

# Parent Forum Minutes



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| <b>Meeting title:</b> | <b>Brownlow Parent Forum</b>   |
| <b>Date and time:</b> | <b>Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 9.00am</b>   |
| <b>Location:</b>      | <b>Meeting at the school</b>   |
| <b>Parents</b>        | Krzvstof Randzio<br>Olubukola Olawade<br>Andrew Needham  |
| <b>In attendance</b>  | Vicky Sellars, Headteacher<br>Sarah Childs, Deputy Head<br>Susan Beasley, Executive Lead for Governance and Compliance<br>Kelly Morris, Admin assistant<br>Anna Duval, MET Clerk |

## Welcome and Introductions

Mrs Sellars welcomed everyone to the Parent Forum meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

Mrs Beasley said that Brownlow is one of the schools in Melton Mowbray Trust and explained the governance structure. There are opportunities for parents to become a governor in one of the three local governing committees: the Performance Committee, the Curriculum Committee and the Community Committee. If any parents are interested in finding out more about the role of the parent governor or is interested in becoming a parent governor please ask the school to share your contact details with the Governance Manager.

The rationale of the Parent Forums are to provide feedback and suggest improvements, and to help promote positive and effective two-way communication between parents and the Trust. The improvement of children's learning experience is the Forum's clear and consistent goal.

Parent Forum will not be discussing items relating to specific pupils, specific parents, or individual staff: this should be discussed one to one with the relevant teacher or Headteacher as appropriate.

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 16 responses and these were used to shape discussions.

The minutes from the parent forums and a report that includes main themes are presented to the Community Committee and then are reported to Trustees. The minutes are made available to parents via the school website.

**Feedback from Parents MS Forms: What is Working Well?**

- Staff are amazing and support us well.
- The school facilities and events, these are varied and our child enjoys the experiences.
- Excellent teaching and support of the children. Lots of feedback given to the children on their work.
- Newsletters. Class dojo, good to be able to receive photos and updates. Class teacher usually responsive.
- Quality of the teaching, children are happy.
- To me everything is fine.
- I am happy with everything.
- The support from the staff when a child needs extra care.
- The general day to day running of the school, communication has improved and SEN accommodations are better than historically.
- More communication between parent, teachers and kids.

**Feedback from Parents: What could we improve?**

- Communication and letting parents know more. We still do not know how this class and year merge is happening and we was invited to a meeting but not aloud to ask any questions.
- Changes of PE days on a regular basis without clear communication. Also relying on children who are known not to perhaps communicate as well as others to tell parents these changes. 2 platforms of communication, very confusing especially if you have more than one child at school. One should be posting news and photos etc. One for communication and payments.
- Using 3 apps for 3 different functions from the school. receiving 10-15 notifications for single messages on each of these apps. These notifications and messages need to be reduced and condensed, I believe that's why so many messages are being ignored by parents. Additionally, ordering meals isn't as straight forward as it should be for any school. To summarise, communication from the school needs to be more efficient and effective.
- More curriculum time dedicated to outdoor learning, art and creative subjects. Less use of homework involving screens (eg times tables games) - many parents are trying to encourage time away from screens for well-being.
- Still frustrating that we have to have 2 apps for communication. We can't log absences so have to call or email.  
Still lots of emails despite having two apps!
- Late notice of additional inset days. More inset days than previous years. Excessive discipline (for the sake of it) at times.

- To many discos! A lot of fundraising recently and it's hard for some of us to keep up and afford it.
- Giving the parents an opportunity to view the children's work on another time other than a rushed parents evening. 'A chance to share' would be a lovely opportunity.
- Events and call for donations.
- communication and organisation.
- Unconscious bias against pupils that are not as academically gifted or sporty and more introverted; I feel that if you're not good at extroverted activity, such as sports or strong academically, other talents can go unnoticed.
- Mostly communication I think.
- Mostly communication!
- Why are my children learning about the Qur'an before our own Christian believes, in my opinion this is wrong and needs addressing. We live in England and not a Muslim/Islamic state.

**Feedback from Parents: anything else you would like to discuss:**

- The methods of assessment of reading seem to place the emphasis on competition/ quantity of reading rather than enjoyment of reading.

Children have an enjoyment of reading session every week. Reading badges include the most improved and most enthusiastic in addition to other reading badge incentives.

- Changes to mixed classes next year. How are they going to be monitored and assessed?

The classes will be monitored and assessed as they are currently. Children's learning are assessed by their class teacher and there are year group assessments. The school are scrutinised and assessed by the Trust and the local governance committees and the Trust Board and its committees.

- More recognition of individuality.

**Events**

Parents said the Christmas decoration day event where families came into school and joined children in making Christmas decorations was good.

Mrs Sellars said there was good parental engagement in the event and would like to offer similar events to engage with parents further.

Mrs Beasley said that events for families that includes activities with children are a positive way to engage with parents.

Mrs Sellars that there is limited time to view children's books during parents' evenings and they are planning an event for families to come and view children's work.

Action: The school to arrange events that families may attend and share activities with children.

**MCAS Parent Portal / Bromcom**

The Parent Forum discussed the apps used and communication. There had been a number of MS Forms responses raising concerns with communication and the apps used.

MCAS is the parental portal to the Bromcom management information systems that has been introduced Trustwide.

The school said they welcome feedback from parents as the school can only view the admin side and will feed back comments to the system providers.

Parents said app's font size is too small and they are unable to zoom in. The school are having similar problems when sending messages.

Mrs Beasley asked the school to report this issues about the font size issue and inability to zoom in when using MCAS to the CFO for follow up.

Mrs Sellars said the staff are learning how to use the system and are finding it has limitations.

The school still uses the ClassDojo app for announcements and tapestry in early years for online journals.

### **Recording absences**

MS Forms responses included parents being unable to record a child's absence on the MCAS /Bromcom app.

Mrs Morris said that parents were able to record absences on the previous app used and are able to via the web version. Parents are not currently able to record absences on the MCAS app but this feature is in development.

Mrs Morris said to record an absence parents can either email the school admin, send the school a message through MCAS or telephone the school.

Action: The school will recommunicate to parents' ways to report their child's absence to the school.

### **Volume of messages**

Parents said it would be useful to stick to a time frame of when messages can be sent.

Mrs Morris said that if a school event is cancelled at short notice sometimes a message needs to sent straight away. Messages are scheduled to be sent at 4pm but they don't seem to go through at the schedule time. Mrs Beasley will feed the concerns of messages not being sent at the scheduled time back to the CFO for investigation.

Mrs Sellars said in recent years to schools has moved from Gateway, to Weduc and now Bromcom. Bromcom's primary function is a management information system and its other functions are still in the process of being implemented across the Trust.

### **Class changes**

Parents said they were happy with the class changes.

Parents asked if children moving into year 5 in the year 5/6 class will keep the same class teacher next year.

Mrs Sellars said the aim is to keep the same teacher throughout but this will depend on staffing and class dynamics.

### **Outdoor Learning**

The outdoor canopy is being built in the summer to encourage more outdoor learning.

The trim trail in the process of being developed. Thanks was given to the Friends of Brownlow for funding towards the trim trail.

There are a variety of outdoor activities included in the curriculum for all year groups. For example, Year 1 are having an Eco Day outside today.

### **Inset days**

The additional inset days were Trustwide training sessions for all staff to implement additional curriculum training. At Brownlow it enabled staff to meet in their new teams and plan the curriculum for the mixed aged classes.

### **School Discos**

The Friends of Brownlow PTA run a number of fundraising events including discos to raise funds for additional resources for the school and are planned so that they are spread throughout the year.

### **School Clubs**

There are a wide range of opportunities and recognition is based around values. The school run competitive and non-competitive clubs, music, choir, chess and gardening. Mrs Sellars will review the clubs and ensure there is a broad spread to be suitable for many interests.

### **Teaching of religious education**

The school follows the national curriculum that includes a statutory requirement to teach religious education and British values.

Mrs Sellars thanked parents for attending the Parent Forum and thanked parents who provided feedback by the MS Form.

The meeting ended at 9:45am