

Parent Forum
Tuesday 28th February 2017, 6:30pm

The meeting was led by Sam Hunter, Executive Headteacher. Diana Massa, Assistant Headteacher and Judith Rutherford, Vice Chair of Governors, were also there.

Introductions

Homework Club Update

Mrs Hunter explained that some parents have asked if we would run a homework club. This has been given consideration but the school feels that along with establishing skills such as independence and time keeping it is also an important way to establish and maintain home school links around learning. Therefore the school will not be running a homework club where children do their homework with a member of staff. However, if in the future it was felt that there were families who did not have the facilities in their own home to complete their homework then the school would be happy to provide a space for children and parents to work together to complete the homework.

Healthy Snack Shop Update

Mrs Hunter talked through the work that the Pupil Forum has been doing reviewing the snack shop. She spent some time listing the complexities of running this facility and how opinions can be very divided, as is the case for homework. Mrs Hunter is about to work with the School Business Manager, Mrs Perrin, along with the Pupil Forum to finalise ideas for the way forward.

School to School Support in the summer term

Mrs Hunter asked the parents if they had any questions or comments in relation to the communication that had gone home the day before regarding school to school support. (STSS)

Question: Is the motivation for doing STSS mainly financial?

Answer: Mrs Hunter explained that there are several reasons for doing STSS. One is a moral imperative to ensure that children in other schools get a great education, like our children do. More important, it provides excellent continual professional development opportunities (CPD) for our staff, making them better practitioners which directly impacts our children. It enables them to further support their colleagues in the own school. The variety of opportunity that we can offer helps us to retain staff and to be an attractive place to work for recruitment. However, there is also the real need to consider the essential funding that this brings to enable our school to remain financially viable.

Parent Comment: The balance of Mrs Hunter only out 3 days a week and having a break for a term or so to be back full time at HJS seems the right balance.

Mrs Hunter agrees that 3 days is the maximum number of days that she wants to be out and explained that Mrs Massa being at the other school for the 4th and 5th days will ensure there is a buffer and that her HJS days will therefore be 'protected'. Judith Rutherford said that for the governors, our children remain their priority and therefore have needed to give a very considered approach to this.

Mrs Hunter explained that only two classes this school year have been affected by the STSS, for a total of 8 mornings. However, most classes will have had their teachers out of class for other CPD activities, but not for STSS.

Question: How do you measure the impact of STSS? It looks disruptive – how does it benefit our children?

Answer: Mrs Hunter explained that they are confident with the data, both end of KS and also with the internal data for term on term achievement of the children. Judith Rutherford explained the role of the governors in this. There is also the external validation, such as the annual LLP visit from the local authority. Mrs Hunter also talked about qualitative monitoring, such as incidents of bullying or number of parent complaints, all of which have indicated that standards remain high.

Question: Can you compare data with a school that is not doing STSS such as those locally.

Answer: Judith Rutherford explained that it is hard to find a school like ours that is not doing STSS to make the comparison with. Mrs Hunter explained that there are always other issues involved, such as the number of SEND pupils.

Question: You talked about Maths progress being your Achilles' heel – can you explain why this is?

Answer: Mrs Hunter explained that while everything around our maths teaching and learning is looking outstanding we are trying booster groups this year with some Year 6 pupils to see if there is more that we can be doing around test skills to ensure that the results that we get in tests reflect what they are achieving in the classroom.

Question: Are you certain about your approach with not streaming?

Answer: Mrs Hunter explained that the school is and talked about why.

The conversation then moved on to the spring term parents evenings and the management of having the children in and part of the conversation whilst parents also wanting time to talk to the teacher on their own. We discussed various approaches and their merits and disadvantages. Mrs Massa shared the feedback from the governors' survey to parents regarding this.

