

Parents Forum Minutes – 15/06/2023

Staff present – John McDonald (HT), Collette Haig (Pastoral Lead/ Family liaison), Kelly Nuttall (DHT & minute taker)

Parents/ carers = 4 people present

HT welcome – agenda shared: Homework policy/ Pupil voice

Parent – Can you explain the reflection room?

HT: Clarified it was not a detention room but a centralised place for children to complete the reflection sheets which are a part of our behaviour policy.

Parent: Do you feel the 'softly softly' approach is working?

HT: There are still consequences dependent on the incidents. This has always been the case and is stated in the behaviour policy but not on the blueprint. The restorative approach provides children with a chance to reflect on their behaviour and think of how to change it moving forwards. Most children just need a quick chat but there are some children with higher needs who do require further support.

Parent: What about the good children – how are they rewarded?

HT: Agreed that staff need to work on this and ensure that these children are recognised through phone calls home/ postcards etc (

Parents all agreed that they want these things to happen regularly

Action: Staff to send positive notes/ dojo messages/ phone calls on a regular basis

HT: We want to build consistency across the school in terms of positive recognition

HT: Pupil voice has been worked on this year. It is telling us how to improve the school. Children have not had the opportunity to do this before. Children have been very honest about what is happening in classrooms. We have listened and responded to their opinions – for example they fed back that lunch times were not as good as they could be. We have now changed this and their feedback about this has been positive.

Parent: Could you maybe use a 'You asked....We did...' board or system to show the children how their views are important?

HT: Agreed. Great idea.

Action: Look at how to set this up ready for Sept.

HT: A homework survey was sent to parents. We had ??? responses. Fed these back. Explored the question 'Does my child learn through HW?' as answer was majority neutral. Is this because the work is pitched right to ensure consolidation?

Parents agreed it was pitched correctly for their children.

DHT: We are always reviewing our HW approach. We could possibly look at introducing a topic element to HW – a project for example.

Parent: I like this idea as it allows children to develop in other ways not just Maths and English etc.

There was a discussion around whether this may become too competitive and it was decided that more thought would be given to this before a decision is made.

Action: Look into the possibility of introducing some topic based HW (possibly 1 per term across the term)

Parent: Is there a discrepancy between not finishing HW and not finishing work in class:

HT: Not finishing work in class and having to finish at break is a decision made on a child by child basis – dependent on the reason they haven't finished. The reflection room is not used for finishing work – more for if they have not followed the rules.

Parent: Consistency across 14 classes will be hard. My child struggles to write legibly but wants to finish so how best is it to balance this?

HT: If a child is a slow writer then the teacher should be aware of this and adjust their expectations accordingly. Good teachers should know their classes and be able to balance this. Teachers need to use a variety of ways to help children to achieve. Adaptations are key.

Parents agreed.

Parent: During lockdown Mrs Coogan made some short videos expanding how to do the maths HW for example. Could you do something similar again.

HT: This is something we can look at.

Action: Look at ways to use the website to share parent help videos/ examples for helping with HW

Parent: There is too much on dojo at the minute and I feel things are being lost/ missed. It would be better if the HT had a dedicated method of communication to ensure important things aren't missed.

HT: Agreed

Action: We will use ScholarPack/ text for important info. Dojo for events.

HT: What are we doing well?

Parents:

- Wraparound care – it's very accessible, no long term commitment needed etc
- Parent Forums – actions were followed up

HT: Any other business?

Parent: Are you not concerned about the number of children leaving the school? Parents are not happy.

HT: Parents need to let us know their reasons are as the reasons given are that it is nearer to home etc.

Parent: Why is the HT never on the door in the morning?

HT: Up until recent weeks the HT has been out most morning (other parents agreed with this). HT is often on the top corridor welcoming the juniors in and ensuring a smooth start to the day. Creating capacity is important and so the DHT and Pastoral Lead plus a group of TAs are almost always there to greet on the door.

Action: HT will be on the door more often when able to.

Parent: Communication is an issue. Things are sometimes not communicated or communicated short notice. Could school produce a list of FAQs for parents sharing the procedures for different things – who to go to with an issue etc?

HT: Agreed

Action: Create an FAQ document to share with parents on the website – who the SLT are, what the complaint procedure is etc

Parent: Recognition that only 4 people attended tonight's forum which is a very small percentage of parents even though it has been offered out to all.

HT: Agreed this is a shame. This is the third session of the year and others have been held at different times to allow people to attend. What can we do to improve this? How can we get parents thinking 'What can I do for St Alban's'?

Parent: Invite parents into school more. Examples such as Chatterbox, Grandparents day, workshops etc

Action: Look at calendar for next year and see what we can plan in for parents/ families

Parent: Some classes are very late out

Action: Remind staff that classes must be out on time.

Parent: Website timings of the day are wrong

Action: Rectify this

Parent: The school buying ice lollies for all children was a lovely gesture

Parent: Next year's term dates haven't been shared

Action: Share these asap

Parent: Could the school share news of all the sports teams etc on the newsletters as that is a something good that is happening.

Action: Speak to PE Lead and office to get this on after each competition