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Newsletter and Spring 1 - Parent Forum Meeting Notes

Wednesday 3rd January, 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back and a very Happy New Year to you!

We have already made a busy start to the New Year here at The Prince of Wales School. It promises to be an exciting term ahead with many activities planned to inspire learning. I am particularly looking forward to David Solomons' visit next week to formally open our 'Writing Hall of Fame' and our whole-school visit to see 'Dippy the Dinosaur' at the Dorset County Museum in March.

Today, we held our third 'Parent Forum' in the Staff Room at 08:45am. The Prince of Wales School Parent Forum is a half-termly opportunity to meet Headteacher Mr. Spracklen and other members of the Senior Leadership Team. It provides an informal platform to share concerns, discuss ideas and ask questions.

All members of our community are welcome.

At the meeting, I reminded everyone of our school's goals for this academic year, namely to -

-  **Raise attainment and accelerate progress**
-  **Improve the quality of teaching and learning**
-  **Improve the conditions for learning**
-  **Develop the school as a professional learning community**

I am delighted that we made significant progress against all four of these goals last term, this is just the beginning though of a long journey and we must continue to all strive for the very best.

At the end of this letter, I have included our meeting notes and actions following our third meeting and **updates in red** from our first two meetings. Please feel free to catch me anytime to discuss these notes or any other matter. I am usually standing at the front of the school at the beginning and end of the school day. If you would like a more confidential chat, the school office holds my diary and can book an appointment for you.

Healthy Living

As a school we work hard to promote healthy living, this is linked to our Science, PSHE and PE Curriculums as well as our Vision and Ethos which seeks to develop happy and healthy children.

In the past it has been traditional for children to bring sweets into school on their birthday to share with their class. This year, however, we are aiming for a healthier school and will no longer be accepting sweet treats, including cakes, biscuits and sweets. We shall, of course, celebrate your child's day with a song and make them feel very special.

This change will come into effect as of **Monday 8th January 2018**. The Senior Leadership Team, Student Council and Governing Body are all in agreement about this decision.

Reminder

As shared in my letter to you on Wednesday 6th December 2017, from January, we have adjusted the timings within our school day slightly to maximise our learning time.

Our new timings of the day are shown below -

| Reception and Year 1 | | Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 | |
|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 08:45-09:00 | MORNING ACTIVITIES | 08:45-09:00 | MORNING ACTIVITIES |
| 08:50-09:00 | REGISTRATION | 08:50-09:00 | REGISTRATION |
| 09:00-09:50 | SESSION ONE | 09:00-09:50 | SESSION ONE |
| 09:50-10:40 | SESSION TWO | 09:50-10:40 | SESSION TWO |
| 10:40-11:00 | BREAK | 10:40-11:00 | BREAK |
| 11:00-11:40 | SESSION THREE | 11:00-11:50 | SESSION THREE |
| 11:40-12:20 | SESSION FOUR | 11:50-12:40 | SESSION FOUR |
| 12:20-13:10 | LUNCH | 12:40-13:30 | LUNCH |
| 13:10-14:10 | SESSION FIVE | 13:30-14:20 | SESSION FIVE |
| 14:10-15:10 | SESSION SIX | 14:20-15:10 | SESSION SIX |
| 15:10-15:30 | ASSEMBLY | 15:10-15:30 | ASSEMBLY |

These changes have added approximately thirty minutes of high-quality learning time to our daily routine by reducing transitions and 'dropped' time. This is the equivalent of ninety hours of learning a year or **eighteen extra school days**.

I am confident these changes will further support the development of our children and help ensure stronger learning outcomes over time.

Polite Reminder

Parents and Carers are politely reminded not to park in the Pre-School or Staff car parks. It causes problems when people do not follow our clear signage and policy, we appreciate your support on this matter.

Attendance

It is important at this time of the year to remember the importance of good attendance. All DASP (Dorchester Area Schools Partnership) schools are working hard this term to promote good attendance and have put common systems in place to work with families when attendance drops below an acceptable level.

As a reminder, if your child has a medical appointment GP/hospital, etc you are required to bring in medical evidence for the office (slip from GP surgery etc) to prove this.

At The Prince of Wales School, we celebrate good attendance and we have made some fantastic progress over the past term with our school attendance rate currently standing at 97.2% (top 10% of schools nationally).

If a child has an attendance level of 90%, they will have missed one day a fortnight in school. Over a school year, this will represent four weeks of absence. If this level of absence was maintained for a five-year period, it would mean half a school year would have been missed.

Here at The Prince of Wales School, we are determined to ensure that all our children have the opportunity to achieve success and have an excellent record of attendance. If we are concerned about a child's attendance, we will talk to parents and write to them to explain our concerns. The school will then monitor the child's attendance expecting to see an improvement. DASP and the Dorset County Council (DCC) School Attendance Service will be made aware of the school's concerns.

If attendance does not improve sufficiently, you will be invited to a DASP Attendance Panel. This meeting is an opportunity for the school, family and a representative from DCC's School Attendance Service to meet together to discuss why your child has such a high absence rate and seek solutions to any problems.

The Panel can recommend several outcomes, which can include: a further period of close monitoring with specified targets for attendance; issuing a £60 Penalty Notice, a Parenting Order or seeking prosecution which could result in a fine of up to £1000.

The attendance process is designed to identify children with poor attendance quickly and address the issues that are affecting their attendance. When attendance improves, monitoring will continue and, if it falls, the Attendance Process will be resumed.

All DASP schools hope that the Attendance Panel will not be needed and that all pupils will have a good record of attendance, are happy and successful and benefit from their time in school.

I am sure I will see many of you at the POWSA meeting on Tuesday 9th January (7:30pm).

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries, concerns or if there is anything I can do to help and support you with your child's learning and school life.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. Gary Spracklen
Headteacher

Spring 1 - Parent Forum - Notes and Actions -

GSp = Gary Spracklen (Headteacher) MBi = Maddie Biddlecombe (School Business Manager)

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| <p>1.0 - Response to Parent Questionnaire</p> | <p>GSp outlined the recent responses to the Parent Questionnaire (conducted December 2017).</p> <p>Key points -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 52 Responses- 100% said the school was well led/managed- 100% would recommend our school to another parent- Homework is optional - we seek to inspire children- Read, Write Inc Phonics Scheme - SJo to present at next Parent Forum- Social Media / Use of Images - Parental Choice / Opt Out- Trip Selection- Gender Equality- Attendance - It's Important- Data Protection <p>GSp discussed options and sought feedback on what 'valuable information' parents/carers would like to receive.</p> <p>Parents present felt enough information is already being provided and did not want information sent home that may confuse them.</p> |
| <p>2.0 - UPDATE - Guest Speaker - Caroline Morgan (CMo) - Chief Executive of Local Food Links (Hot Meals Provider)</p> | <p>CMo shared Government Food Guidelines and outlined the changes being made to support healthier hot school meals.</p> <p>CMo outlined Local Food Links 'Social Enterprise' status and discussed the importance of local food providers.</p> <p>CMo invited questions and comments from those parents and carers present. Discussion included -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sweet menu choices (50/50 fruit options)- Two puddings a week are fruit options- Pizza base topping (made with seven vegetables)- Allergies and gluten free options- Price of dairy - yogurt may not be on the menu in the future- Sugar in puddings - reducing where possible- The importance of a balanced diet <p>GSp shared Come Dine with Me opportunities which provide parents and carers the chance to come in and eat a hot meal alongside their child.</p> <p>Our next 'Come Dine with Me' event will be for Year 3 parents and carers on Monday 27th November, 2017. Letter to follow.</p> <p>UPDATE - The 'Come Dine with Me' event happening on 27/11/17 for Year 3 parents/carers. We are currently looking at further dates for other year groups. More information will follow.</p> |
| <p>3.0 - UPDATE - Concern raised that all Parent Forum dates were on at the same time and day.</p> | <p>GSp recognised concern. As dates have already been communicated for this year, decision has been made to stick with these to avoid confusion. In the summer term, SLT will consider appropriate</p> |

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| | <p>timings for the 2018/2019 Parent Forum based on parental feedback.</p> <p>UPDATE - As above.</p> |
| <p>4.0 - UPDATE - GSp provided presentation outlining the key priorities for the year ahead at the Prince of Wales School.</p> <p>These were to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⚙️ Raise attainment and accelerate progress ⚙️ Improve the quality of teaching and learning ⚙️ Improve the conditions for learning ⚙️ Develop the school as a professional learning community | <p>Copy of the presentation will be made available on the school website.</p> <p>UPDATE - Copy of presentation is on the website. School Development Plan will also be provided in the same 'Parent Forum' area of the website.</p> |
| <p>5.0 - UPDATE - Parents requested a 'Parent Information Board' at the front of the school for key information to be shared through this platform as well as online and via email.</p> | <p>Board has been purchased and will be installed in the next two weeks.</p> <p>UPDATE - Board is being used on an adhoc basis, GSp seeking a long term solution.</p> <p>UPDATE - Long term solution was ordered before Christmas. Delivery and installation due before half-term.</p> |
| <p>6.0 - UPDATE - Parents expressed the desire to have one place to access all information.</p> | <p>GSp confirmed that all information would come through Wednesday letters and that these would be archived on the school website for easy access.</p> <p>UPDATE - This is happening.</p> |
| <p>7.0 - UPDATE - Parents raised issue of blogs not being consistent - i.e can't rely on them for reminders.</p> | <p>GSp outlined how blogs were an <i>additional</i> form of communication. They exist to provider a stronger link between home and school. Parents/carers should refer to the website for official dates and letters.</p> <p>UPDATE - GSp has been monitoring blogs and welcomes further parent/carer feedback.</p> |
| <p>8.0 - UPDATE - Trip contributions were discussed and suggestion made that we ask for an annual trip contribution for trip below a certain cost.</p> | <p>GSp to discuss this idea with Senior Colleagues. MBI to run a trial with a small group of parents/carers.</p> <p>UPDATE - Volunteers welcome for trial. Please see GSp.</p> |
| <p>9.0 - UPDATE - Discuss on amount of paperwork to be signed, can this be streamlined?</p> | <p>GSp to issue new 'local trips' permission slip to provider blanket coverage for trips across the local area.</p> <p>UPDATE - Slip was issued following meeting.</p> |

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| 10.0 - UPDATE - Discussion on Annual Forms such as the Home School Agreement and the Acceptable Usage Policy. Do these need signing every year? Could the language used be more accessible to younger children? | <p>GSp to discuss this with Senior Colleagues.</p> <p>UPDATE - Discussions ongoing, intention remains to review before next year.</p> |
| 11.0 - UPDATE - Discussion on sweets being given as rewards. | <p>GSp will clarify position with all staff. Sweets should not be used as a reward. Stickers are more appropriate.</p> <p>UPDATE - Action closed.</p> |
| 12.0 - UPDATE - Discussion on parents/carers sending in sweets for Birthdays. How is this managed. | <p>GSp will monitor this. We need to find an appropriate balance here.</p> <p>UPDATE - Discussions ongoing. GSp will be taking this matter to Governors.</p> <p>UPDATE - Sweets and cakes no longer allowed. Action closed.</p> |
| 13.0 - UPDATE - Parental request for the ordering of pudding to be available. | <p>MBi to review puddings being offered. MBI to take thought to Local Food Links (Hot Meal Provider).</p> <p>UPDATE - CMo attended Autumn 1 meeting and addressed these points as stated above.</p> |
| 14.0 -UPDATE - MB requested feedback on moving to online payments. Discussion on cost of systems being prohibitive and very complex. | <p>Parents requested to volunteer to try direct payments into our bank account and via eschools and with a paypal account. Please see MBI.</p> <p>UPDATE - Volunteers welcome for trial. Please see GSp.</p> |
| 15.0 - UPDATE - Issue with Ukulele lesson raised. | <p>Same day letter sent to parents/carers. Matter resolved.</p> <p>UPDATE - Action closed.</p> |
| 16.0 - UPDATE - Request to keep music provision in the school a high priority. | <p>GSp shares desire to do this, Mrs S. Johnson (Year 4 Class Teacher) is now leading on Music Provision and is doing a fantastic job.</p> <p>UPDATE - Action closed.</p> |
| 17.0 - UPDATE - Sport provision for KS1 requested. Historically this has been difficult to find qualified coaches. | <p>Sports funding is increasing and this will be considered.</p> <p>UPDATE - This remains a key priority and plans are in place to increase provision from January 2018. More information to follow.</p> <p>UPDATE - Junior Fitness and Badminton provision now added to extra-curricula timetable. GSp seeking more options in the near future.</p> |
| 18.0 - UPDATE - Parents requested that KS1 were offered swimming too and that the possible use of the hydro pool for small groups to do this was explored. | <p>GSp will look into this with Senior Colleagues but it is unlikely due to other curriculum pressures.</p> <p>UPDATE - This option has been explored but is not practical with</p> |

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| | current restraints on time, resource and most importantly curriculum. |
| 19.0 - UPDATE - Concern raised that current Y1 have missed out on a number of trips due to inclement weather. | GSp to monitor this. UPDATE - Ongoing |
| Next meeting - Wednesday 21st February, 2018. | |

PARENT FORUM - 08:45-09:30 - STAFF ROOM

The Prince of Wales School Parent Forum is a half-termly opportunity to meet Headteacher Mr. Spracklen and other members of the Senior Leadership Team. It provides an informal platform to share concerns, discuss ideas and ask questions.

All members of our community are welcome.

2017/2018 DATES

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| Autumn Term One - Wednesday 27th September, 2017 |
| Autumn Term Two - Wednesday 1st November, 2017 |
| Spring Term One - Wednesday 3rd January, 2018 |
| Spring Term Two - Wednesday 21st February, 2018 |
| Summer Term One - Wednesday 18th April, 2018 |
| Summer Term Two - Wednesday 6th June, 2018 |