

Thorndown Primary School - Parent Forum Minutes
October 9th 2017

Present: Heather Wood (Chair), Vicci Godbold (Head teacher), Claire Gerrard (Deputy Head), Rob Jagger (Governor) Clare Lorman-Hall, Nina Rust, Sam Poole, Louise Keeley, Verity Windmill, Heather Leonard

Apologies: Jenny Cowens, Pawel Kurkiewicz

1. Welcome and explanation of the Forum for new parents

2. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Following the summer meeting on Transitions, a small number of parents had raised concerns about the Parent Forum feedback in relation to friendship choices. Ms Godbold reiterated the position of the Governors.

- Feedback from the Parent Forum is just one aspect of the feedback that the Governing Body is considering when deciding whether or not to continue asking children about their friendship preferences when allocating classes.
- Friendships will still be taken into account as teachers are aware of these and also well placed to know which friendships are helpful in the learning/classroom environment and which friendships work better in the playground.

Action: HW will reply to those parents who have commented via the Parent Forum email and also clarify in the October minutes. Any parents who continue to have concerns are welcome to discuss these with Ms Godbold.

3. Year Representatives (a point of contact for parents who wish to raise or discuss a matter at the forum).

Reception	Louise Keeley
Year 1	<i>Heather Wood (provisional)</i>
Year 2	Pawel Kurkiewicz
Year 3	Sam Poole
Year 4	Pawel Kurkiewicz
Year 5	<i>Heather Wood (provisional)</i>
Year 6	Clare Lorman-Hall

4. Main topic: Priorities for the coming year

- i) There will be a focus on **grammar, spelling and punctuation**. Although there were improvements this year in the SATS results, the improvement was not as great as some other schools. Grammar,

spelling and punctuation is an area that is given importance by central government and is reflected in the content of SATs tests which is why the school will place an emphasis on it during the coming year.

Parents raised concerns about the complexity of some of the grammar taught. Ms Godbold confirmed that a parent session would be organized to help parents understand the subject matter.

Action – School to arrange a Parent Information Session relating to grammar, spelling and punctuation.

- ii) The school will also focus on Pupils' self-awareness ie sometimes children don't apply the knowledge they have ie don't write words correctly even when the information is in front of them.
- iii) Embed the high quality learning in maths started last year. This year Rainbow Recall has been introduced to help embed key maths facts and build on the mastery in maths.
- iv) Cognitive depth – feedback from the OFSTED report is that the learning and knowledge children have needs to be applied across the curriculum. The recent History Day was one way of doing this by helping children to really think about what it would have been like in a particular era.

In addition, Staff have decided that it is helpful for each year to follow a key book and discuss it in depth as a means of deepening understanding. For example, Year 5 are reading and discussing *Private Peaceful*.

As part of building on pupil self awareness and developing cognitive depth, the Governors are keen to develop a 'Learning Entitlement' setting out what pupils should know/understand by the time they leave Thorndown. This includes education matters but also general self development and awareness. To assist with this, parents present at the Forum were asked to provide their views on the following questions:

- **What sort of people do we want them to be?**
- **What are the important things we want them to have had a chance to do in primary school?**
- **What should they be able to do?**
- **What should our Year 6s learn by the time they leave Thorndown?**

5. AOB

There was positive feedback from Yr5/6 parents using the new SeeSaw app about the way in which it will allow them to be involved in their child's learning. Some specific queries about how to access the app were raised and these will be passed to Mr Sweeney to respond directly.

A query was raised about Teacher Training days which don't always match the training days set by other schools, especially the Ivo. Ms Godbold confirmed that each cluster of schools tries (as far as possible) to set the same training days and every effort is made to co-ordinate training days with the Ivo. There is one specific day in October 2017 which is different from the Ivo. This is because teaching staff at Thorndown will be visiting other schools across the country where there are aspects of outstanding practice that they may be able to learn from. The observation has to happen on days when the schools in question are 'open' to children.

6. Date of next meeting and topic

DATE: Monday 27th November 2017 at 7.15pm in Dragonfly Classroom

TOPIC: INCLUSION (this includes information on diversity and SENCO as well as general information about the way in which the school tries to be inclusive).

A REMINDER – that the Forum is a two-way opportunity for parents to raise issues/concerns with representatives from the school *as well as* the school seeking views/opinions from parents on matters relating to the advertised topic. If parents are unable to attend the forum they may miss the opportunity to contribute in this way. The Forum takes place on different nights of the week to try and maximize attendance and is held in the early evening to allow working parents the opportunity to attend.

All parents are members of the parent forum and are welcome to attend the meetings. If you cannot attend but wish to raise an issue you can email parentforum@thorndown.cambs.sch.uk post a note in the suggestion box in the lobby or raise it with your class/year representative.

--