

Shirley Infant School – Parent Forum – Summer 2

Date: Thursday 13 July 2023 @ 12noon (Teams)

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 – [Megan Cox \(MC\)](#) / [Kass Colley \(KC\)](#)

Head/Deputy Head – [Cate Gregory \(CG\)](#)

FOSIS Secretary – [Lynsey Powell \(LP\)](#)

Parent Governor - [Martin Walker \(MW\)](#)

Parent Reps

Attendees	Apologies
Reena Jewell (Badgers)	Becky Evans (Owls)
Tabytha Cunningham (Woodpeckers)	Gemma Thomas (Moles)
Vicky Crawford (Foxes)	Laura Sparks (Foxes)
Hector Uhalte (Hedgehogs)	Chloe Foster (Rabbits)
Kathryn Payne (Squirrels)	Annemarie Clayton (Otters)
Hilary Pearson (Rabbits)	Claire Shrugue (Owls)
Becky Maclean (Moles)	Kitty Galpin (Otters)
Natalie Steel (Woodpeckers)	Tracey Sindall (Squirrels)

Agenda

1. Actions from previous meeting
2. Positive feedback
3. Feedback on celebration events
4. Reading
5. Communication – Dates
6. Communication – With Children
7. Donations for in-school activities
8. Star of the Week
9. Transition
10. Other

1. Actions from previous meeting

Item No.	Action	Responsible	Comments	Complete
4.1	CG to speak to Year R teaching staff to refer to gross motor skills session as PE	CG	Spoke to Year R teachers, they will bear in mind for next year. Current Year returned to PE in the summer term	Y
7.5	CG to investigate the best way to share with parents if children need additional reading support	CG	CG confirmed that it will be written in reading diaries.	Y
9.2	CG to investigate with USH the use of School Cloud to book parents evening meetings	CG	CG spoke to USH and they are in the middle changing systems so CG will connect with them again when their new systems are in place. CG advised that they continue to review the process for signing up for parents evening	Y
11.3	Add descriptions of what will be celebrated at Celebration Events	CG	Amanda in the office is trying to do this where possible but sometimes the teachers don't always know exactly what will be shared for each event, a lot depends on the children and what they have been up to.	Y
11.3	Seek parent opinions on whether they prefer all celebration events to be face to face or 50% face to face and 50% virtual or all virtual	All Class Reps	See section 3 for summary of feedback collected.	Y

2. Positive feedback

- 2.1. As we reach the end of my second child's journey through Shirley Infants, I'd like to commend the consistently fantastic teachers we've had every year. The way they inspire enthusiasm for learning in the children is amazing and I hope they know they are very much appreciated.
- 2.2. Loved the movie project, the children had so much fun with it and were so proud of their movies.
- 2.3. The approach taken to the yr2 SATs was great to reduce any worries/pressure on the children, thank you!
- 2.4. I'd also like to add that we think Mr Simmonds has been a breath of fresh air. My child has really enjoyed his class and he is an asset to the teaching staff.
- 2.5. Thank you to the hedgehog staff team for helping my shy little one settle in so well.
- 2.6. Great trips and bug ball and celebration events.
- 2.7. I think all the performances have been lovely especially the recorder and the movie. I loved the award ceremony. I think the effort they've put in has really shown and my son has been really engaged with it.
- 2.8. I was really impressed by the recorder performance. The children did so well, and Mrs Clark did wonders teaching 90 children how to play.
- 2.9. A big thank you for the movie they did, and all the other performances and events they have planned for the last bit of Year 2.
- 2.10. Thanks to all the Year R staff for making this year a wonderful introduction to school life for all our children and enjoy the summer break! Also, thanks to FOSIS for all the wonderful events this year.
- 2.11. A huge thank you to all of the teaching and support staff for the past three years, you have consistently provided a safe and nurturing place for my children to thrive. When concerns have been raised, you have dealt with them quickly and sensitively and that is very much appreciated. For all the extras on top of the day job that you

do to make learning fun and engaging, please know they are appreciated beyond measure.

- 2.12. Thank you Mrs Arnott and Miss Howard for all of your hard work and making every day a fun day for Hedgehog class.

MC summarised the positive feedback received from parents.

3. Feedback on celebration events

General feedback via reps

- 3.1. Majority prefer a range of times and days (not just Wednesday/Thursdays), and in person where possible.

CG explained that the days are chosen based on staff availability, the timings will always remain the same.

- 3.2. For those not able to attend could the slideshow/video be added to Google classroom afterwards?

CG explained that whilst this seems like something that is straightforward and quick for a teacher to do, all of these little things add to an already heavy workload, so this won't be possible.

- 3.3. As much notice as possible of in person events is appreciated and spread out a bit. For example, the movie premiere was a struggle for many parents as date only put out in diary just before half term and books was the day before.

CG explained that we share dates a term in advance.

- 3.4. Only one parent felt they were too frequent! Caveat, this parent has two children in infants.

Facebook Poll

CG said thank you for doing the poll, this has helped us reach a wider audience than just those parents who might be willing to share their feedback with a rep.

****Based on the following results and in agreement with class reps in attendance at the meeting, celebration events will remain in person only.****

Year Group	In Person	Online	Mix
Year R	61%	0	39%
Year 1	77%	0	23%
Year 2	30%	0	70%
Overall	60%	0	40%

4. Reading

- 4.1. Little Wandle not working as planned. Books are returned but the books sent home are not Little Wandle and not the one they are reading in class. Parent can't remember the last time they had a Little Wandle book home. Can we fundraise to purchase more books? (Moles)

CG explained that the Little Wandle scheme is a new one and they are still finding their feet and they recognise that there have been bumps in the road. In the case of Year 1, they didn't quite have the right number of books for the phase 5 so they used old books that were phonetically matched to read at home. They do feel that they are now back on track with Year 1.

The school has allocated some of its 2024 budget to purchase more books

- 4.2. Reading diaries haven't been written in since March and reading progression slips not added since March does this mean the children have made no progress? Kids love it when they get a new slip and it's written in once a half term. (Rabbits)
Children keep their own records for that

CG spoke to the Year 1 team regarding this and they explained that they had missed writing targets in the books due to the phonics screening and apologise for that, they are working on them now. CG did highlight that many children are not coming into school with their reading record books which makes it difficult for the teacher to keep track of ones that were missed when they writing in them.

5. Communication – dates / details around events

- 5.1.** Several parents referencing the issues with communicating dates and dates changing, examples include Woodpeckers sports day at Wordsworth still being advertised in weekly comms in July but the children say they have already been? School fair date, deadline for feeding back comments on class allocations, sports day timing (changed / changed back), Nativity.

MC acknowledged that some of the date changes were down to FOSIS having to change the date of the Summer Fair.

CG explained that sometimes things happen and dates do need to change. For example the JEP sports events, the school combined two classes to prevent a clash with the Year 2 leavers performance. The teachers just forgot to let the office know to remove it from weekly comms.

- 5.2.** Year 2 leavers performance – very little detail shared on this event in any comms, just the start time, nothing about how long it is or if children can be taken home early if it finishes before the end of the school day. Parents have called the office but no one has been able to confirm the information. It makes it very difficult for working parents to plan.

CG said that the school had taken on board points raised by parents and would ensure that for next year, more details would be included to help parents be able to plan.

6. Communications – with the children

- 6.1.** A couple of parents shared feedback where their child had come home from school confused about a situation and didn't seem to understand what had happened:

- 6.1.1.** A small group of children were taken away from a 'fun' exercise to read. No explanation was provided to the children and my child was confused as to why and saw this as a punishment especially as they were all excited about the fun exercise. Contact was made with the teacher the following day and all was explained and resolved promptly - thank you!

CG explained that children are doing different things all the time, but learning should not been seen as a punishment. Year 2 have all of their assessments to work through and so children are working on different things at the same time. CG added that she was pleased to hear the teacher had resolved this.

- 6.1.2.** Auditions for Year 2 leavers performance – children were given scripts to practice on the premise that auditions were held and open to all. Then specific children were called out to audition and parts allocated and announced. No explanation provided at the time as to the process and how parts were allocated leaving children who had hoped to audition really deflated.

CG explained that everyone had been given the chance to audition but that the teachers don't put a lot of emphasis on it. If any parents still have concerns, please speak to the class teacher.

7. Donations for in-school activities

- 7.1.** Several parents from across year groups have put forward the suggestion of giving parents the option to be able to make a one-off donation at the start of the year to cover all the in-school activities that need extra funding i.e snacks for SATs, bread making, spa days etc. and if possible could this be accepted online?

CG explained that Bree (school business manager) is going to look into options for this, recognising it's not easy to always find the change.

LP asked about school trips and whilst contributions from parents are voluntary can the school follow up for payment / send reminders.

CG explained that the cost of school trips has increased massively, particularly the cost of coaches so the school are really having to focus on the trips that support the learning. The school's current thinking is that the maximum they will ask for parents to contribute in a school year is £50. CG also agreed to break down the different costs within a school trip i.e. transport, entrance fee, so parents had greater visibility.

CG explained that Bree was working with Bromcom to send general reminders about payments for the school trips, 3 weeks after the initial comms.

RP suggested that could it be made possible that parents who are in a position can contribute more to support the other families? Similar to pay it forward.

TG also suggested that we could run a dedicated FOSIS event to fundraise for school trips.

MW explained that he had worked at schools where they had contingency funds set up so there was a pot of money ringfenced for school trips that parents could contribute to.

CG said that they would do a general reminder comms to ask parents to check their outstanding payments on MCAS or speak to the office to help remind parents.

8. Star of the week

8.1. A couple of parents have raised the star of the week in year R, asking if it could be explained to the children that not every child gets to be star of the week, so their expectations are appropriate. I realise that they can be encouraged in other ways instead, but star of the week seems like quite a big deal to them!

CG confirmed that every child in year should get star of the week and the mascot bear. If this hasn't happened for your child, please speak to the class teacher.

8.2. Class mascot bear – Is it ensured that all children have a turn at taking the class mascot home? Think it needs to be managed as it could knock the child's confidence if everyone else got to take it home and an individual child didn't.

As per above comment.

9. Transition

Several parents sharing that there wasn't enough notice for parents that they would be able to go and visit their children's new classroom at the end of the day so were unable to go - people are suggesting a month's notice. (Year R)

CG gave her apologies, they thought this had gone out earlier.

10. Other

10.1. Is there any progress update on the outdoor classroom?

KC – happy to say we have had the official sign off from the school to be able to place the order for the outdoor classroom – 100% funded by FOSIS! The manufacturer will hold onto it until we are ready for it to be installed later in the summer. FOSIS to provide some copy to share the news in the final weekly comms of the summer term.

10.2. With the 'Oscars' for the Cindy, Ann and Bones performances it would be more helpful if the number of recommendations for best actor/actress was consistent across the 3 classes. Some had 2 nominations in a category others had 5.

CG explained that Mrs Lubbock-Smith has already addressed this as some Year 2 teachers got carried away and it wasn't known until the ceremony itself.

- 10.3.** We'd love more feedback on marvellous behaviours/achievements/activities on MM. At the moment we only get the weekly learning updates, could this be used for more comms/updates about what the children have been up to?

CG explained that the year leads share the learning updates every week and staff are getting more into the swing of using the badges to recognise behaviours. She added that the staff's workload means that they can't do more than they are already.

BM – asked if it was possible to adjust the text in the email that comes from MarvellousMe, it's very generic, if it could be tailored to explain what to expect that might help. CG to investigate.

- 10.4.** Scooter shed - perhaps a reminder is needed in the newsletter to ensure that scooters are placed in the racks rather than just left on the floor as it is a trip hazard. CG explained that FOSIS had provided posters in the past and the school would be very grateful if they could do so again. CG to investigate the sloping which might be causing the scooters to roll out of the slots.

- 10.5.** World book day – some people were not happy with the theme provided as still felt obliged to purchase/make a costume. The suggestion is for a personal care day – where children come to school in comfy clothes/ pyjamas and their favourite book, feels this would tie into enjoying books as a form of relaxation and self care. CG and the class reps in attendance agreed for it to be left open to whatever people wanted to dress up as, PJs, fancy dress etc, just keep it open. CG added that both schools are considering potential different options for world book day next year and asked that parents didn't purchase anything until they receive further updates from the school nearer the time.

- 10.6.** If a child has support from speaking space/chat club etc, is it possible to be given a copy of the signs they use to support speech sound production so we can reinforce this at home as well? Alternatively a generic video on the school website that all parents can access illustrating the signs that are commonly used in school or chat club could be useful for a lot of families.

CG explained that if your child has support from speaking space, then you should get the target sheets, if this has not been received then please speak to the class teacher. CG added that they are working on being a more inclusive school, using signs in maths and following national programs. They hope to be able to put more on the school website in the near future.

- 10.7.** Could there be a more diverse range of visitors to support RE? We are aware of visitors from the local church but no others which isn't very reflective of the local community and doesn't seem right to only have Christian representation in a non religious setting. Pupils would benefit from a wide range of diverse and inclusive experiences.

CG explained that schools have to choose 2 main religions as part of their RE curriculum, the school has chosen Christianity / Hinduism. She added that during assemblies they try as much as possible to celebrate all other festivals. Since Covid, it's not been as easy to get external visitors to come into the school.

- 10.8.** Raising concerns – A call or email following up on concerns that have been raised would be useful. Not clear if when a letter has been dropped into the office or if a message has been left about a concern if the teacher has received the information and if there is an action.

CG explained that the school's commitment is to respond within 3 working days. She recommends following up if you are still waiting longer than three days.

Actions from July 2023 Meeting

Item No.	Action	Responsible	Comments	Complete
7.1	Investigate the possibility of allowing parents to pay up front at the start of the year to cover the various school activities	CG/BE		
7.1	Investigate if a contingency fund / pay it forward option for school trips can be created.	CG/BE		
7.1	Reminder to all parents to check MCAS for outstanding payments	CG		
10.1	FOSIS to provide copy to announce the outdoor classroom order.	LP/MC/KC		
10.3	Investigate the possibility of tailoring the MarvellousMe email notifications so you know what has been shared	CG		
10.5	FOSIS to supply posters to remind children/parents to keep the scooter shed tidy	LP/MC/KC		
10.5	Investigate sloping in scooter shed	CG		