

Shirley Infant School – Parent Forum – Summer 2

Date: Wednesday 6 July @ 12noon (Zoom)

Purpose: The parent forum is an important and valued (by both school and parents/carers) communication link. It is an opportunity for parents/carers to provide feedback, seek clarity/confirmation, raise general concerns, and make suggestions. It is a two-way partnership, and the school will also utilise this platform for purposes such as to propose new initiatives, changes, or gain feedback on parental engagement. By working together, we can continue to make Shirley Infant School a great place for children to thrive and support the motto of 'Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day'.

Attendees

FOSIS Co-Chairs – Kass Colley (KC) / Megan Cox (MC)

Head/Deputy Head – Cate Gregory (CG)

FOSIS Secretary – Lynsey Powell (LP)

Parent Reps

Attendees	Apologies
Collette Thorpe (Foxes)	Katy Durston (Foxes)
Lisa Witt / Lisa Longhurst (Owls)	Hilary Rebecca / Sarah Scott (Squirrels)
Zoe Konn (Otters)	Sarah Whicher (Otters)
Jo James (Woodpeckers)	Gayle Doulton (Woodpeckers)
Maria Dimech / Tabytha Greenhalgh (Moles)	
Kerrie Reed (Rabbits)	Gemma Gore
	Tracey Ward / Natalie Formstone (Badgers)
	Gill McCann / Sarah Willcocks (Hedgehogs)

Agenda

1. Actions from previous meeting
2. Positive feedback
3. Reading/Library books
4. WOW moments
5. School gates
6. Communication
7. Special menus
8. Other

1. Actions from previous meeting

Item No.	Action	Responsible	Comments	Complete
7B	CG to speak to MarvellousMe regarding calendar link	CG	CG advised that office and MM confirm link is working. Reps using mobile devices (Samsung/iPhone still experiencing issues).	N
8B	MC to speak to Alistair Rutt regarding the use of Toyota funding to fix the bike shed	MC	LP confirmed that we can use the funding from Toyota to fund a new bike/scooter shed.	Ongoing

			CG – discussions taken place and school have chosen the style of sheds they want. Mr Davis to look at the best location over the summer holiday.	
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2. Positive feedback

LP gave a summary of the positive feedback received and also added how appreciated a lot of parents were to be able to attend the JEP festival.

- a. Big thank you to the school and teachers for organising the Hilliers trip plus all the volunteers.
- b. I was really impressed how the Sats were handled. Many thanks to the school and y2 team for making it such a smooth and stress-free experience for the children - at least in our house it was barely mentioned.
- c. Thank you to Miss Ruck and Mrs Dunford for giving the owls such a fun year, with trips and engaging activities etc to support the learning. The children have really enjoyed it
- d. Really helpful being able to wait on the playground before pick up and so any more ability to do that much appreciated!
- e. Great to be able to go into the classrooms to share the children's work, the children were so proud to show their learning.
- f. Butterflies in the class have been a real hit, and trips have been great this year, really help the children get into the topic.
- g. Definitely a sense that kids have been very happy this year and settled into school really well
- h. Thank you for everything you have done for our children in the last three years. Even through the challenges of covid you have been supportive and done your best for the children. Although they have not had a typical infant experience I think they will all look back at their time fondly. Thank you for making such an effort with the Juniors now to aid a smooth transition into year 3.
- i. Little ladybirds session for incoming year Rs are fantastic – Mrs Clark is wonderful!
- j. I think the infant staff have all been fantastic. Thanks so much to everyone for your effort and hard work.
- k. I was really pleased to be able to go into class to see the children's work on the open doors afternoon! Lovely to be able to look through the books.
- l. Thank you to Miss Sneddon for always being so quick to take action and get in touch if any concerns are raised.
- m. Year 1 school trips have been great this year, thanks to the teachers for organising them and all the parent volunteers who have stepped up to help.
- n. Thank you for all the extra opportunities that you have given the children, choir, to reading buddies, they have been really welcomed in our house.
- o. Thank you for allowing the parents to come and watch sports day, the children were so excited to see their parents in school with them.
- p. Mrs Arnott is amazing and a great teacher!!!
- q. Overall we're really pleased with the school and the teachers in general but especially the wonderful Hedgehog teachers and teaching assistants. There seem to have been some fabulous activities and events happening in school recently, both from feedback from the children and those we have been lucky enough to witness ourselves as in the Year R Celebration in May and the fantastic sports day which was such good fun and very well organised.
- r. A huge thank you to all the teachers and volunteers who made it possible for the children to take part in the JEP festival.

3. Reading books / library books

- a. A couple of parents have asked about the frequency of reading books being changed – hedgehog child has had the same book for about a month
CG advised that reading books should be changed regularly but that there is no dedicated day for the changeover, individual teaching staff can work that around their timetables which is why they ask for their reading books/reading records to be in book bags every day.

In the new academic year there will be a change to how the school approaches phonics which will change the approach with reading books. This will mean that there will be a dedicated day for changing over of reading books. More details will follow at the start of the new school year.

- b. Reading record doesn't have any log of child reading to adult at school for months (since March) – Squirrel parent
CG advised that every Year R has guided reading in school but there is no daily/weekly summary provided, this will be given at the end of each ½ term. CG requested that if parents have concerns like this, please don't wait for parent forum and raise via the class teacher so they can be addressed sooner.
- c. Library – a couple of comments about access being infrequent and sporadic to the library. Would it be possible to have a set day they are collected in or a drop off box for the class if we want to return them but the library isn't accessible?
CG made the point that the library offering is an enhancement to children's reading but that the occasions where children haven't been able to use the library have been few and far between. CG advised that each child is allowed to take one book, if they have one book out, they can't get another until the old one has been returned, which may explain why some children have kept the same book for a prolonged period of time. Yr 2's use of the library has been impacted by the various transition activities, SATS etc.
- d. Rising Stars – there was a problem of this working on the iPad, has this been resolved?
CG advised that there is still an issue. The school has raised the issue with Rising Stars but no update/timeline as yet.

4. WOW moments

- a. A couple of parents (both Hedgehog & Squirrels) commented that WOW moments are being left in book bags.
CG advised that teaching staff won't check book bags, so recommend that the children have their WOW moments in their hands as they walk in the classroom to ensure time is given to celebrate
- b. Another parent asking for clarification on how parents/children can best share wow moments outside of school with the school/teachers e.g. Gymnastics award or similar.
CG said that WOW moments are just for Year R. Other year groups get the opportunity to celebrate their successes outside of school during the celebration assembly. A child should bring what they want to share to their teacher.

5. School gates

- a. Will the school consider opening the gates in the morning and letting parents and children wait in the playground before classrooms open? It's pretty crowded and more dangerous waiting on the pavement and assume there's no longer a covid reason to not allow parents/children in?

CG advised that one of the learnings from Covid restrictions is that the approach to the start of the day enables the children to settle much better and quicker into their classrooms. CG reminded that there is a window to come into school to enable parents to be more flexible when they arrive and try to avoid the need for people to queue.

CG advised that starting from the next academic year, the school will be starting the school day at 8.40am as they have been told by the Government that they need to increase the length of the school day by 5mins.

6. Communication

- a. Can direct links to specific letters/documents be added to Weekly Comms?
CG to speak with the office team so that direct links to letters can be included in future weekly comms.
- b. Questioning the need for Marvellous Me, not received anything personal
CG said that whilst they appreciate that there are mixed opinions amongst the parent population on the benefits of Marvellous Me, but the school believe in it as a tool for the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to be able communicate both specific achievements by a child (learning behaviours) and year group weekly summaries.
- c. Comments from a couple of parents saying that they find communications confusing.
CG appreciates that there is often a lot of information shared, particularly for those parents who are new to the school. However, a lot of work has been done with the communications working group (which includes parents, teachers, school office team) to make tweaks to make improvements. Yet everyone digests information in different ways and have different preferences on the channels they use.
- d. Emailing reception. I think the 3 working day turn around is too long. It states "we will respond in 3 working days if required" I would say a response is always required even just to say thanks this has been noted. Otherwise you're left wondering if anyone has actually read the message.
CG explained that the office simply isn't resourced to be able to respond to every email that they receive but was keen to reassure parents that emails are forwarded / shared with the appropriate member of staff and where responses are appropriate they are sent.
- e. A couple of comments from parents wanting more notice on school celebration events so they can coordinate time off work.
CG said that the school tries to balance the amount of notice and information that is shared in advance as sometimes not all information is available at the time of sharing the date. CG explained that they try to give at least ½ term notice but will look to try and include times as much as possible. CG added that if they share too far in advance, it can be more confusing for parents if changes then need to be made.

- f. It would be nice if there was a general overview of what the children have been doing that week. It can just be one for the whole of year R. This could be something on marvellous me which seems quite underutilised.
CG advised that everyone should have a weekly summary of what the children have been doing in English and Maths from their year leader via MarvellousMe. CG to raise with Year R and Year 2 leads, Year 1 is happening as it should be.
- g. Could more a few more activities that the children are doing be posted on Google classroom – if it is a time constraint problem – perhaps a volunteer could assist?
CG advised that they add as much as is possible onto Google classrooms but that the teaching and office staff are at capacity. It isn't possible to allow a parent volunteer to assist due to GDPR and confidentiality.

7. Special menus

- a. A couple of comments about the special menu days, some find them difficult and others have asked if there can be a normal menu option available.
CG advised that it's not the school's choice but that they have to have them as it's what the current supplier offers and they have been having issues with their own supply chain. There will be a new catering company starting in September and the school has shared their views on theme days and they have taken it onboard.

8. Other

- a. Are any new procedures /health checks/tests /treatments etc. with our children are planned in post covid times that parents should know about? That are different from pre covid times.
CG advised that other than the Solent medical team increasing the flu nasal spray to all, there are no additional checks planned.
- b. Clarity around what happens when a child's birthday falls on a school day.
CG advised that there is no school policy on birthdays. Whenever possible, the teachers will welcome the child into the class and the class will sing happy birthday. Some teachers purchase their own stickers but it is at the discretion of the teacher and as with all things, sometime the teacher does simply forget.

CG advised that birthdays used to be celebrated each week in the celebration assembly which stopped due to Covid but CG to investigate reinstating.
- c. Anything teachers can do to reduce pen marks coming home on t-shirts which don't wash out much appreciated by parents.
CG advised that the supplier of pens assures them that they are washable. CG added that they train children to put the lids on / put the pen on the floor in front of them but it doesn't always happen. CG acknowledged the challenge and says that they continue to share this feedback with suppliers.
- d. Appreciated the Spring term child targets but haven't seen anything since and would hope there isn't anything in the end of term report that we could have been working on throughout the Summer term.
CG advised that targets set for the summer term but were given in the spring. She added that there will be targets in the end of term report as they will be what they need to start using in Year 1.

- e. Would be good to have new class info before transition day to prepare child for change especially for those who find change hard

CG acknowledged that there are pros and cons for both approaches and the approach will vary from school to school. She explained that some children respond well, others don't. She added that current research supports the school's approach but they are continually reading and reviewing what research is saying.

CG added that the school's transition programme is so strong, the children visit their new classrooms, they have story time with all the teachers, the year above answers questions for the new year group. CG explained that they are trying to give them the life skills in the safest environment, that it's important to talk about how they are feeling. There is lots of time spent on transition and change.

- f. Quite a few worried that teacher (squirrels) has been out the class an awful lot and some children unsettled by this.

CG explained that it's unfortunate, but it does happen, especially at the moment with lots of training going on for number of the teaching staff and particularly where staff are leading certain areas. We try to use staff that the children know. There is always a familiar adult in the setting.

- g. Several parents would like the Pokemon trading to be stopped completely. It seems to cause upset every week when cards go missing from bags, or a child goes to school with a load of cards to return home with only one.

CG explained that it was a request via Parent Forum for this to be allowed to happen so she was happy to stop if that was the consensus.

Agreement from class reps in attendance that this would stop from September given how close we are to the end of the year.

- h. Technical issues with online recordings – Great Fire of London video issue, which has been flagged to the school already and being looked into but there seems to be frequent issues.

CG advised that the school would be stopping DVDs and all videos would be shared on Google classroom. CG to check with Mr Hack regarding issues with people being able to access videos via Google classroom.

- i. Marwell Trip – parent helper felt the trip wasn't very well organised. Started with the coach driver not knowing where he was going, resulting in them arriving 45mins late and missing the first session. The lack of organisation from Marwell was also commented on and that the educational sessions were not engaging for the age group.

CG advised that they had raised a complaint with the coach company regarding the standard of the driver that was allocated. Marwell did their best to rectify with the lateness by moving things around. It's not something that has happened before.

- j. Waiting area outside the hedgehog class can get very busy – other parents with pushchairs going to the other year R classes struggle to get through, especially if unwanted furniture etc is left there.

CG acknowledged that the layout of that area was not the best and can often get congested. She advised that one of the jobs for Mr Davis over the summer holidays was to look at the area to see what improvements can be made.

- k. Could we fund raise and purchase some fans for the year R classes – the classes get very hot and limited windows and doors can open in summer
CG advised that the classes do have fans but staff haven't felt that they have needed them. CG doesn't feel that they are needed for the moment.
- l. New Menu – good variety menu - however twice the fruit has ran out and my child has had to have the ice-cream – if it shows ice-cream on the menu as desert is there usually alternative offered?
CG explained that the current catering supplier was having supply issues which is why this had happened. She added that they would always prefer to give the children fruit rather than ice cream.

Additional questions:

ZK asked:

- When will the current Year R get MCAS logins? CG advised that they would get them in time for Year 1
- Will Year R get their water fun day? CG explained that details were still be discussed and would be shared shortly.

CG requested that personal details relating to staff members were not included within the Facebook Groups. The school has permission to share details within their own communications and website but this does not extend to social media channels.

Discussions following the Parent Forum identified the Facebook post that was the issue and the post has since been updated to remove any personal information related to the staff member.

All class reps have been made aware that no personal details related to staff members can be shared in the Facebook groups and will remain vigilant. Rules in all Facebook groups have been updated to reflect this requirement.

Actions from July Meeting

Item No.	Action	Responsible	Comments	Complete
6A	CG to speak with the office team so that direct links to letters can be included in future weekly comms.	CG		
6F	CG to speak to Year R and Year 2 leads regarding weekly updates of Marvellous Me related to maths and English	CG		
8B	CG to investigate returning to celebrating birthdays during celebration assemblies	CG		
8G	CG to communicate that the sharing of Pokemon cards will no longer be possible on a Friday	CG		