

## **Minutes of Parents' Forum**

25<sup>th</sup> November, 2019

**Present:** Katy Lyons, Head Teacher; Tracey West, Jo Cursley, Governors; Parents: O Chuter (Years 4 and 5), E Rice (Years 1 and 4); Jo Crosby (Years 1 and 5); Alison Birchall (Years 4 and 6); Sophie Weldin (Years 3 and 5)

KL began the meeting by saying she was feeling her way with the structure of a Parent Forum meeting as it was the first time she had taken it. She opened up the discussion first of all to the Parents to bring up any issues they would like to discuss about the Curriculum.

### **Year 1 (ER and JC)**

Parents appreciate the hard work done in the curriculum. They would however like more natural science to be taught to encourage those non- sporty children to be outside. They would also like more Art with links to Devon Art Week, the Hulbert Gallery and Double Elephant Printing in Exeter. They would also like Drama and Sport.

KL to speak with Primary Forest School (EB) to further enhance links between science and Forest School. Teachers to plan for science opportunities to be taught in outdoor classroom where beneficial to the children.

### **Year 3 (SW)**

Parents felt that all the trips had been planned well and the maths games are enjoyed by the children. Also, the Parent Association enjoyed working with KL.

### **Year 4 (ER, AB)**

Parents would like more Drama, Music, Art and DT. They wondered if languages could be inserted into the curriculum. The children love Topic Days and would like more. One parent had reported to AB that she would like a Maypole and would teach the children how to do a Maypole dance. Some parents had felt there was too much RE and that it was very repetitive. A query was made about studying Guatemala as there was a perception it had been on the school curriculum for a long time.

Parents had requested more information about children's progress in other subjects in the end of the year report. (See \*\* at end)

Children are loving Book Club with Mr Walsh at lunchtime.

Children would like more specialised Sports Clubs such as Football and Rugby.

KL teaching French to KS2 (as this is the main language taught in Woodroffe) Drama and Music is taught by KL to all classes at some point in the academic year. Art and DT are now explicitly planned for on long term curriculum plan and progression of skills are being developed. KL to share this information at a curriculum meeting in the Spring Term.

KL/AH to speak to our sports providers about club provision.

### **Year 5 (SW)**

OC had looked at other school websites in the MAT. She felt that Marshwood's planning was easier to follow and that some explanation would be useful for the understanding of Mrs E's diagrammatic

plan. Basically the parents said they wanted to understand what the children studied previously, what they are studying now and what they will be studying in the future. (\*See comment at the end) OC said that Lisa Rawlins from Colyton used to be the link for providing enrichment free to schools, working with Primary School teachers. OC will investigate and find out who is now the link and let KL know. KL welcomed this, though she pointed out that this already occurs with Woodroffe staff where there will be a liaison regarding the skills, characteristics and attributes expected of Mrs E's children by the end of Year 6 to ensure they are ready for secondary education.

KL to use the curriculum meeting to explain the new style of learning maps and share the long term planning so parents understand how the curriculum has been structured and designed.

KL has made contact and is awaiting a meeting with Colyton to see how we can work collaboratively in a variety of subjects.

### **Year 6 (AB)**

Parents would like more music in the curriculum. There was a lack of understanding at the moment about which lessons are available for children. They would like Drama Club. KL explained she has considerable experience in Drama having first of all studied it, practised in it and then taught it with various Drama Groups for years before she began Teacher Training. She may consider opening up Drama Club again.

OC requested an explanation of the difference between Enrichment and the Curriculum. KL said that where specialisms were not covered by the staff, then specialists had to be brought in. The school has brought in specialist coaches for sport and also for Forest School. The Sports Premium is well-funded and can be used to hire coaches.

### **General comment on trips from all years**

Parents from all classes welcomed the trips this year which all seemed very relevant to the children's topics and which had all been enjoyed. They thought the proposed school trip to a pantomime was a brilliant idea.

Music is being taught by KL and the school has subscribed to Charanga. KL has had a meeting with the representative for this area and will look into CPD for all staff.

KL and AH to update the website so information about music lessons is easier to find and share this via the newsletter.

### **Other comments by KL**

#### **National Curriculum**

KL explained that while Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum, they then have to prove that what they are following or have created is better. KL is therefore following the National Curriculum as they have already done a considerable amount of work on this. For examples, they have to cover an Ancient Civilization but it does not specify which one – this is down to the school to decide. The staff have worked hard to unpick the curriculum and make sure that what they have chosen to include from the non-statutory examples are relevant and engaging for the children. KL is working with Woodroffe to ensure that the coverage offered at primary will compliment that of their secondary experience and that the children leave with the skills to ensure they can be successful.

. \*KL explained that from September the topics studied had to be broken down into specific subject areas: Geography and History. This has been a major change and will take two years to phase in as there now has to be detailed planning of the skills progression in those areas.

\*\* KL explained that the children's End of Year Report will be reviewed by SLT and a discussion will be held about how we report on all areas of the curriculum whilst considering work/life balance for staff.

### **Reading**

KL explained that all classes include reading to a teacher whatever their ability. This includes and encourages accelerated reading. Also at the end of every day the children are read to by different teachers as the school wanted not only to encourage reading ability but also a passion for books. KS2 children were encouraged to read novels. For KS1, parents are being encouraged in to listen to readers at the beginning of the day on specified days. To develop this further, KL is working with Woodroffe as their older pupils who have to do 40 hours community service, will be potentially opting to hear readers at Mrs Ethelston's.

KL to share this information about reading at Curriculum meeting.

### **RE Curriculum**

The RE Curriculum is devised by the Diocese. To encourage children's awareness of other cultures, the children have 6 'Stop the Clock' days during the year which focus on other cultures/festivals and also an awareness of the challenges in different sectors of society they may not be aware of. The first one was 'Hello Yellow Day' which focussed on mental awareness and the next will focus on Diwali. The purpose of these days is to widen children's awareness of the world outside as mainly their experience is of a mono culture not representative of the rest of the country.

KL to share this information about reading at Curriculum meeting and make reference to it in the newsletter and website.

### **Music**

KL explained the way music is organised in the school. KL will be teaching all year groups music and will be working to develop a progression of skills that compliments the Charanga scheme that has been 100% subsidised by Devon Music Hub. The aim is that all children will learn a tuned instrument in this way and there will be progression throughout the years.

Alongside this KL has been teaching drama skills and French to KS2.

### **Sport**

A plea was made for better organisation at Sports Matches. KL explained that the problem occurs where matches take place in school time. There is no cover for teachers who cannot leave their classes. Therefore they cannot always be involved in transporting and organising the children at the matches. SW stated that parents would like to be involved in transporting and organising the children. KL said she would follow this up and do her best to organise a better structure.

She explained how historically there had been issues with competitive and inclusion opportunities with sports. It has been decided that events taking place within the MAT would be inclusive to offer all children to represent the school and participate and where fixtures/competitions were external, we would ensure that a system was in place for children who train in these events to be selected.

KL is meeting with parent volunteers to look through dates of fixtures, decide on selection for teams, discuss ensuring the children have the opportunity to feel prepared prior to the event and how we will communicate any additional details.

## **In conclusion**

After KL's explanations about all that the school is involved in, there were general comments about the fantastic range of the curriculum but a general consensus that it needs to be better communicated to parents.

KL and staff to arrange a date for a curriculum evening for parents and carers.