

## **Loudwater Combined School Parents' Forum Meeting 12.3.19 at 7pm**

### **Attendees:**

Shelley Sheppard (Mum of Thomas Y5, Logan Y3 & Ellie Lou Y1, Chair of FOLS),  
Nicky Springle (Mum of George Y3),  
Jean Howard (Childminder),  
Debbie Sarl (Mum of Gabrielle Y6 & Lucy Y4),  
Leah Emery-Barnard (Mum of Matilda FS),  
Michelle Hazell (Mum of Imogen FS),  
Belinda Welland (Deputy Head teacher)  
Paul Randall (Chair of Governors),  
Clare Cunnington (Head teacher),  
Josie Mill and Jo Pikulski (Observers from Disraeli School).

### **Apologies:**

Nancy Smith (Mum of Amy Y2 & Freddie Y1)  
Jacqui Perryman (Mum of Jasmin Y2)  
Kelly Leary (Mum of Oscar Y4)  
Amanda Pierce Collinao (Mum of Pia Y6)  
Rachel Burch (Mum of Zach Y4)  
Annabel Balderson (Mum of Elizabeth Y1)

### **Terms of reference for the Forum:**

These were agreed without change and are attached to the minutes.

Nicky Springle agreed to become Chair of the Parents' Forum.

It was agreed that we would continue to have class representatives:

**Foundation Stage:** Leah Emery-Barnard (Mum of Matilda) & Michelle Hazell (Mum of Imogen).

**Year One:** Annabel Balderson (Mum of Elizabeth)

**Year Two:** Nancy Smith (Mum of Amy & Freddie Y1) & Jacqui Perryman (Mum of Jasmin)

**Year Three:** Nicky Springle (Mum of George & Chair)

**Year Four:** Kelly Leary (Mum of Oscar)

**Year Five:** Shelley Sheppard (Mum of Thomas, Logan Y3 & Ellie Lou Y1, Chair of FOLS)

**Year Six:** Kelly Greenlee

It was agreed that it would be useful to have some outline 'job descriptions' of the roles of Chair and Class Representative. Clare will produce a first draft of these.

### **Friends of Loudwater School (FOLS) Updates**

Shelley informed the meeting of the upcoming events which are detailed on the attached flier.

### **School Updates**

#### **Visits and visitors**

Chiltern Rangers: Y5 & Y6 on Kingsmead looking at river conservation

In school working in Fennels Wood – creating habitats, planting and zoning areas.

Sustainability – support to do this.

Year One have had a visit from the Hearing dogs to link with their topic on 'The World Around Us' and are planning a visit to St Tiggywinkles Animal Hospital.

Year 6 have visited Hazard Alley – a safety centre which included an E-safety workshop.

Year 3 have visited Whipsnade Zoo to enhance the learning in their topic 'Inside Out'

Year 4 have visited the Ashmolean Museum to explore Ancient Egyptian artefacts

Year 2 and Year 5 have enjoyed meeting and singing with local senior citizens at Barrowcroft and Wrights Meadow

Our football and netball teams have played matches against other local schools.

### **Class and Values Assemblies**

During this term all classes have presented their learning so far this year for parents and other classes in the school. It has been lovely to find out about the range of topics they have been engaged with. I know all children have greatly appreciated having their parents, grandparents or carers come to share the assembly with them.

Year three presented their learning about the value of empathy and later in the term we will hear from Year two about the value of compassion.

Forthcoming events include: Red nose day, Shakespeare week – week beginning 25<sup>th</sup> March and including a drama workshop for all children, Science week in the summer term that will also include a whole school visit and Greek week which will culminate in sports day.

### **School Development Priorities**

We have worked as a whole staff to explore how we can make our curriculum more relevant and engaging for our children whilst at the same time ensuring that we teach the requirements of the National Curriculum. This is an ongoing process that fits neatly with Ofsted and their proposed quality of education judgement which will focus on the quality of the curriculum offered to pupils.

### **Parents Consultation Meeting**

The purpose of this meeting was for parents to find out more about our proposal to join the Oxford Diocese Bucks Schools Trust and was held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. The consultation continues until the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019. If parents have any further questions these can be sent to the school office, the governing board or to the trust. The minutes of the meeting will be available with the weekly newsletter on 22.3.19.

### **Feedback from Parental Questionnaire**

Parents completed a questionnaire when attending the Parent/Teacher consultation meetings in February. Clare shared the results of the questionnaire. The summary pie charts are attached to the minutes

### **Governor Updates**

Paul Randall updated the meeting on the work of the governors.

The governing board meets 3-4 times each term – as a full board, as a Raising Achievement Committee, and two other committees which are not attended by all of the governors – Curriculum and Admissions Committee and Finance, Personnel and Premises Committee. These groups challenge and support the work of the school. Governors make class visits in to school on a termly basis and where appropriate meet with subject leaders.

Work of the Governing Body recently has seen a Full Governing Board Meeting take place, this covered various aspects of the school and included the Head teacher's Report to Governors, where governors ask relevant questions on aspects of the report as well as completing a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results) analysis of the school. At this Governing Board Meeting we also appointed a new member to the Governing Board, Kennedy Dune; Kennedy approached the Governing Board directly after looking at what we do via the website. He comes with a background

in mental health and will provide the Board with a different perspective. Over the next week or so we will provide some more information via the newsletter.

Coming up we have a curriculum meeting and Finance Personnel and Premises meeting at this meeting we will be approving the budget, initial reviews indicate that the next year's budget will be fine, but longer term predications highlight that the budget will be much tighter.

We look to keep Governance fresh and up to date and will shortly be evaluating the work of the Board using Governor Space, which is something that we are fortunate to be provided through the DfE.

As you are aware, our biggest piece of work is going through the process of due diligence with the ODBST (Oxford Diocese Bucks Schools Trust). To confirm what was said at the parents meeting – joining the trust is by no means a done deal and if at any point that we want to walk away, we will, this is also possible if the ODBST want to do the same. Part of the due diligence next week will see a review of the school as well as some scrutiny on the work of the Governing Board, which we will welcome and is one of the many reasons that we wish to join them.

Questions asked were:

- How is funding being distributed? Could we have some of our money taken away for another school that needed it? There will be no money taken away from us, the only difference will be that we have our budget is paid to us monthly, rather than a lump sum, this means it will have to be managed just as you would a household budget, ensuring we save for items that we feel we need and ensure the budget balances each month.
- Are there any church connections? No there are no church connections, our values and ethos remain as they are.
- If the budget is tighter, will parents be asked to make contributions to the school, as I am aware that this is happening elsewhere? No, there are no plans to ask for any contributions, other than the one that is already in place regarding the voluntary contributions for school trips and visits.

### **AOB – Feedback from class representatives/others at the meeting**

School uniform

Some parents have expressed concern about the quality of the new school uniform: the school logo badge on the PE t-shirts can be rough on the skin and crinkles when washed, cardigans are somewhat long and thin therefore finding the right size can be a challenge.

The school uniform shop in the town centre still sell our school sweatshirts and cardigans so there is an alternative supplier for these – if you buy from the uniform shop, please make sure that the item has the new school logo and be aware that you may need to order as they keep a limited stock. If girls wish they are able to wear a sweatshirt rather than a cardigan. When we completed wash tests on the PE t-shirts it was found that the roughness of the logo badge did improve with washing. However there has recently been a new supplier take over from F & F so the quality may have changed.

E-Schools

Some parents commented that it is sometimes difficult to find the most recent home-learning listing on the class home page. We will investigate how to make the most recent listing first or to delete some older listings to make things clearer.

It was pointed out that some of the comments made by children on the class chat section were inappropriate. There is a comprehensive filter to identify any inappropriate language, however we will check entries to identify any posting that may not have been flagged as inappropriate.

#### Home-learning

Some parents of children in Key Stage 1 requested more home-learning activities, an email was also received from a parent not able to attend the meeting requesting this. Some of the requests were for spelling lists that the children would learn and then be tested on at home. It was explained that educational research shows that this is not an effective way for children to remember spellings and that our approach of learning spelling rules, correct usage and meaning of words was more effective in the longer term. There are lists of high frequency words on the class pages that parents can refer to.

The activities on the class pages are updated half termly and provide a guide to the activities that we believe are most valuable for parents to engage in with their children. Underpinning this is our firm belief that the most effective form of support that parents can give their children at this stage of their learning is to be regularly sharing books with their children. These books do not only need to be those scheme books from school but should also include library books and any other books that children enjoy at home.

In order to ensure that parents are fully aware of the activities on the class pages and how these can be used Miss Weston and Mrs Olcot will hold a short meeting for parents at the end of the school day to explain this – dates and times to be confirmed.

In Key Stage 2 a significant proportion of the home learning activities are IT based. All of the activities chosen provide consolidation of the learning children have completed in class. A key reason that we moved towards IT based activities was that it enabled teachers to monitor the time spent by children completing their homework and provides a detailed breakdown of where the children experienced challenges and where further input is needed. There are some paper based activities over the course of each half term. If children have challenges accessing IT or the internet at home there is a home learning club in school on a Thursday or arrangements can be made for children to use a computer at lunchtime. Mrs Welland reminded parents that there is a wealth of websites to support learning and some of these are highlighted on the newsletter each week or there are many publications available to support learning.

#### Hot school meals

Some parents had described the school meals as 'grim' and 'monotonous' and had suggested AIP as a possible alternative to our currently supplier Dolce. Whilst this was the view of some parents others felt that the three week menu cycle did offer choice and that their children enjoyed the meals.

We will explore the view of the children and what AIP could offer as an alternative and will discuss at the next governors' committee meeting.

#### Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm

The meeting closed at 8.20pm