

## Shirley Infant School – Parent Forum – Summer 1

**Date: Wednesday 17 April 2024 @ 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-Chair – [Kass Colley \(KC\)](#) / [Megan Cox \(MC\)](#)

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

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

### Parent Reps

Attendees	Apologies
Emily Arbery (Moles)	Jo Baker (Owls)
<a href="#">Tabytha Greenhalgh (TG) (Squirrels)</a>	Katy Durston (Owls)
Abigail Gallagher (Badgers)	Sarah Lowth (Badgers)
Annemarie Clayton (Woodpeckers)	Jen Simpson (Woodpeckers)
Natalie Steel (Hedgehogs) - part	Myiah Ahmed (Otters)
Katrina Crisell (Squirrels)	Angie Dharmaraj-Savicks (Hedgehogs)
<a href="#">Becky Maclean (BM) (Otters)</a>	Sarah Scott (Foxes)
<a href="#">Rachel Ayrton (RA) (Rabbits)</a>	
<a href="#">Yasmine Arafa (YA) (Foxes)</a>	
Lydia Stammers (Rabbits)	
<a href="#">Mel Durman (MD) (Teaching Asst) - part</a>	

### Agenda

1. Costume Hire – Mel Durman
2. Actions from previous meeting
3. Positive Feedback
4. Communication
5. Share my Learning / Celebrations
6. Inset Day
7. World Book Day
8. Reading / Library
9. Playground
10. Teaching Arrangements on a Wednesday (Rabbits)
11. Other

## 1. Costume Hire for Dress Up Days

MD shared her idea for supporting parents with the school dress up days through establishing a costume hire facility. All attendees were in support of the concept, recognising that the majority of children enjoy the dress up days.

MD explained that she would collect donations through the school office, sort through them and then a couple of weeks before the dress up day, would offer the ability for parents to hire costumes from the stock collected. MD to It was agreed that £2 was a reasonable price point.

LP offered to explore the possibility of using the Junior PTFA PayPal account to allow for online payments.

TG offered to help on a Tuesday morning to be able to offer drop off to those parents who don't do pick up to have the opportunity to hire costumes.

FOSIS to promote on Facebook Groups for donations.

MD to liaise with FOSIS once donations become sufficient to need storage.

## 2. Actions from previous 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	CG explained that Mrs Enemark has looked into this but it's not possible as not all of the prices are known in advance for all the activities.  CG explained that the Juniors had trialed it with one year group and it resulted in not having sufficient funds.	Y
7.1	Investigate if a contingency fund / pay it forward option for school trips can be created.	LP / MC / KC	CG explained that the school can't offer this as it would look as if the school were making money out of trips which is an auditing issue.  CG asked if FOSIS could come up with a system with Karen Allen to support vulnerable families with trips.  LP advised that FOSIS can't support individual pupils due to the charity's constitution.  CG has asked for FOSIS to speak to Mrs Prince and Karen about event pay it forward tickets and the best way to get them to families who need them.	Ongoing

10.3	Investigate the possibility of tailoring the MarvellousMe email notifications so you know what has been shared	CG	CG advised that she is still waiting to hear back from Marvellous Me.  She added that there has been a recent update and this hasn't been added.	Ongoing
10.5	FOSIS to supply posters to remind children/parents to keep the scooter shed tidy	LP/MC/KC	FOSIS to provide a 'Rules on use of the scooter shed'.  KC to reprint posters and take into the office.	Ongoing
10.5	Investigate sloping in scooter shed	CG	Andy moved the pods around so better placed.  AG advised that she had been into the scooter shed and doesn't seem to be the same issue.	Y

### 3. Positive feedback

- 3.1. Appreciate the effort that goes into the hook days for the new topics the children were so excited by the great fire of London Day.
- 3.2. We love Mrs Clark recorder sessions.
- 3.3. Wednesday morning park runs have inspired my child to attend park runs and official running events out of school thank you to Mrs L S for giving up her time the children love this event!
- 3.4. Ms Longman always happy to chat at the end of the day to resolve any issues and give feedback about pupil progress always helpful and supportive. Lots of positive comments relating to Mrs Longman's approachability, knowledge of the children and how much the children like her.
- 3.5. So lovely to see staff at the yr1&2 entrance always so smiley and excited to welcome children into school. They love mr seguns high five's as they enter and when staff welcome them by name. Such a lovely start to school day!
- 3.6. Really pleased school are still doing face to face parent evenings this is so important and I really hope never lost like it is in juniors.
- 3.7. Loved the choir performance, thank you for giving them the opportunity to perform
- 3.8. Yr 2: Loved the panto for the day after WBD. GFoL has been a great topic, really captured the imagination (especially Samuel Pepys' cheese!) My child has told me they love the 'special days' where they do 'fun stuff'. We love Ms Longman and it's clear the teachers really work very hard for the children. The great fire of London celebration event (though brief) was lovely.
- 3.9. Newsletter looks great now. And clearer to read.

- 3.10. Foxes class child adores Foxes - thank you to the teachers for making it such a wonderful class with so many special traditions e.g. Compliments Cushion.
- 3.11. big thank you to Miss Sneddon and Miss Mantle, the children have all learnt so much over the year.
- 3.12. All the children loved the chicks in the classrooms, such a great idea!
- 3.13. The format of the weekly comms is now great
- 3.14. Firstly myself and the parents would like to thank you and your team for the consistency of teachers when covering Mr S absence . This was an anxious time for families and the support and consideration you put in to ensure the children had stability was greatly appreciated . We acknowledge this was also a stressful time for you all. A massive thank you to Mr Segun who was the constant for the us all during this time .
- 3.15. We would like to extend these thanks to Mrs Chowdhury who has settled into the role of class teacher very quickly . The children and parents are talking positively about her and we have been impressed with her caring nature and the time she has taken to get to know each of the children. Please pass our thanks onto her.
- 3.16. My daughter has really enjoyed the topics covered in year 2!
- 3.17. My son is excited about school and he loves his teachers very much. he has learned a lot since he started year 2, I thank the teachers very much for everything and for doing an excellent job.
- 3.18. Miss Saville is amazing, thank you to her and the support and time she gives to the children's
- 3.19. Thank you to Mrs and Mrs Smith for all the hard work they put in to the rabbits class, always approachable and on hand for any worries.
- 3.20. I think it's great that the school are offering the new after school club options - Isobel is enjoying Japan club and super keen to go to the cooking club as well.
- 3.21. Mrs Chowdhary also seems to be settling in well - Isobel is really positive about her and she seemed incredibly diligent at parents evening.
- 3.22. Trip to manor farm great: really helped to bring the topic alive
- 3.23. Victorian day: great interactive learning
- 3.24. New office staff member is really friendly and helpful.
- 3.25. Victorian Day - children all loved coming in with costumes on and thought Mr Ball's suit and cane were amazing. He really got into character, which added to the fun!
- 3.26. Manor farm - brilliant - kids loved it and parent helpers really enjoyed it too. Day felt a little rushed but they all managed it well. Very exciting to be off-site.
- 3.27. Class celebrations lovely - great to see the kids perform songs they'd learned.
- 3.28. Lots more learning coming home - monster words etc, which has helped us get involved at home (e.g. cut up the monster words and made them into a game). We've only had maybe one or two physical books this year though, and it's been much harder getting them to engage with online reading week after week.

- 3.29. Great to have library books again! Thank you!
- 3.30. What a wonderful teacher Mr Ball is, very lucky to have had him this year.
- 3.31. Thank you to Miss Channell and Miss Baddams, they are both so kind and patient and have really got to know all the children's which is hugely appreciated by us all.
- 3.32. My son had some issues before Easter so I emailed the office. I then had a call back from Mrs Bailey and Mrs Gregory, turns out Mrs Gregory was already aware of the issue and had been reviewing cctv and come across it. She had already dealt with it before I was aware the incident had even happened. The communication I received and knowing how important the safety of my child was really impressive and comforting to know.
- 3.33. Several parents shared really positive reports from their children about the chocolatier experience. Those who shared their feedback felt that this is a fab addition to the curriculum provision.  
MC gave a summary of all of the positive feedback received. CG added that it was really lovely to read all the great comments, thank you!

#### 4. Communication

- 4.1. Multiple comments from across all classes/year groups regarding the quality of school comms, causing confusion, lots of corrections needed.  
CG acknowledged that there had been a number of errors recently and that apologies had been shared. She added that the office team had a new member of staff learning and asked for patience whilst she learns the new role. This type of role has the added pressure of when a mistake is made, it's very public which is unfortunate.
- 4.2. Several parents asking for the school initials to be at the start of the subject line of every email i.e. either SIS or SJS so easy to understand which school the message is coming from.  
CG said that she would remind the office team of the need to do this, adding that again, with a new member of staff, it takes time for all of the knowledge to be transferred.
- 4.3. Updating of letters on the website is slow – no letters have been posted in Spring 2 section.  
CG explained that this had been missing whilst we recruited the new role in the office. She added that these would be added again but in slower time.
- 4.4. Can any attachments sent by email be added to the website?  
CG explained that school related attachments such as letters will be uploaded to the website as per 4.3. However, she added that other attachments such as external information from external clubs would not be added to the school website.

#### 5. Share my Learning / Celebrations

- 5.1. Can the teaching staff ensure that the share my learning and celebrations are different – Badgers had a situation where the share my learning was looking at the children's Peter Pan stories and then a week later the celebration was the same.  
CG explained that the share my learning sessions are intended for parents to drop in to look into the books / targets for that term and that the celebration events are for the children to showcase what they've learnt about a specific topic. CG said that she would discuss with the teachers to try and avoid duplication where possible.

- 5.2. Can a short description of celebration event shared in advance, perhaps by the teachers using MM?

CG advised that the office team had been doing this on weekly comms and said that she would remind them to do to this.

## 6. Inset Day

- 6.1. Several parents feel that the notice for the additional inset day on 5 July is quote short, causing childcare problems due to not being able to take the time off work.

CG advised that the additional inset day was a decision made by Hamwic. She acknowledged that it was communicated in a slightly awkward manner which did cause confusion. CG added that they have tried to put the day as close to the end of the school year as possible and line up with USH in response to feedback that they have received in the past.

- 6.2. Other parents fed back that the way in which the additional inset day was communicated was confusing. Just added into the dates section, with the June inset date not included which led parents to believe the 5 July replaced 21 June inset day.

See 6.1

## 7. World Book Day

- 7.1. Several parents across year groups mentioned the disappointment of not dressing up for World Book Day – can it be a choice going forwards, rather than a theme or no dressing up at all? Dress up if you want to, or comfy clothes to enjoy a book or school uniform if you don't.

CG shared that this topic is raised frequently and whilst they have tried lots of different ways to address this over many years, whatever has been done simply has hasn't worked for everyone. As such, whilst she appreciates this might be a popular decision for some, the final decision is that there will be no dressing up on World Book Day going forward.

CG shared that on World Book Day, there were a number of parents who chose to voice their frustrations, in particularly inappropriate ways, directly to teaching staff. The staff involved found this extremely upsetting.

CG explained that the children still had a great day and really focussed on the text in the books they were reading which was really great to see.

TG shared that her child had come home and told her all about what they had done on World Book Day and how much fun she had had. TG acknowledged that whilst her child had told her, not all children will necessarily share the same level of detail with parents. TG suggested sharing something about what they had done would have alleviated some of the negative comments from parents, as some were perhaps under the impression that with no dressing up, that nothing was happening for World Book Day at school.

CG explained that they can't always share details about every specific day that the school celebrates such as World Internet Day and others, but that they hope there is trust from the parents in the curriculum enhancements that the school provides the children.

BM suggested that the school newsletter would be a good channel to share this kind of information about World Book Day and the other days / events that the school recognises with activities.

CG shared that we aim to write up different focuses for the week that the children have been involved in in weekly comms. CG shared she had written about world book day in the Friday weekly comms of the week.

CG also added that there is a lot of information on the school website, specifically the assembly timetable that can be found here <https://www.shirleyinfantschool.org.uk/curriculum/assemblies> which covers all of the different celebrations / events that the school shares with the children.

CG added that they have been making changes to the school website and would welcome any feedback anyone has to share on the website / how easy content is to find. BM said she was happy to take a look and share any feedback.

AG asked if there was a reason as to why the infant children didn't receive the tokens. CG to follow up with the office as she was under the impression they had been given out.

- 7.2. Frustration shared by several parents about the miscommunication on the book swap happening in infants. This was in the weekly comms for two weeks running, several parents also checked with the office staff who confirmed it was correct. CG said that it was unfortunate that this error caused confusion, explaining that this was related to her earlier comments regarding a new member of staff.

CG added that when the error was discovered that she had spoken to the volunteers supporting the junior book swap to see if they could support but unfortunately they didn't have the capacity.

MC added that several parents checked with other members of the office team who all confirmed that the book swap was going ahead. LP added that teaching staff had also told children that they thought it was taking place.

CG acknowledged the comment the office staff and teachers confirmed but it could only have come from weekly comms as the organizing teachers had not shared it in the booklets the staff get given to lead on the days. CG thanks the community for their understanding and patience whilst we sorted this timetabling error.

- 7.3. Parents were extremely grateful to FOSIS for stepping in to support an after school book swap on the Friday so the children didn't miss out. CG said that she was also very grateful for FOSIS for facilitating the book swap on Friday afternoon.

## 8. Reading / Library

- 8.1. Year 2 (badger): scattergun approach to library visits (nothing from oct half term until feb half term, and only 2 visits since), despite the importance of reading focus this academic year being pressed at meetings etc. Curriculum letter promised fortnightly. This also makes ensuring the book is in the bookbag on the correct day almost impossible increasing the likelihood of child not then being able to take a book at all. Could a drop book in box be added to the classroom for return when the day eventually comes.

CG to said that she would speak to Miss Longman on this topic.

- 8.2. it is disappointing that we weren't given a physical book OR allocated an E book for the whole of the Easter holidays. Reading is so important so to not even be set an E book was surprising.

CG explained that she was a firm believer that the children need to stop and have a break over the holidays, adding that the children were very tired at the end of last term. She also said that the school is mindful that parents are still working and children in holidays clubs, so they try to give a balance of expectations.

CG said that there are other ways to promote a love of reading, and always promotes visit to the local library.

YA added that she was appreciative that there is minimal work that comes home from school and feels that it's the right level for their age group.

## 9. Playground

9.1. Can anything be done about the large puddles and litter in the infants playground. CG explained that they are constantly battling with the puddles in the playground as a result of the age of the building and the associated drainage issues. The drainage is made more challenging as a result of the leaves falling from the trees near the school.

CG added that Hamwic are looking at some kind of replacement to the drainage system. Over recent months the school has had to spend £1k to fix year R toilets. Site team vacancies has also had an impact on the litter in the playground. CG explained that her and Mrs Enemark try to keep on top of it when possible.

9.2. Suggestion that FOSIS purchases litter pickers (FOSIS) for use by the children in the playground to keep their facilities in good order with rewarding badge / token or similar.

MC confirmed that FOSIS will purchase 8 litter pickers for the school. CG explained that she will get the Eco Council involved with picking up the litter with the new litter pickers.

**\*\*Post meeting note - Litter pickers purchased by FOSIS and delivered to school.\*\***

## 10. Teaching Arrangements on a Wednesday (Rabbits)

10.1. A couple of parents have raised that it seems to vary who covers for Mrs Smith and Mrs Smith which is causing some children anxiety/reluctance about coming to school on Wednesdays.

10.2. This seems to be particularly around who is on the door in the mornings, and the teaching of maths.

10.3. Parents asked whether it would be possible for one of the Mrs Smiths to be on the door in the morning, whether there could be more consistency as to who covers, and/or for clear communication to the children in advance as to who will be teaching them so they know what to expect.

CG explained that recruitment of both teachers and supply teachers continues to be a challenge. She said that she would take onboard these comments and speak to Mrs & Mrs Smith and look to ensure that Mrs McIntyre stands on the door in the morning to ensure there is continuity for the children.

RA also added that parents had shared that the teaching of maths and the different teaching styles were making some children anxious. RA asked if there could be a MM sent out on a Tuesday to parents so they could help the children to know what to expect. CG also suggested that the white board could be used to share with the children which teacher will be teaching.

CG also advised that if there is an issue with a specific supply/cover teacher, please speak to the class main teachers directly so they can resolve these with you.

## 11. Other

11.1. **Greater choice of dessert options for children with allergies please**  
CG explained that they have raised this issue with the catering company several times. CG asked that parents email directly to the catering company with this request in the hope that lots of voices will make them realise they need to take action. Ask those parents to email directly to the catering company.



11.2. **School Park Run** – can school reconsider their decision on children attending Choice Breakfast Club to take part in the school park run? Choice staff are very happy to take responsibility for those children taking part.  
CG explained that she has spoken to Mrs Enemark on this topic and that it is a Health & Safety issue as it comes down to who the parental responsibility lies with once the children are taking part in the run. With parents supervising their children, it's a one to one ratio, this isn't possible with Choice Childcare. CG has asked Mrs Enemark to look at this again. So unfortunately it is a No for now but it will be reviewed.

11.3. **Power supply issues** - the day before school was closed due to power supply issues, were the children kept at school in the dark and with no power or heating. My child said he said went to the loos and it was dark.  
CG explained that the power was off on an intermittent basis as the electricians tried to find the source of the problem. She added that there have been short periods of time when the children might have been in the dark, particularly as the emergency lighting went off too. CG acknowledged that could have been scary for children who might have been in the toilet at the time.

It was the lack of emergency lighting which meant that the school had to close the following day.

11.4. **Scooter shack sign** – is there any update on when this will be put up?  
CG is still chasing this up with the local authority. CG added that she has asked FOSIS to paint / stain the shed as part of the tidy up day in May.

11.5. **Acorn Class** - when will the children be able to use Acorn classroom? The year 2 cohort will have been the ones involved in the fundraising for this excellent resource the longest and my year 2 reports they've been in it once at Christmas. Last PF (nov 23) said 'once carpet is down, within a couple of weeks it will be in use'. There's been no further explanation.  
CG explained that it has been used for story time but due to the bad weather and the rain teachers have chosen to stay in the main school. CG has reshared the timetable with the teaching staff so they should be using it more.

CG added that they were still looking for quotes for the path and landscaping around Acorn Class.

LP mentioned that there was a company on the SIS/SJS Business Page that does this kind of work. LP to share the details with KC to discuss with Mrs Enemark.

11.6. **Payments for school trips** – can the school send out reminders/chase parents for payments for school trips?  
CG explained that yes they do follow up / remind parents who haven't paid for school trips. She added that they are targeted communications.

11.7. **Dress up Days** – sharing of which terms school dress up days will happen will help parents to plan / find cheaper costumes. Appreciate exact days might not be known but knowing the term will help.  
CG said that this information could be shared by the teachers during the curriculum sessions. She also added that Mrs Durman's idea of costume hire would be helpful reminders for parents.

## Actions from April 2024 Meeting

Item No.	Action	Responsible	Comments	Complete
1	Fancy Dress Costume Hire - Speak to PTFA re: use of PayPal account for online payments - Promote / request donations on school FB groups	LP  LP / MC		
4.2	Remind office team to include SIS / SJS in all subject lines for communications	CG		
5.1	CG said that she would discuss with the teachers to try and avoid duplication where possible.	CG		
5.2	Remind office staff to include a short description for celebration events on weekly comms	CG		
7.1	Speak to office staff re issuing of World Book Day tokens	CG		
8.2	Speak to Miss Longman re: Badger visits to the library	CG		
10.3	Speak to Mrs & Mrs Smith re: who stands on the door on a Wednesday morning for consistency	CG		