

Welcome to the Parent Council

Have YOUR views heard on school matters

Thank you to the group of parents that came to the Parent Council meeting on Friday 8th March, and particularly to Mrs Busswell for gathering views from parents unable to attend. Although a small group, we had a good representation from classes across the school which was incredibly useful.



A bit about Parent Council

The purpose of the Parent Council is to ensure that parents have a voice in school decision making and provide better communication between the whole school community. It gives parents a chance to meet up and share ideas and talk about the things that matter to them.

- Parents as a group can advise the governors and Headteachers of their views.
- The governing body can consult parents as a group.
- It engages in activities which support the education and welfare of the pupils.
- it works in partnership with the school to create a welcoming school, which is inclusive of all parents.



Uniform

School said...

"We have now sourced an online supplier and will be launching this later this year. It will run alongside Love Your Logo. We have reviewed the colour of PE T-shirts in response to parent feedback and have a sample t-shirt in navy. We are able to offer additional products which would be optional such as coats, bags, water bottles, through the new supplier if parents would like them. There will be a delivery charge for online orders - will parents find this prohibitive?"

Next steps...

- School to offer plain version of PE kit and test durability of new printing.
- School to review PE kits for Reception, for this September.
- Online shop to stock PE shorts.

Parents said...

- Prefer navy PE tops, but will printing type on new PE shirts stand up to wear and tear, or crack over time with washing / drying?
- Can be difficult to find navy PE shorts - can these be bought via the website or is black acceptable?
- Could parents club together and bulk order online to save delivery costs (could this be organised through school?)
- Do Reception Class need full PE kit from September - if not, can parents be asked to provide it later as children outgrown kit which has barely been worn.
- *Love Your Logo* often out of stock - especially in summer holidays - so parents happy to be able to order in advance online.

Payments	
School said...	Parents said...
<p><i>“We increasingly struggle to cover the cost of school trips, as we are finding less parents are paying the contributions we ask for. Legally, we are not able to exclude children from curriculum-based school trips (this does not include residential) if parents are unable to pay, but we cannot manage the current deficit. On average, we run one trip per class per term though sometimes we might organise visitors or workshops to come into school instead of going on trips out. The majority of the cost of trips is often the transport. We would like to know if parents find the costs too much, or feel we run too many trips / residential (currently one night in Year 5 and one week in Year 6.) We would like to propose an alternative payment plan where parents are asked to make one payment for the cost of total trips for the year in September (either in full or on a monthly payment plan) so that they know what to expect and can budget accordingly. We welcome any other suggestions from parents about how we can improve this so that it is manageable for you and we can continue to offer a good range of enrichment activities.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They don't want less trips - these are seen as the most enjoyable and memorable aspects of school by many, and parents appreciate the amount of work that goes into organising them. ● Would it be easier to have the residential spread out (e.g. Years 4 and 6) so that the costs are not one year after another? ● Could the one-night residential be on-site, to reduce overheads? (e.g. sleepover in school hall.) ● Parents would welcome easier ways of paying (e.g. online payments.) ● More notice for big payments (such as year 5 residential which was early in the year) could be beneficial. ● Parents liked the idea of an annual / monthly payment plan for total of all trips and expenses. Would want to know exactly what is was covering at the start of the year.
<p>Next steps...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → School consider the points raised with a view to introducing payment plans next year. → School to investigate online payments for school trips. → School to discuss and review residential for next year, in light of feedback. → Meet the teacher sessions to include information about upcoming school trips for the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Could teachers talk through the trips for the year in the September <i>Meet the Teacher</i> sessions, so that parents see the value in visiting places they may otherwise not have heard of. ● Consider people with children in lots of classes and spreading things out so they don't all come at once.

Communication	
School said...	Parents said...
<p><i>“We have had feedback from parents that you would like more information about what children do in school, especially now you are used to having Tapestry in Year R and see the benefit of this level of communication. We are looking to invest in an app called Marvellous Me, which will enable teachers to</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents would welcome a messaging service from teachers about what children are doing in school. ● Parents do not want a huge amount of information - brief weekly updates would be

message parents with information about what children have done in school. This can be either whole-class messaging about what they've done in lessons, or individual messages about achievements. Firstly, would parents welcome this form of communication, and would you like more guidance on how to help your children at home? Would you do more work at home if you had more information, or can we better support you at home in any other way?"

Next steps...

- School will go ahead with trialling new Marvellous Me app - further information to follow.
- School to compile a list of recommended books / websites that parents can be referred to when looking to help children at home.

sufficient.

- Parents do not necessarily want more work to do with children at home, but prompts to start conversations about what children are doing in school so they can help / reinforce what has been covered.
- When targets / things to work on are given, parents would appreciate if this was more specific to individuals as whole-class targets (such as "learn times tables") are not always relevant / helpful.
- Parents don't want work sent home, but would like recommendations for books / websites they could go to to support their child (the list Year 1 gave at parents' evening was especially useful.)

Any other business

Parents said...

1. Please can we have regular homework setting days (e.g. when teachers are off sick, homework is not always set on same day.)
2. Homework (especially if online / optional) is not always acknowledged by teachers and feedback is not always received, which can make children feel it's not worth doing. Please can we make sure this happens in all classes?
3. Following on from above point, in younger classes children do not always give their homework in (it can stay in their book bags) - can a teacher check to see if they have homework to hand in? In Year 1, it is not always clear whether homework is optional or compulsory, and if it's compulsory, there doesn't seem to be any follow-up if it's not completed. Can we have clarification?
4. Could the school run teacher-led mindfulness sessions?
5. In a previous school, one pupil's class had daily Q&A sessions where children could ask for help with anything they needed help with - is this something we could introduce at Powell?
6. Classes are not always out on time at the end

School response...

1. This should be the case (Fridays) but is tricky when teachers are off sick - we will remind teachers of expectations.
2. Our expectation is that homework is acknowledged by teachers and feedback given where necessary. We will remind all teachers of this expectation.
3. We will pass this message on to the relevant classes, thank you.
4. Some staff have been trained in mindfulness, and have run sessions in school which have been well-received. We are happy to discuss whether this could be rolled out across the school in future, and will add it to our staff meeting agenda.
5. Again, we are happy to add this to our agenda for discussion as a staff.

of the day - this is frustrating for working parents and parents who have to collect from both playgrounds.

6. We apologise, and will remind all teachers of this expectation.

Thank you!

Once again, we are so grateful to everyone who gave up their time to come to the meeting this morning, or who sent in their views. These meetings are invaluable to us as a school, and help us know how the decisions we make affect you at home. Please do continue to share your views with us through the parent survey or by popping in for a chat. We will be holding another Parent Council meeting in the summer term, at 9:00 am on Friday 14th June. Further details to follow - we hope to see you there!



COOPERATION

RESPECT

UNDERSTANDING

CARING

RESPONSIBILITY