

# Minutes of the joint KS1 and KS2 Parent Forum

Monday 7 June, 7.00pm

## 1. Feedback on issues raised at the last meeting

- SIMS Learning Gateway. Following the parent forum meetings in the autumn term where parents contributed ideas about the information they would like to have available through the Gateway about their daughter, we have been constructing the site and a pilot should be ready in the autumn term. We plan to have an online school calendar, copies of recent letters, information about your daughter's attendance, performance etc. The site will continue to develop, responding to suggestions from parents about the information they would like to access.
- Parking/traffic: concern was again raised about persistent offenders who drive into Melbourne Avenue and turn round in the gateways and driveways of the Infant and Junior departments. Reminder to parents that parking is much easier at the Senior end of the campus (Ash Grove, Clarkehouse Road and Clarke Dell) with a 5 minute walk through the Senior School grounds to Melbourne House. Suggestions were made about a possible "stop and drop" scheme on Ash Grove, using a Teaching Assistant and Sixth Formers to walk the children up to Melbourne House. We will consider a trial of this.
- Transition meetings. Following suggestions made at a previous KS1 meeting, we have introduced a Transition from Reception to Y1 meeting (14 June) and one from Y2 to Y3 (21 June). A request was made for an evening meeting to enable working parents to attend. This will be considered for next year.
- Jade cardigan to accompany the winter uniform. A supplier has been found and this should be available from September.
- School photographs: next year's photographs will be taken by Mr Bloodworth and will also include Form Photographs. The Year 6 year group photograph was very well received.

## 2. Homework at Weekends

Requests were made for more flexibility in the length of time given to complete homework. Parents were advised to liaise with class teacher who are happy to be flexible to accommodate any weekend commitments or evening extra-curricular clubs/activities.

A request was made for longer time to be given for Y1 homework and a better spread of homework in Y2.

A homework timetable is given to the girls at the beginning of each year.

## 3. Teaching methods in English

Information was requested on the support parents give their daughters in developing their spelling which correlates with the phonics work in Reception and Y1.

Mrs Jones gave a presentation using examples of writing from girls at different stages of Reception, Y1 and Y2, showing the progress the girls make in learning spelling rules. Parents can support by helping their daughters to learn their spellings and also by getting them to use the spellings in context.

#### **4. Measuring Performance and Progress**

National curriculum levels are not used as we do not feel that these give staff and parents enough information about where their daughters' strengths and weaknesses lie, nor specific targets for how they can progress.

Progress is monitored using PIPS (Performance Indicators in Primary Schools) which is a standardised assessment test used by most independent schools. The girls are assessed using PIPS at the beginning and end of Reception and then at the end of each school year. This then gives the teachers a standardised measure of attainment for each girl and measures the progress she is making year on year. The tests give an indication of any areas teachers need to work on with each individual girl and information from the tests is used in feedback given to parents at Parents' evenings. All data is transferred to the Senior School so Y7 teachers have a good knowledge of the girls' abilities. At the start of Y7 and Y9 the girls follow a Midyis (Middle Years) test similar to PIPS which measures progress from Y7 to 9 and gives an indication of likely performance of GCSE. All our girls usually outperform their predictions!

#### **5. PE Curriculum for each year group**

In Y1 and 2 the girls have 3 sessions of PE per week which include gym, dance and outdoor games. From Y3 upwards they are taught by a PE specialist (Miss Morgan or Mrs Dickson) and from Y3-Y5 continue with 3 sessions per week, covering the following:

##### **Year 3:**

Gymnastics  
Fitness  
Athletics  
Rounders  
Mini Games - (mix of Tag Rugby, Hockey and Netball)  
Dance  
Problem solving and orienteering  
Short Tennis

##### **Year 4:**

Dance  
Problem Solving and orienteering  
Netball  
Swimming  
Gymnastics  
Rounders  
Athletics  
Mini Hockey  
Football  
Short Tennis

##### **Year 5:**

Dance  
Netball  
Badminton  
Gymnastics  
Hockey

Rounders  
Short Tennis  
Problem Solving and Orienteering  
Hockey  
Short Tennis  
Rounders  
Athletics

## 6. School uniform issues

- Concern was raised about the quality of the blue cardigans and the new jade shirts. Mrs Dunsford will follow up with the uniform shop manager. Some parents preferred the old summer dress to the new one.
- A request was made for the girls to be allowed to continue wearing the pinafore dress beyond Y2. This is permitted but it is the girls who chose to wear the skirt!
- A request was made for the girls to be allowed to wear trousers in the winter. Mrs Dunsford explained that this had been raised on several occasions at school council and has now been voted on twice with 70%+ against wearing trousers. Girls who walk to school however may wear their school jogging bottoms on the journey and change when they get to school.
- Shoes: concern was raised about girls wearing flimsy shoes. Our uniform requirements are for plain, black, flat shoes but parents must take ultimate responsibility for ensuring that their daughters' shoes are appropriate for their feet.
- School coat with removable fleece lining. This will be discussed with the supplier. Request for long length coats in bigger sizes and longer skirts in smaller waist sizes.
- Cost of summer dresses was queried and also the style – too wide at the waist and a superfluous belt.
- Skort: request for these to be available from Y6.

## 7. Class sizes

Next year Y2 will have 2 teachers and will be in two separate classes for all subjects. Class sizes are as follows:

Reception: 16 maximum

Y1 and 2: 18 maximum

Y3 and 4: low 20s

Y5 and 6: mid 20s

The current 6w has 29 girls because of Brantwood girls joining who had places for Y7. There are however 1.5 teachers attached to 6w.

## 8. School Lunches

- Concerns raised about the new beakers which do not fit on trays and are becoming cracked and sharp around the edges.
- Snacks: concerns raised about girls being told by other girls about what they can and can't eat or drink. Suggestions for the school to provide the snack for a small charge.

## 9. Co-ordinating term dates with Birkdale

- We always try to do this with other local schools but cannot always align the dates as we work slightly longer terms than other schools and all schools plan staff training days to suit each school's needs.

- A suggestion was made for a longer half term holiday with a shorter Christmas or Easter.

#### **10. Any other business**

- Concern was raised that the entry door pad to the infant building has been raised in height and what would the girls do in case of fire. It was explained that this is to meet Ofsted and ISI regulations regarding safety of Early Year's children who should not be able to open the door. The girls are never left alone in the infant building so an adult would be available to open the door in case of fire. The fire alarm sounds in every building on the school campus.
- Security of the whole site was discussed and the issue of gates sometimes being left open. Parents are reminded that they should always close gates behind them. Self-closing gates will also be investigated.

Thank you to all parents who were able to attend or who submitted topics for discussion.