

Parent Forum Minutes



CHILDREN COME FIRST.

Meeting title: Autumn term meeting of the Sherard Parent Forum

Date and time: 15th November 2022 at 5.30pm

Location: Sherard Primary School

In attendance

Parents:

- Michelle Long
- Jenny Harley
- Hannah Mansell
- Rebecca Partington

Staff:

- Helena Blumfield – Headteacher
- Michelle Wright – MET Clerk (Minutes)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mrs. Blumfield welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the purpose of the Forum.

The Parent Forum had been established to help promote positive and effective two-way communication between parents and the school. Key issues would be reported back to the MET Trust Board to enable the Trustees to hold the school to account.

An online survey had been sent to parents a week before the meeting to gather views on what could be improved and what worked well. The responses from the survey were used to guide the discussion. Parents also had the opportunity to raise other matters.

2. What could be improved:

Reading: A parent reported that the class teacher had not read with their child and would like to see this in the timetable. Mrs. Blumfield agreed to raise this with the teaching staff. The school's reading policy would also be checked to ensure this was included. Parents asked whether it was possible to re-introduce reading volunteers who could listen to the children read. Mrs. Blumfield agreed this would be a good idea, although it would still be important for the class teacher to hear the children read as well as they would be able to assess progress.

Key Stage 2 transition: Parents said they would have liked more information about the transition into Key Stage 2 so they were in a better position to support their child with the changes in routine/expectations. Mrs. Blumfield agreed to review this as it was acknowledged the transition could be a bit daunting for some children. Parents suggested providing an information sheet and/or holding an information meeting for parents in the summer term. It was also suggested that current Year 3 pupils could speak to the Year 2 pupils about how they had felt about the transition to help reassure them.

Music curriculum: Parents asked about the school's music curriculum offer. Parents were informed that the school used the 'Music Express' scheme and lessons were held weekly. The school wanted to expose pupils to a wide variety of different music styles. There were also plans for an external peripatetic music teacher to offer some instrumental tuition – there would be a charge for this. Mrs. Blumfield explained that the school had decided to deliver more arts teaching this year. Staff were continuing to seek out more opportunities, including those which would enable children to try a musical instrument. Mrs. Blumfield offered to share some of the curriculum maps at the next Parent Forum.

Parents' evenings: The school had decided to hold virtual parents' evenings in the autumn term. This had received a mixed reaction from parents. Some parents preferred the virtual meetings as they were more convenient. Others wanted the opportunity to meet their child's class teacher in-person to help establish a better relationship. Mrs. Blumfield confirmed that the parents' evenings in the spring term would be held face to face. Due to the parents' evenings being virtual, the school had also held an open evening in the autumn term to give parents an opportunity to look round the school and to see the children's work.

Parents had been given an 8-minute slot to talk to their child's class teacher. It was suggested that for children who received support from a learning support assistant, it would also be useful to have an opportunity to meet with them at future parents' evenings and/or for longer slots to be available.

Annual activities: In response to feedback from the online survey which had noted the school tended to do the same events each year (e.g., Christmas play, Children in Need), Mrs. Blumfield explained that the school sought to provide a variety of activities and there would be a wide range of Christmas activities for the children (and parents) to get involved in this year.

Extra-curricular activities: Parents raised the fact that some children had missed out on the opportunity to join a club, as slots were allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, and some parents did not pick up their notifications until later. It was asked whether one club per child could be offered. Mrs. Blumfield explained this was not possible as there were not enough places available. The amount and type of clubs the school was able to offer was dependent on staff availability. It was explained that different clubs would be held each term or half term. This would give those pupils who had been unable to join a club this term to join one next term. It was suggested by parents that rather than trying to offer more clubs, more staff could be allocated to the more popular activities, so as to be able to offer more places.

School trips: Parents wanted to know about plans to reintroduce trips. Mrs. Blumfield said the school would arrange trips again. There was a need to keep costs to a minimum given the cost-of-living crisis. Staff had been encouraged to consider more local trips/outside visits to help with this.

Government cuts: There was no indication to date that the school would need to make any cuts to staffing. The school was currently in a good financial position.

Lunchtime: Parents had fed back that lunchtime felt rushed, and the children who went last had to finish eating whilst tables and chairs were being stacked away. Mrs. Blumfield informed parents there would be a review of the lunchtime arrangements to make things run more smoothly and to allow children sufficient time to both eat their lunch and play. However, the hall is needed for PE after lunch and therefore the staff need to tidy up etc in good time.

Communication: Parents wanted key dates (e.g., sports days, plays, school photos) communicated to them earlier in the year. Mrs. Blumfield confirmed that dates for the rest of the academic year had been finalised as far as possible and would be sent out to parents shortly.

3. What works well:

- Quality of teaching.
- Curriculum diverse and interesting.
- Great relationships between teachers, pupils and parents. Teachers are supportive.
- Communication via Dojo – parents know what is going on in the school and feel able to contact the teachers.
- Dedicated lessons for times tables /Times Tables Rock Stars.
- Organisation of morning drop-off.
- The reintroduction of clubs; a good variety of activities on offer, not just sports.
- Positive atmosphere.
- It was suggested whether some version of the class celebration assemblies could be reintroduced for parents to attend.

Mrs. Blumfield thanked the parents for attending and for their contributions.

The next Forum would be held on 7th February at 9.00am.

It was suggested that information could be shared at the next Forum that parents might find useful e.g., on the music curriculum and/or extra-curricular offer.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm.