

Parent Forum 310317

Many thanks to all the parents who stayed on after our Open Morning.

The Budget

NB started off by sharing the bad news that the school have decided to make the Assistant Cook, Sarah Roncaglia, redundant as of September 2017. This is not a decision that the school made lightly; they appreciate that the quality of meals cooked on site is far better than those brought in from outside. However this could save as much as £10 000. Funding from National government has not increased for 8 years even though costs have risen and the squeeze on the school's budget is growing ever tighter. At a finance meeting NB went to this term, it was suggested that the days when schools can afford a TA in every class are numbered; this will soon be a luxury few schools will be able to afford. When forced to make a decision between a TA and a cook, the school felt their hands were tied.

Obviously, everyone will be very sad to say good bye to Sarah who has been a fantastic member of the lunchtime team. We wish her the very best of luck in the future.

SDP (School Development Plan)

The priorities on the SDP this year are:

1. Attendance. Highlighted by OFSTED as an issue. The school is trying to raise the profile of good attendance through weekly assemblies, the newsletter and on the website. Sadly currently attendance is not great, due to the waves of sickness that have been sweeping the school. This is all documented for when OFSTED arrive. NB has talked to the children about the importance of regular handwashing!
2. Improved attainment in Maths. The school was disappointed with the Maths results last year. They have been working with the advisor from the LA to improve teaching by using some of the approaches that have been introduced from Singapore. Recent results from the year 6s do suggest that improvements have been made; in the lower years, there is a clear need to really focus on arithmetic. The school would like to buy a new maths scheme to support this work but this is a huge investment. NB is looking to see if there are any bodies that we could approach for grants.
3. Improved attainment in Writing. OFSTED wanted to see more writing across the curriculum; last year's moderation highlighted issues with spelling. The school has implemented a new spelling scheme which has increased the amount of time spent teaching spelling. They are also extending 'Talk 4 Writing' – look on YouTube and you'll find lots of information! Teachers are already reporting improvement in both quality and quantity of writing.
4. Improved assessment across the curriculum. The school has developed a four year cycle which will allow them to focus on each curriculum area over time. They are investigating and developing ways to make assessment manageable and meaningful.

5. To improve transition between Starfish and Dolphins. After the meeting with year 1 parents just before Christmas, the school have agreed a range of actions which are going to be put in place for next September.
6. To develop the use of 'big questions' across the curriculum. After introducing Philosophy for Children last year, staff wanted to continue to develop our children's willingness to engage with deeper questions across many different subject areas.

If you would like to see a copy of our School Development Plan, please give the office an email address, and NB will happily send you a digital copy.

AOB

Leonne Broome asked about school blogs. Apparently there has been a post about a child's birthday. She wondered if the blogs should be password protected. NB said she would be reluctant to do this, as the blogs are a great advert for the school. She said that all staff were made aware of the children for whom we have permission to put on the blogs and those that we don't. However she said she would remind staff to keep the blogs general rather than specific and to be mindful of confidentiality.

Faye Gostick let everyone know that the PTA are intending to hold a morning meeting on the 28th May in order to attract different parents. She reminded people that that they can sign up to help when they can – it doesn't have to be a regular commitment.

A parent asked if there was any news about the Headteacher. NB said no, but would of course let the parent body know as soon as she knew anything.

NB closed the meeting by thanking the parents for their continued support.