



A community Growing in Love for Learning and Life Rooted in God's Love

**St. Francis Catholic Primary School 1<sup>st</sup> Parent Forum**

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March**

**Minutes**

In attendance: Elisabeth Blanden, Patricia Williams, Pauline Holliday and 8 parents

1. Welcome

Parents were welcomed with a prayer. Apologies were received from one parent. Protocols were discussed.

2. What's going well/things to celebrate (taken from emails submitted by parents).

The new initiative of the Mission Ties in the 4 colours was applauded by a parent. It was felt that celebrating the various areas of achievement was an improvement on the golden tie process and helped children to understand the school's mission statement more.

The Homework exhibitions are a success and parents felt it was great to see what the children are doing at school. The Reading and Maths workshops are an ideal opportunity to understand the language used by teachers which can then be used by parents at home.

Parents felt that themed weeks, weekly newsletters, the afterschool club and the Friends social events were all things to celebrate.

3. Pick up/drop off times

The staggered pick up times for KS1 and KS2 were discussed considering the positives and the challenges posed.

Traffic issues related to parking were discussed fully and the dangers of the speed and quantity of vehicles on the road and entering the site. Various ideas were suggested such as contacting the Council to get a zebra crossing installed and although the School has investigated this before, a surge or parent power could help the issue. A lollipop lady was also mentioned.

Exploring the use of buses to pick up /drop off children to and from school was also discussed as well as possible support for the reintroduction of a 'Walking Bus' for more local children. Funding and the need for supervision were discussed at length.

Action: Parent and school management

Parents were informed that the grass bank outside the school gate will soon have a fence around it.

Parents have voiced concern that the pedestrian entrance gate is quite heavy and difficult to open, especially with a pushchair. Parents asked if it could be secured open for a period of time in the morning and afternoon.

**Action:** The Site Manager will contact the supplier to establish if there is anything that can be done to adapt the existing system.

Parents enquired why there is a chain preventing crossing at the front gate. With this chain in situ it forces parents to cross at the widest section of road. It was stated that this chain was installed as pedestrians walking at this point had been affecting the gate system.

**Action:** It will be looked at again to see if improvements can be made to ensure safer crossing.

Parents have commented that the side entrance gate has been opening later than 8.45am and closing earlier than expected. Mrs Blanden apologised to parents if this has been the case and explained the timings, stressing that the gate cannot open unless teaching staff are back in their classrooms to receive the children following their morning briefing. Equally the gate must close at 8.55am as this is the start of the school day.

**Action:** Mrs Blanden concluded that the Staff briefing time will commence 5 mins earlier at 8.35am so that teachers can be back in their classrooms earlier.

Parents enquired whether a larger shelter or canopy (preferably temporary to avoid any building regulations) could be erected outside the main entrance for children and parents awaiting the gate opening. It was felt that the Friends could be asked to raise funds for this. Alternative funding could also be available.

**Action:** Aparent will research if any funding is available.

#### 4. P.E/medical

A parent would like further information with regards to the P.E curriculum and the competitions currently undertaken by St. Francis.

**Action:** The school will make this information available to parents.

A parent has concern that asthma pumps were not outside with the children during PE and that if held elsewhere at school there may not be adequate time to fetch it if required.

**Action:** Mrs Blanden explained that supervising staff do carry a first aid kit but will ensure that all support staff are aware that asthma pumps must be included in their kit at all times.

5. Financial

An online payment system is currently being investigated so that it links directly into the schools information system. This is something that is hoped for the new financial year and will facilitate many payments to school, making it easier for parents and for the office staff to process.

Software is also being investigated with parental login to aid with Parent consultation appointments.

6. Home/school communication

Cancellation of events: If a club is unable to run the children will be supervised until the club is due to finish e.g. Forest School Club 4:00p.m. Other clubs finish at 4.20pm. Parents will be contacted and therefore able to collect their children at the end of the school day if they wish to do so.

Incident forms: there are 2 methods undertaken and depends upon the severity of the incident. Children are given head bumps stickers and parents are given a telephone call home and a slip is completed for other minor incidents. Alternatively, for more serious incidents, protocols are followed enlisting the help of external bodies or an Ambulance if necessary and a different recording process is used.

Homework: It was voiced by a parent that more spellings, phonics or maths homework would be desirable for Year 1, rather than just reading material. Other parents felt that at this stage, allowing children to play is more beneficial and as the children progress through the school, further homework will arrive. It was stressed by Senior Management that talking to and playing and reading with your child is still a positive learning experience for young children. Lots of information is available on the website and perhaps parents can be guided towards this.

**Action:** To signpost where parents can access further information either on the schools website or additional learning locations such as YouTube.

**Action:** Phonic information to be shared with parents. (Parents information session Term 5)

7. A.O.B

- Parents mentioned that some schools have their own App – mentioning St. Michaels and Westborough. This would be an ideal tool for parents and teachers.

**Action:** This will be investigated by Senior Management.

- Further development of class pages was suggested so that parents can see exactly what children were working on. Alternatively teachers could put a poster up on their window so at pick-up time parents can see the current topic or theme.

**Action:** This will be explored by Senior Management.

- Making this meeting a success and accessible to as many parents as possible is key. This meeting will be scheduled at different days and times, including after school, to give all parents the opportunity to attend. Parent has volunteered to create a survey to establish further information from parents, if required.

This meeting will take place termly with the next meeting scheduled for a 2pm start.