

# Briary Primary School

## Parent Forum Minutes.



11 January 2018

Present:

Raymond McDonagh – Head Teacher

Sarah Grange – FLO

Vicky Evans

Michelle Rohan

Karen Chapman

Jo Brett

Emma Boraston

Paula Bird

\*Parent forum asked with reference to the school discos whether there was any merit in offering a limited number of sweets for sale during the discos. The children had been given a small bag of sweets at the end of the disco last time.

School Response: Whilst acknowledging that the sale of sweets had been a source of income for the Friends' of Briary in the past, the school feels that it is not necessary or appropriate to be encouraging children to buy sweets at a disco. Our concerns were initially raised by the amount that some children spent and then consumed over the course of an hour; some children barely participated in the disco because they were eating. It was noted after the Christmas disco how much more the children joined in (due in part to the enthusiasm of the entertainers who came with the disco) and how much less rubbish was left at the end.

\*Parent Forum asked whether they could be informed which year groups would be having a school trip this year. Parent forum praised the leaflet that was given out which listed all the diary dates and said that it was very useful. They asked if next year the trips could be listed and a rough price guide.

School Response: Our intention is for all year groups to have educational visits of one sort or another each year. In addition, many year groups have workshops in school – this is often a cost effective means of enriching the curriculum without the additional transport costs – but we recognise the value (not least to the children of a 'day out'). We were aware that the diary dates had been positively received so intend to continue that and, as far as is possible, include as many future dates as we can. We recognise that it is easier for parents also if they can be given some indication of costs we in advance. Our aim is to provide all classes with this information in September.

\*Parent forum asked whether the after school club letters could be all handed out on the same day to allow for parents to respond quickly if there is a particular club that their children wish to take part in

School Response: This is nearly always the plan. We are endeavouring to ensure that letters get to classes in sufficient time for this not to be an issue. Some schools try to avoid this by having letters going out on a specific day each week eg a Thursday. Please be aware that on days that letters go out there are always some left in classrooms despite reminders from the adults.

\*Parent Forum stated that it had been a little unclear to parents what the situation was with school dinners and food during the Christmas party week this year and asked if the school would be willing to break down the dates and info more clearly next year. This appeared to be a particular issue for new parents who had not been aware of the arrangements in previous years.

School Response: We were aware of the confusion and will seek to make it clearer next time. We will also try to get some of the information out sooner so that forms and monies are not coming into the office all at the same time. In that regard, it would help us tremendously if money were sent to school in a named envelope clearly marked with the name of the event to which it applied.

\*Parent forum gave some positive feedback about the year 3 & 4 Carol Concert being inside the hall and said that it had worked well.

\*School asked Parent Forum to support us with PE kit issues and reminders to all parents that PE kits are required in school. There have been large numbers of children with no kits, which is making the PE lessons difficult to manage. We also spoke about how good our staff are at returning lost clothing items to children when the clothing is named. We do however, have 2 enormous plastic dustbins already full of lost clothing with no names on it. It just seems such a shame that parents are buying such lovely clothing that we cannot re-unite with its' rightful owners.

\*Parent forum stated that there is some anxiety amongst parents with Kentish Gazette Articles and on Facebook around information about the school reducing down to a single form entry.

Mr Mc Donagh's Response:

The Governors have taken the option to consult on a proposal to reduce to 1-Form entry for September 2019 due to a predicted fall in pupil numbers locally. Parents may also be aware that the new National Funding Formula for schools is closely linked to pupil numbers.

Unfortunately, some rather inflammatory press headlines and local chatter has linked this to the possible closure of Briary.

I can state categorically that the school is not to be closed, in fact, the Local Authority still sees a need, and is planning, for the school to expand to 3-form entry by 2022

I know that one or two families, who have children joining in September 2019, have looked at our admissions criteria and are concerned that they will be affected by this change. If you think that in the event of a change to 1 form entry, you will be affected as a result, please contact Mr McDonagh, Mrs Murrell or Mrs Sheppard to discuss your concerns.

Finally, I reiterate, the consultation is still underway. Please send any questions or comments you may have to the Chair of Governors, Mrs Anna Webber, either via e-mail ([anna.webber@briary.kent.sch.uk](mailto:anna.webber@briary.kent.sch.uk)) or via the school office, marked for her attention. All comments will be duly considered. No firm decision has yet been reached.

Even if the Governors decide to reduce to 1 form entry, this could, in a matter of hours, be reversed and changed back to 2 form entry without the need for a formal consultation.

I hope this alleviates any anxieties that may have arisen.