

PARENT FORUM – MINUTES
FRIDAY 9TH November 2018 9.00 am

Attendees: 14 Parents

Mrs Fairweather – Interim Headteacher - MF

Zoe Gallimore – Chair of Governors - ZG

Mrs Worrall – Minute Taker

Mrs Fairweather thanked parents for the agenda items and handed them out to all present.

Topics of Discussion

Morning Interventions

MF – In order to raise standards at Ellingham we need to look at our children’s writing and spellings. We are currently running morning intervention club from Monday to Thursday before school in order to support children to work on these skills and to help them feel confident within the classroom. The progress is tracked and parents will be given a progress report at Parent/carers’ evening.

Signs at the front and back of school

MF - We are working on this at the moment.

Parent Feedback:

- If the cost is too much considering an Interim Headteacher in place, can we look at a cheaper option for the moment.
- As we have parents of new to reception coming to look around the school, it is a bad reflection for parents who walk in.
- Parent mentioned three years ago when their child started at Ellingham the Headteacher gave a great welcome speech but at the time they were not told that she was leaving. The parents whose children are starting in September are facing the same uncertainty. What is being done to resolve this?
- Parents wanted to know what is happening about the Headteacher position and if Mrs Fairweather will stay. If not, they wished to know if MF will be part of the handover to the new headship.

ZG - The governors will advertise the Headteacher’s position in January.

Holiday Clubs

MF - There is no easy solution to this. We are currently looking at private external providers to look at what they can offer. We need to find the right provision so please bear with us. If anyone knows of providers please let MF know.

We will keep having this as an agenda item but we are not able to find an easy solution.

Parent feedback:

- Parents will forward details of clubs that may be able to run, which parents feel offer a good provision.

After school clubs

MF – We are looking at meeting with current and new providers to make sure we are providing a quality service. The offer for Spring term clubs will have changes to it. Parent questionnaire will be sent out, we welcome feedback from parents.

Drama Club

MF We have got in touch with the company that run drama club to discuss the various issues that have been raised since the start of term. If standard is not maintained we will not advertise this club from Spring term onward.

Parent Feedback:

- The club is not offering what they actually advertise.
- Can parents come and observe clubs before they decide
- Clubs that are run need to be tested beforehand
- Can you offer some music lessons as after school clubs?
- Is music part of the curriculum and do we have a music teacher in school?

MF – Ms Brooks has been going in to observe in classes to look at quality of clubs. We want to invite new clubs to run an assembly at school before we sign them up. The way forward is to ensure we have the right clubs in place and ensure quality is not compromised.

MF – We do have music lessons that run on a Tuesday morning in school, please contact KMS if you would like your child to attend. MF will put some details in the Newsletter.

Wider opportunities for Year 5 teaching every week in school. Children are learning to play the Clarinet and are encouraged to practice at home. They will be performing at a concert in the summer.

We buy into a scheme called Charanga, to deliver music in school. Mrs Pakes oversees this and supports teachers in delivering this to classes. We value our music in school and children do use it during the day.

Homework

MF – We have had an equal amount of positive and negative feedback on homework. We want our children to be organised and independent learners. We want to support families

to help children with their homework and have organised lunchtime homework club on a Thursday and Friday. We have staff available to help children at the club.

Homework Clinic – Some children feel like they don't need to complete their homework. The Homework clinic is an opportunity for them to get their homework done. We are shifting the responsibility on our children.

Parent Feedback:

- Parents are happy as children find the homework fun rather than a chore to complete.
- Can homework be sent out on a Monday morning?
- Some parents find Monday and Tuesday better to get work done due to other commitments during weekend
- If Monday not possible, please can it be sent out earlier in the day on a Wednesday?
- Spellings are incredibly challenging
- Moving away from Phonics completely is too much, parent not in agreement
- Some random spellings were included in the sheet which were very difficult
- Technique in Maths is very different, makes it harder for parents to help children
- Can we have some support/workshops?
- A parent mentioned flashcards that have been advertised on Facebook, is it worth looking into?
- Children are engaged and enjoy doing homework
- Option of Homework club is a great idea

MF – Sending homework out on a Monday is a little bit tricky as teachers need time to mark the homework from previous week. Teachers have been asked to reflect on when they get the planning and preparation done.

As for phonics and spellings, MF will look into it. As part of the curriculum we have certain words that need to be included. MF will look at spellings in all year groups. The spellings we are sending home offer a more structured way of word grouping.

MF will put some links to websites/books that explain how maths is taught in school now. MF will look at the flashcards parents mentioned and signpost parents to the right source.

We are currently looking for a Maths lead and as soon as we have appointed, we hope to run maths workshops for parents.

Emails

MF – We are organising a data collection app to ensure all the details we hold on you are correct. A lot of parents are experiencing problems with receiving emails and we are working on this at the moment. We do try to put everything up on the website too.

Reading

MF – We are aware this is inconsistent at the moment. Each half-term Senior Leaders monitor each classroom. We will be looking at reading now and we will communicate this clearly with our parents. We all need to encourage our children to read. We need to encourage children to be critical readers. We are aware from progress meetings that children know how to read but won't read. We need to make reading fun and exciting for them.

We have introduced a Nurture group in which our children in junior classes read with our children in KS1. We are trying to encourage children in both year groups to help read and learn themselves.

Parent Feedback:

- New reading scheme books are amazing
- Can there be some clarity on who is responsible for changing books
- We have to concentrate on reading comprehension
- Some parents feel like their child has not been listened to by an adult and children have been going to various year groups to read depending on their ability.
- Bookworms club used to be run before, children really enjoyed it. Can we run that club again after school?
- Parent reader mentioned some children that they read with at school have not read at home at all. We as parents need to encourage reading at home.
- Please put up dates of upcoming events on gates to encourage more parents to attend.

MF thanked everyone for attending.

Next Parent Forum TBC.

Meeting ended at 10 am