



Celebrating learning together in faith, hope and love

Bishop Perrin School's Parent Forum Terms of Reference January 2024

Rationale

The Parent Forum (known as 'the Forum') is a body of parents/carers who represent the parents of children in each class at Bishop Perrin School. It provides an opportunity for parents/carers to put forward the views of parents to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Governing Body (GB) of the school in a meaningful and purposeful manner with the aim of strengthening the school community. The Forum is not intended to address individual issues or concerns. Instead, it seeks to discuss more general issues and identify solutions in a spirit of mutual respect.

Purpose of the Forum

The Forum works in partnership with the school:

- To learn about the school community and parental perspectives, context and history;
- To promote and enhance communication between the school and the parent body;
- Raise awareness of the views of our parent community;
- To facilitate a mechanism, outside of the annual parent questionnaire, for the parent body to provide suggestions and feedback to the SLT and the GB;
- To help develop a meaningful partnership between parents and the school to support the education and welfare of all pupils at Bishop Perrin;
- Triangulate governor, parent and staff viewpoints;
- Gain support for school projects or goals.

Meetings of the Forum will be conducted in a positive spirit, be constructive, informative and solution focused.

Scope

The Forum will provide an opportunity for consultation on matters such as (but not limited to):

- Procedures and policies which affect the day-to-day operation of the school;
- Systems of communication between the school and parents on matters concerning the operation of the school;
- Matters designed to foster greater parental participation and engagement in the education of pupils by all parents.

Some topics cannot be addressed by the Forum and should be referred directly by individual parents to the class teacher in the first instance or a member of the SLT if the issue cannot be resolved by the class teacher. These include matters such as, but not restricted to:

- Issues relating to individual children or staff
- Individual complaints or grievances

The GB remains the decision making body and provides the strategic leadership of the school.

Membership of the Forum

The Forum is made up of:

- Parent Representatives (PR)
- A member of the school's SLT
- Governor/s, one of whom will also act as Chair of the Forum.
- An Associate Governor drawn from the School Association (when applicable)

. The representatives are expected to be available for every forum meeting. If they are unable to attend, another parent can fill in. This must be agreed in advance with the Chair.

Other members of staff will be invited to the meeting if it is deemed appropriate with regards agenda items.

Parent Representatives (PR)

Ideally there will be at least one PR for each class, with each class having up to two representatives. Ideally, the Forum will include a diverse representation of the school's parent population including parents of different genders, ethnicities and different faiths; and parents with different family structures. Parents or carers may nominate themselves to become a PR for their class at the beginning of the academic year or if a vacancy occurs. Where there are more than two volunteers for a given class, an election will be held. If a class only has one PR for the academic year and they are unable to attend one of the termly meetings, they are able to nominate another parent from that year group to take their place for that meeting. This must be agreed in advance with the Chair. PRs will sit on the Forum for one year.

Parent representatives are committed to attending one meeting every term. The PRs from each year group will act as the focal point of contact for parents in their year group.

Topics for discussion

The Forum will be an opportunity for gathering, discussing and conveying parental views to the school. It will be involved in working with the school to address matters identified from the annual parent questionnaire and making suggestions to the SLT and GB regarding possible actions that could be taken to improve these issues.

In addition to this, prior to each meeting of the Forum, PRs will consult parents in their year group to establish suggested topics for discussion. The Chair will assess the submitted suggestions to ensure they meet the threshold of the Scope for Parent Forum meetings. Where it is decided that a submitted suggestion to the Forum does not meet the threshold, the PR who has submitted the suggestion will be informed by the Chair.

The suggested topics for discussion that meet the threshold will be shared with the Forum prior to the meeting in order to establish an agreed agenda and avoid duplication. The start of each meeting will focus on discussing the actions agreed from the previous meeting as a means of updating the Forum on their progress. The Forum will endeavour to discuss all points raised within the meeting. Where this is not possible email correspondence between a member of the SLT and the PRs will be used to establish if action is needed.

Where feasible, the school will arrange for a member of staff to take minutes of the meeting. If this is not possible, a member of the Forum will take the minutes. Minutes should be submitted to the Chair and SLT within ten working days of the meeting for approval. Once approved, PRs can share the minutes with the parents from their year group. Minutes of meetings will be published on the school website and discussed at GB meetings. Other than listing the names of those present at the meetings, the minutes from the meetings will be anonymised other than responses from the SLT and GB.

Frequency

The Forum will meet once every term with additional meetings held in exceptional circumstances. The Forum is scheduled to run for 90 minutes and will usually be held during the course of the school day.

Review Period

The effectiveness of the Forum and its Terms of Reference will be evaluated on a regular basis or sooner if there is a need to.

Code of Conduct

Members of the Forum will abide by the following:

- All members of the Forum will adhere to the Terms of Reference;
- PRs recognise that their role is to represent the views of parents of the children in their year group;
- All members will respect the confidentiality of the meeting and will not name individual teachers, pupils, members of staff, Governors or parents;
- Members will support the Chair in their role of ensuring appropriate conduct in meetings;
- Members will express views openly, courteously and respectfully and show respect to all members of this forum, by listening to and respecting a diverse range of opinions
- Avoid discussing individual circumstances or grievances. These issues will be directed via the school's complaint's procedure instead