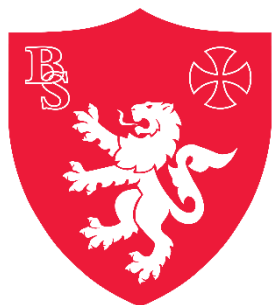


Parent Forum Minutes



CHILDREN COME FIRST.

Meeting title: Autumn term meeting of the Brownlow Parent Forum

Date and time: 9th November 2022 at 9.00am

Location: Brownlow Primary School

In attendance

Parents:

- xxx
- xxx
- Richard Harley
- Samantha Sanders

Staff:

- Mr. Toon - Headteacher
- Michelle Wright – MET Clerk (Minutes)

1. Welcome and Introduction

Mr. Toon welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the purpose of the Forum.

It was explained that key issues would be reported back to the Community Committee of the MET Trust Board to enable the Trustees to hold the school to account. It was explained that minutes from the meeting would be produced and then published on the school website for parents' information.

An online survey had been sent to parents a week before the meeting to gather views on what could be improved and what worked well. The responses from the survey were used to guide the discussion. Parents also had the opportunity to raise other matters.

2. What could be improved:

Parents' evenings: Some parents had expressed a preference for face-to-face parents' evenings. Other parents found the virtual parents' evenings more convenient. Mr. Toon said a face-to-face option was available and this was stated on the letter. Parents were also able to request a longer meeting with their child's teacher should there not be enough time at the parents' evening.

Communications: Feedback from the online survey had found that some parents felt they received too many emails/communications from the school. It was mentioned at the meeting that a number of notifications came through at the same time which could be overwhelming and it was asked whether parents could control their own Gateway notifications. Mr. Toon agreed to look into this.

Mr. Toon informed parents the school was looking at introducing a new communication platform to help reduce the number of emails that were sent out. Parents also raised that a number of communications often contained errors and had to be re-sent. Mr. Toon acknowledged this needed to be addressed with the office staff.

It was confirmed that the Brownlow Bugle was no longer produced as other parent communications had been introduced. Parents said they would like to see what is going on across the school and suggested that a short (one page) communication could be produced on a termly basis to share what pupils had been doing and to highlight some of their achievements. It could also be a way to promote opportunities for parents to support the school, e.g., via volunteering or career links.

Changes to lunch menus: It was noted by parents that a number of changes had been made to the menus and it was asked whether children should be informed in advance. Mr. Toon confirmed this was the case, although the school was reliant on the external catering company that provided the lunches to notify of changes.

Storage of lunch bags: Parents were concerned that lunch bags were getting wet due to being stored outside in all weathers. Mr. Toon agreed more suitable storage was needed and said the school was looking at getting rain covers for the cages or another type of shelter. Parents asked whether it was possible to store the lunches near the pupils' bags in school. Mr. Toon said this could be looked into, although it might be difficult due to the space available.

Behaviour culture: The online survey had found some parents thought the uniform rules and some of the other behaviour rules were too strict and/or unnecessary. Mr. Toon said a communication would be sent out to parents to reiterate the rationale behind the school's approach to curriculum. This was an approach that had been adopted by the whole Trust. It was explained that the policy was based on the research of Tom Bennett, a behaviour specialist and former DfE advisor. The aim was to instil behaviours and attitudes that would set pupils up for greater success at secondary school and into their adult life. It was commented upon that new parents had been made less aware of the behaviour culture and it would have been useful to have been introduced to it earlier. This was noted by Mr. Toon.

Extra-curricular activities: Parents queried the fairness of the 'first come first served' approach to joining clubs. It was pointed out that this gave parents who checked their emails at an earlier time of day an advantage over parents who looked at things later. Mr. Toon said the school tried to ensure all pupils who wanted to participate in a club got the opportunity to do so. It was also noted that some priority had to be given to vulnerable children. Parents asked whether the teachers could have more of a say in allocating pupils to clubs and this was noted by Mr. Toon.

Transition to secondary: Parents asked whether it was possible the Year 6 pupils could be visited by some former Brownlow pupils at John Ferneley as part of their transition programme in the summer term to help allay any anxieties they

had about moving up to secondary school. Mr. Toon agreed to raise this with the relevant senior leaders. It was confirmed that the Head of Year at John Ferneley would visit each Year 6 class in the summer term.

County lines: Concerns about young people being approached by gangs in the local area were noted. Mr. Toon confirmed the school was aware of the issue and the vulnerability of some pupils to this. Parents were informed that safeguarding measures were in place and the school's Pastoral Manager was able to put support in place for pupils affected.

Residential trips: Parents wanted to see better communication regarding residential trips, particularly when it had been decided not to arrange a residential that year. Mr. Toon explained that residential could not be guaranteed for all pupils. Residential needed to be reviewed on a yearly basis to take into account staffing availability and costs. It was suggested this be communicated to parents so as to manage expectations.

Playtime mixing: There was some concern about the younger children being on the playground at the same time as the older children. Mr. Toon informed parents that from the week beginning 7th November, teaching assistants would be on the playground to monitor the situation. It was agreed to review how this working at the next Parent Forum in February.

3. **What works well:**

- Great teachers.
- Quality of teaching. Phonics teaching was noted as especially good - parents had seen their children make significant progress and praised the enthusiasm of staff which was evident in their children's learning.
- Availability of information about their child's learning via Tapestry, Dojo and learning maps - parents said this helped them to better support their child's learning.
- Good variety of extra-curricular activities – not just sports.
- Reading certificates – parents noted these were a good way to encourage reading in pupils of all abilities. Mr. Toon agreed to check whether these were still awarded.

Mr. Toon thanked the parents for attending and for their contributions.

It was confirmed that further Forums would be held on 9th February (at 3.30pm) and 24th May 2023 (at 6.00pm).

The meeting closed at 10.00am.