Classroom evening (around March/April) has been recently introduced to further this. This is in addition to our Open School Morning that is held in July when the school is opened up for parents and other family members to visit and look around all the classrooms. AC reiterated that the school supports and encourages parents and carers to speak to teachers at pick up at the end of the day or if it's easier, to request a meeting either before or after school.

The group discussed the weekly newsletter and the formal and informal opportunities for parents and carers to meet teachers (as described in the paragraph above) and whether we need to assess if these are the right opportunities and if they are reaching all or the right audiences. Do we need to engage with fathers more? Are parents able to use the current 'touch point's – not all parents do pick-ups. Are they distracted by children or feel unable or anxious to raise the issues? Alongside the responsibilities of the school, the importance of parents/carers also taking responsibility to read information from the school was also raised.

It was discussed that it would be useful to have information from the school newsletter detailed on the school calendar. AC said that this was not practical as it would be a duplication of information that has already been published and that parents need to be responsible for reading the newsletter thoroughly.

ACTION: Consider how we can get parents/careers discussing school communications and feeding back.
ACTION: Consider use of an electronic suggestion box (TypeForm) to support communications strategy.

iii) How to further improve inclusion and fairness in terms of the selection of pupils for lead roles in academic and extracurricular activities. In particular how can we balance selection based on ability with the desirability of ensuring that opportunities are made available to as many pupils as possible?

The group raised the issue that it can often appear to be the same children representing the school in several events whilst some pupils don't get to represent the school at all. This included sporting events such as football and netball and non-sporting events such as plays, performances and clubs.

AC confirmed that for Borough-wide sporting festivals, tournaments and leagues, the school will always aim to put out the strongest and most competitive team that it is able to select, and in a small school with a small talent pool to choose from, often it will be the same children being selected. When selecting children to take part in sporting events, there will always be a fair selection process carried out either through observation during PE lessons or through trials where all the pupils are considered. However the school will always aim to run as many friendly fixtures and inter-house competitions as possible alongside the annual swimming gala and sports day. Friendly fixtures are limited by the capacity of the staff available to organise and run these additional fixtures.

The termly external achievement list was discussed and queried as to whether it should be encouraged to be broader, to include achievements from a wider range of activities or milestones that were particularly important to a pupil.

ACTION: The school to detail which pupils have been involved in key events throughout the year in the handover information between teachers.

ACTION: To encourage a broader achievement list which is not only focused on formal achievements.

ACTION: To consider how the school can provide opportunities for all pupils to represent their school

iv) How does the school communicate with parents about the assessments that are carried out (Phonics Checks/SATs) and how parental expectations of the results might be managed?

AC explained that the school try to play down the assessments, to stop children and parents becoming anxious. The group felt that this was the right message but queried whether we could improve it.

ACTION: AC to consider the schools' communications about assessments to include who is being assessed, purpose of them and how and why the assessments structures change through-out the school years. For example, Y3 move towards more formal timed assessments to prepare for Y6 SATs.

3) Terms of Reference.

The group briefly discussed the terms of reference for the forum. Two key changes were requested in the suggested Terms of Reference and that:

- There should be 1 representative per class with a maximum of 8 representatives.
- Priority for involvement in the 2019-20 Forum will be offered to those representatives that attended the Pilot Forum on 12th July.
- There should be 1 meeting a term.
- The parent questionnaire should be used to lead discussion but shouldn't limit the discussion and other topic should be covered.
- The meetings should end with at least 2 or 3 positive changes that can be evolved/used.