



Meeting: Autumn term meeting of the Brownlow Parent Forum

Date and time: 7th November 2023 at 9:00am

Location: Sherard Primary School

In attendance

Parents:

- Emily Marshall
- Rachael Gwynn
- Andrew Needham
- Donna Snellgrove
- Vicky Pearson

Staff:

- Vicky Sellars – Headteacher
- Sarah Child, Head of School
- Anna Duval – MET Clerk

Welcome and Introductions

Mrs Sellars welcomed everyone to the meeting. The aim of the parent forum is to hear parents voice, for parents to put forward ideas and for open discussions to take place. Parents can suggest topics or subject areas they would like to discuss or receive training in, and relevant school staff can be invited to present at meetings. Parent forums do not discuss items relating to specific pupils, specific parents, or individual staff.

A MS Forms was sent to all parents in advance of the meeting to give feedback and raise questions to the parent forum. There were 11 responses and these were used to shape discussions.

Green areas

Parents discussed the green areas around the school including the pond area, the grassed areas, and the school field at Dee Close across Thorpe Road. The pond area is being developed.

Parents asked if there will be forest school sessions. Mrs Sellars said there is a forest school curriculum and that the forest lead has left the school. They would like to train another member of staff but this depends on capacity and finances. Mrs Child said EYFS children use forest school.

What works well?

Mrs Sellars asked parents what works well?

Parents said teachers beyond their child's own class teacher know the children well and that teachers across the year band work well together.

Parents said being able to pick lunches on the new system is positive. Parents asked if it just numbers of food choices that go through to the kitchen rather than each child's choice as sometimes there is not always enough options left. Mrs Sellars said that it is just the numbers that go through to the kitchen. At lunch time KS1 go first and then KS2 is rotated so that a different year group is first/last each time and that sometimes for the last year group there may be not enough options left. Children do not always select the meals that they have ordered. Mrs Sellars said they are looking at solutions for example using wrist bands.

What can we do better?

Mrs Sellars asked parents what can we do better?

Weduc

Mrs Sellars explained why Weduc was introduced. The Mowbray Education Trust Heads meet each week and were looking at ways to improve school communications. A representative from Weduc visited and gave a presentation and they thought it would be the solution. All primary schools in the trust have introduced Weduc and are experiencing various issues. Mrs Sellars says Weduc isn't working well for parents, staff, and admin. Weduc support team are working with the trust and are adapting the system to meet the school's needs. Mrs Sellars said she thinks the app will evolve and improve.

The app was looked at and parents discussed the ways in which they use Weduc.

Parents said they get a large number of notifications for the same message and it doesn't always clear. Parents said sometimes they get multiple reminders for events like the school disco and for others there are none for example this parent forum.

Parents said the Weduc app is not user friendly.

Parents said they have experienced difficulties with payments on Weduc and one ended up paying 3 times for the same activity.

Parents gave an example where they were not aware of the red, green, amber behaviour system. A teacher had put some information on the Weduc noticeboard but no one was aware that it was there as there wasn't a notification.

Behaviour Culture

Mrs Child said they are aware not to overload parents with too much information at induction but need to include an explanation of the behaviour culture used in school. Parents said that behaviour culture should be shared up front at open days and before a child starts at the school.

A parents said they felt there was too much focus on negative behaviours and said once their child goes on to red it impacts them negatively for the remainder of the day or week. Mrs Sellars said there is a lot of restorative work that takes place to encourage children to get on to green.

Parents asked if when children get house points could they get a sticker in their book. They felt that this would be useful especially in the early years to let parents know. They said they hear about negatives but not positives. Mrs Sellars said they are introducing postcards that will be given to children to take home to parents when they achieve silver and gold award of house points.

Communication

Mrs Sellars said she is aware that school communications with parents needs to be improved.

Parents said that more communication is needed to explain the school routines when moving to year 1, for example, where to line up and where the classroom is. Mrs Sellars said that the transition from EYFS to Year 1 is a big step and said she will see that this information is provided.

Parents felt they are provided with little information on what their children are doing.

Parents said there were photos in reception.

Mrs Sellars said they had hoped that Weduc would help staff to share photos on the class pages. Mrs Sellars said a finance request has gone in to provide staff iPads and once they have them staff will be able to use the class pages on Weduc. The plan moving forward is for staff to upload photos twice a week on the class pages on Weduc

Parents said they have only just received the curriculum knowledge organisers. Mrs Sellars said the curriculum knowledge organisers should be available by the first week of term or earlier.

Parents said they don't know how to communicate with class teachers and asked if it is via email or via messages on Weduc. Mrs Sellars says a clear path is needed and that messages may not be seen until the end of the day therefore she suggested sending an email to admin@brownlowprimary.org for attention of the class teacher.

Parents said it is important for parents of all for years groups to have logistical information which is often assumed it is known but is not always. Which door to use, P.E. days.

Parents said as they were unaware in advance of starting school that children wear P.E. kit for the whole day on P.E. days rather than school uniform and had over bought school uniform.

Parents asked if communications sent from school could be proof checked as sometimes dates are missing.

Mrs Sellars asked how often parents want to hear from her with a weekly/half termly newsletter.

Parents said a monthly newsletter with achievements and upcoming dates would be useful.

Parents said they would welcome visibility of the Headteacher in the playground each morning. Mrs Sellars said she is always on one gate and will rotate gates to be seen at all gates.

Parents noted that the school uses twitter/X but not many parents see this as they don't use it and parents tend to use Facebook more.

Parents and staff discussed that many good things happen at Brownlow but more communication is needed. Mrs Sellars said there is a fine line between bombarding parents with information and providing the right amount.

Parents evenings

Parents asked if parents evenings could be in person. Mrs Sellars said many parents prefer online meetings and that the school will do a mixture of online/in person parent evenings. Parents said there wasn't enough time to discuss issues when children have more needs. Mrs Sellars said additional time can be arranged for this.

Enrichment activities

Parents asked if there is an enrichment timetable and are there any clubs are EYFS. Mrs Childs said they have not previously had clubs for EYFS children as they play and relax during the lunch break however with continuous provision this may be considered moving forward. Mrs Sellars said EYFS do have activities but they take place during the school day. Mrs Sellars said there are a number of sporting and music extracurricular activities and a gardening club.

Mrs Sellars thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 9:45