



Dartmoor
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

Parents' forum minutes

Monday 18th November 9am

Bridestowe Primary School

In attendance

Adam Hill – Acting Head of School

Phil Whittle – Executive Headteacher

James Liversey-

Abi Horn-

Tess Robinson-

Lyndsay Burder-

Helen Proctor - - Parents

Helen Moppett -

Rachel Dewsbury –

Ann Taylor-

Sally Maddaford-

C Floyd-Walker -

Emily Currie -

Apologies: Gemma Eales, Adrian Anning

Minutes

AH welcomed all parents and stated aims of parents' forum.

Staffing for January

AH stated the staffing changes for January:

- Mrs Lammas will increase days from 3 per week to 5 (full time) in Tawny Owls class
- Mrs Baker will return from maternity leave, 3 days per week in Owlets
- Mrs Harris will transfer from Tawny Owls to Owlets, 2 days per week
- Miss Stansbury will end her temporary contract with the school
- A new teacher will be employed in Snowy Owls

There were many positive comments and praise for Miss Stansbury's contribution to the school and the positive impact she has had on the school.

It was discussed ways in which Miss Stansbury could be kept within the school, Federation or MAT. AH assured parents that we would very much like Miss Stansbury to stay within our organisation but we must honour Mrs Baker's return from maternity.

It was confirmed that Mrs Lammas has returned to work.

Questions were raised about the appointment of a new teacher in Snowy Owls:

Will a new teacher be in place for January?

AH – yes, there will be a teacher in place for January. The job advert is currently live and closes on the 29th of November. An interview process will follow.

Will there be a period of supply teachers?

AH – we would hope not.

PW – There may be a period of notice a new teacher has to give to their current employer in which case we would ensure a teacher in the class.

AH – we have some options around the school and Federation, e.g. Mrs Sharland who currently works 1 day a week in the school.

A question was raised about support staff:

Will Barn Owls class have a full-time teaching assistant (TA)?

AH – The TA structure will stay as it currently is, there is a balance of TA time across the school.

Discussion points were invited from the forum:

Do volunteers need DBS (Disclosure and barring service) checks?

Some volunteers felt put off from helping as they had offered, but been told they could not due to a lack of DBS check.

AH – Yes. All volunteers need to have a valid and current DBS check to work as a volunteer within the school, including transporting children to events. The school will provide and pay for DBS checks for volunteers.

In addition, there will be some training for volunteers in the near future.

What about if parents agree others can transport their children?

AH – those drivers would still need a DBS check.

When will the permanent divide be installed between Owlets and Tawny Owls?

Parents raised concerns about the noise transfer from one class to another.

PW – there is work going on to make the divide permanent, however there are many jobs that need completing, many of which are health and safety related and must take priority. Also, there is only a finite amount of money to spend on buildings. No timeline can be currently given but be assured it is being actioned.

AH – the divide is a better solution than a combined class however the noise is a challenge. The floor in the Tawny Owls is due to be recovered to reduce noise reverberation.

Can some parents just build a wall?

PW – unfortunately not, schools must use approved contractors through the correct channels for many reasons, including insurance and compliance.

Can't the teachers plan their lessons to ensure they don't disturb the other?

AH – they do this currently. However, classes need to be flexible, things adapt and change as the day goes on so some noise from the other class is inevitable.

AH and PW acknowledged the challenges faced by the temporary divide but it is currently the best solution available.

What is the school capacity?

AH – The school capacity is 84, we currently have 80 children.

Will you not accept more children?

AH - As a community school, and one which wishes to grow and develop, we will continue to accept children and grow. Our ethos is that we are inclusive and serve the children in our communities.

Will the school get any money from the new houses being built in the village?

PW – yes, but it will not be substantial amounts.

Will children get more time in the swimming pool as they are going in two groups?

AH – the decision to go in two groups is logistical. There was a lot of wasted time in the previous system. Now children will swim in key stage groups, Snowy Owls and Barn Owls then Owlets and Tawny Owls.

Children will spend 45 minutes in the pool in small groups, giving them a better child:adult ratio and thus more teacher time. This also means they will have lessons bespoke to their needs. The other 45 minutes at the pool will be spent in the seating area with a teacher on learning activities such as phonics, reading, spellings or times tables.

Will there be swimming pool instructors?

AH – Yes, as before children will be taught by a mix of class teachers and pool instructors.

Will it be a similar cost?

AH – Yes. Costs will be confirmed very shortly.

It was clarified that swimming happens at Launceston pool.

Can young children (toddlers and pre-school age) be made welcome at the upcoming Nativity and play performances?

Parents felt that in the past they had felt excluded by being asked to take noisy children out of performances.

AH – we want to include all people in our performances however we must respect that children will have worked very hard to learn lines, generate courage to be on stage and they should be able to perform without being distracted/over shadowed.

A compromise was suggested that younger children could attend the dress rehearsal of performances as Tree Tops attended these. **This has now been agreed with teachers.**

It was noted by a parent that an adjoining property may soon be for sale and the MAT may consider this a way to expand the school.

AH shared some key points for writing and writing at home.

Powerpoint, resources and videos will be available online.

- Why is writing important?
- The importance of speech and reading in learning to write
- Early mark making and muscle development
- Learning to write in the EYFS
- The 'Talk for writing' teaching strategy
- The writing process at KS1 – Pre write, structuring, sentence building, drafting, editing, revising, sharing.
- Practising transcription

- The writing process at KS2 – Planning, drafting, sharing, evaluating, revising, editing, publishing.
- Writing at home
 - o Speech and reading
 - o Opportunities for writing from birth, real and created (shopping lists, birthday cards, stories etc.)
 - o Developing arm and hand strength (Play-doh, cooking, sports)
 - o Encouraging planning when writing
 - o Mistakes are good – editing, revising – Improving!
 - o Be a writing role model
 - o Vocabulary notebook.

Next Parents' forum

22nd January at 3.30pm

26th March at 5.30pm

Meeting closed at 10.20