

Parent Forum Minutes



CHILDREN COME FIRST.

Meeting title:	Autumn term meeting of the Ab Kettleby Primary School Parent Forum
Date and time:	Tuesday 12th October 2021 at 6 pm
Location:	Meeting at the school

In attendance	*	Andrea Brown, Headteacher.
	*	Helen Lowe.
	*	Rachel Connerton.
	*	Catherine Parker.
	*	Amy Clare.
	*	Tracey King
		Anna Duval, MET Clerk

Welcome and Introductions

Mrs Brown welcomed everyone to the second Parent Forum meeting and her first official Parent Forum meeting as Headteacher. She explained how it is a good opportunity for parents to give opinions and share thoughts and the forum enables parents to feedback and suggest improvements to children's learning experiences.

Mrs Brown explained that these meetings will not discuss items relating to specific pupils, specific parents, or individual staff as these should be discussed one to one with the relevant teacher or herself as appropriate and that parents do not have to wait until a Forum and can contact the school at any time

Covid Update

Mrs Brown said there were currently 9 positive cases of Covid-19 in children at the school and the school is on stage one of the Covid Management and measures are put in place.

Behaviour / Culture update

Mrs Brown gave an update of the behaviour culture that has been introduced. She said they were now six weeks into term since it was introduced. Children know what to expect in all their classes with all teachers and it takes away anxiety, routines become habit and it allows teachers to get the best out of each child. She said that Senior Leaders from Mowbray Education Trust visited the school today to walk around and observe the school as a whole. One boy was quoted

as saying to them “I was on yellow today and I am disappointed with myself, and I am now aiming for gold.” This shows a good reflection and understanding of his own behaviour. Mrs Brown said the school was looking to introduce silver and gold stickers as awards for the children to wear. It was also observed that children didn’t speak with the visitors, and this was an area to work upon for children to learn how to speak to visitors and be proud of their school.

Feedback

Mrs Brown shared the following feedback from parents:

- *Happy with everything that has been put in place for my child.*
- *Both children are happy and settled in school.*
- *Child seemed quite anxious at the beginning of the year when new rules were being introduced however this has eased and she seems more settled and often comments about being on silver.*
- *Child seems enthused by the new system and is eager to please to get onto silver and gold!*
- *Routine of lessons & learning seem to help with enthusiasm.*
- *Being physically in school and having the continuity of regular staff is a real benefit to the children and let's hope this continues through the whole school year.*
- *Generally, we are very happy with the learning experience at school. They seem to love learning and enjoy being at school.*

Discussion points suggested by parents

Mrs Brown contacted parents in advance of the meeting for feedback and questions to raise. The following was received from parents in advance of the meeting. Mrs Brown addressed each one.

- *More feedback on reading levels and more frequent change of reading book. Hard to know if there is any progression and what stage books she should be reading at home in line with school.*
- *More regular testing with accelerated reading (they’re always chomping at the bit to progress because they love reading and seem to whistle through their books!)*

We triangulate reading to ensure their book matches their phonic/reading ability. The book should not stop them from reading fluently: if it does, it is too hard. A more difficult book can be read to them/with them to expose them to a higher level of language.

Accelerated Reader – children complete a short test after each book they read and then a half termly assessment “test” where teachers can reassess their reading level.

Parents said that last year there was a process whereby children were tested after each book and therefore had got into this way of learning and asked of the child could choose when they do their test. Mrs Brown said they would make it clearer to children when they are to be tested.

Parents said that set reading time in class was positive.

Parents asked if volunteer readers can start to come into class again for side-by-side reading like they used to before lockdown. Mrs Brown said that when these activities can restart it will be for the early years classes who are encouraged to read to adults.

- *Progress in foundation stage subjects.*

Foundation Subjects are not assessed in the same way as maths or English. It is our job as teachers is to ensure we can show progress within each subject and show that children can retain prior knowledge from previous learning. This will be evident in books over the year.

Parents said they found the homework very useful as a way of helping their child with the topics.

Parents said Dojo can have glitches on some devices and shows a black line. They are unable to complete the task and it shows as an uncompleted task. Parents suggested that saving a dot in the task marks it as completed. Mrs Brown said that doing the work on paper is accepted but the school has found more homework has been returned since using Dojo.

- *Possibility if any of introducing music lessons & afterschool clubs other than sport? Maybe some yoga/wellbeing sessions as offered in previous years?*

Our after-school clubs are being reinstated (following Covid) in Autumn term and from October to Christmas we will be offering Film night, sewing club and a mindfulness club. These will change each half term and will be offered to all ages over the year.

I am currently in touch with Leicestershire Music Services to see what music opportunities we can offer.

- *As an improvement I feel designated brain breaks would benefit to help children relieve any built-up tension from the classroom environment.*

We do this naturally during the day as children can only concentrate for short periods of time.

- *Hopefully the guidance regarding behaviour will continue but without a negative effect on the children, as they try so hard and can easily become over emotional and upset with the difficult daily reminders and reprimands if forgotten.*

The behaviour culture is underpinned by research which shows routines and expectations help reduce anxiety as children need consistency and need to know what is going to happen to them that day, whichever adult is in front of them.

We rarely “reprimand” (unless a serious incident). We remind children of the rules and use positive reinforcement to identify this.

Reflections are used to calmly discuss the negative behaviours seen and to reinforce the positive behaviours we are expecting.

Parents said they felt that some children try very hard but don’t get noticed. They are in the middle and don’t misbehave nor are used as the positive example.

Parents also said that some children have taken the behaviour policy literally and sit so straight that their back aches by the end of the day. Mrs Brown said that SLANT is about children being ready to learn and is not taken to mean that they sit upright at all times.

Parents said that children can be frightened to ask the teacher when they don't know somethings. Mrs Brown said the children are encouraged to raise their hand when they wish to ask a question.

Parents said they had noticed during lockdown when home learning that there was a correlation between sitting in a straight position and writing well compared to a slouched position and producing a lesser quality piece of writing.

Mrs Brown said behaviour boost days took place in school at the start of the term and they were now six weeks into term since it was introduced. She said that an aim in behaviour is how children talk to their peers. It was noticed that children are speaking respectfully to adults but not doing so well in speaking respectfully to their peers.

Mrs Brown said the behaviour culture is working and there are exceptions written into the policy for those children that need additional support.

- *It would be nice to hear any action plans in place to help build children's' confidence, overall learning plans and academic achievement after a horrible covid experience of last year.*

Our PSHE curriculum underpins all our learning, and this works on raising children's confidence and self-esteem on a daily basis.

The website is currently being updated and Termly topic plans will be available on the website for you to see what your child is learning and is sent out at the beginning of each term.

We assess informally on a daily basis to inform our planning and formal assessments take place 3 times a year: the first is the end of November. Parents will be informed if there are concerns.

Parents said they felt the online parent evening slots were too short. Mrs Brown said the next teacher/parents evening in March will be in person and will also give the opportunity for parents to view the children's books.

- *Reinstate the pond? Possible Forest Schools?*

There are few schools in the county now with ponds due to the health and safety risks however I am looking to renew the pond area to be able to use it as a Forest School. I am looking for staff to be trained in Forest Schools – this obviously takes time.

Feedback from School

Dojo. Mrs Brown said that whilst Dojo is good for sending quick messages and reminders it is not a suitable platform for lengthy discussions or as a social media site. She asked parents to consider staff's individual working patterns and the time. She said that parents may contact her if an urgent response is required.

Residential. The prices have risen for the residentials by the companies due to Covid. The school appreciates that residentials are costly but feel that do offer good value for the activities offered. It is an optional activity.

Parents asked if the school would consider taking a longer-term member of staff on the residential trip to help children who require additional emotional support. Mrs Brown said they don't know at this stage which staff members will be attending the residential, but the children will be well cared for, and they will take this into consideration.

Staffing. Mrs Brown acknowledged that at the last Parent Forum concerns were raised about the consistency of staffing and that changes were not good mid-year. Unfortunately, one member of teaching staff is leaving. A full-time member of teaching staff has been recruited and is contracted to July 2022.

Mrs Brown said that she cannot stop staff movement during the academic year when it is their personal decision however reassured parents that there is a rigorous recruitment process to ensure quality teachers are recruited and a rigorous monitoring system to ensure quality teaching and learning across the school.

Mrs Brown said that she sees good teaching in this school but does not see inspirational teaching across the whole school and wants to improve this. She wants all children to come home excited about their learning.

Parents said that because it is a small school, they feel it more when staff leave. Parents observed that it seems to be class 3 that has had 3 teachers leaving consecutively. Mrs Brown said these were all for different reasons.

Parents said that felt that Mrs Brown had handled the change in teaching staffing well by informing parents and this has improved as previously they had not been informed.

Discussion focus suggested by Trust Board

The Trust Board may ask for opinions on certain areas for focus at the meetings from time to time and there were no items received on this occasion.

Next Meeting

The next Parent Forum meeting is on **Monday 24th January 2022 at 3.15pm-3.45pm**. There will be activities provided for children to participate in straight after school whilst their parents attend the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.