

Parents' Forum Minutes – Thursday 11th February 2016

Present: Staff; Ms T McBride (Head Teacher), Mrs J Tucker (Deputy Head), Mrs F Letts (Assistant Head), Mrs E Elliman (Assistant Head)

Governors: Mr P Clancy (Chair of Governors), Mrs F Zakari-Ayankoya, Mr J Doneo, Mrs F Long, Mr R McBrien, Mr R Cachuela, Mr C Richardson

Parents/ Guests: Fr Dominic McKenna, Tracey Dennison, Elaine Hannon, Kasia Mordenti, Alison Jackson, Margaret Aryeetey, Jurina Horinek

Welcome, introductions and prayer led by Paul Clancy

Ms McBride showed a slideshow of highlights from the autumn term also linking to the Catholic Life of the School.

Behaviour for Learning Update

Mrs Letts gave an update on the Behaviour for Learning strategy which has been adopted by the school and will continue to progress over the next couple of years. Hannah East, a behaviour for learning advisor from Herts for Learning visited the school to look at what is currently in place and to advise on how the strategy may be moved forward. There are 3 skill areas which will be worked towards. These are Organisational Skills, Social Skills and Learning Skills. Following Hannah East's input each class has been able to undertake some work to form a behaviour for learning baseline as a starting point and this has been combined to form a whole school baseline displayed on a colour coded chart. Year 5 have been enlisted as a pathfinder class and will take the lead on some areas of the strategy. They will shortly be commencing work with Year 3 to support them with their targets. Each class will be working on targeted areas and these will be displayed in class and in the staffroom. Staff are working on the development of new rewards systems linked for Behaviour for Learning and a 360 degree approach is being taken involving staff at all levels in school.

Mrs Letts explained that it would be positive for parents/carers to support this by being aware of the skills that classes are working on and encouraging children to find ways of supporting and encouraging the same at home. Information will be sent home via the newsletter after half term. There was a discussion at this point exploring how information could be shared using link books and how children could be rewarded at home for positive progress.

Catholic Life of the School

Ms McBride explained that as well as Ofsted Inspection as a Catholic School we also have a RE Inspection and we are now falling into the time when this inspection will be due. As part of the preparation for our inspection we had a monitoring visit from our advisor at the Diocese of Westminster. Excellent feedback has been received from this visit and we now await our formal inspection.

Some group work was done exploring the Catholic Life of the School to consider what we do well, what we should change/ do differently and what we could introduce. Each group gave feedback individually. The strong link between the School and the Joint Parishes of Borehamwood was prominent and the Exceptional work and support provided by Father Dominic was highlighted with special thanks given to Father Dominic for all he does for the school and parishes.

There is particular focus on the Holy Year of Mercy and Lenten acts in preparation for Easter at present. Father Dominic has been considering with the School how a pilgrimage to a Door of Mercy could be facilitated. As Westminster Cathedral has logistical and cost implications some thought has been given to visiting St. Alban's Cathedral as a Catholic Mass is held weekly and there is a Door of Mercy.

Reading/ Book Week

Mrs Elliman spoke about the importance of reading and encouraging children to develop the ability of reading for pleasure which it turn greatly benefits their learning. Book Week "Leap into your imagination" will take place in school from 29th February to 4th March and great effort has been made to ensure that the week is engaging and interactive. Activities planned include Bookmark making, Book swap, Design a book cover, Fr Dominic – Jesus the storyteller, Poetry activities and recitals, Potato character gallery exhibition and competition, fairy crown and pixie hat making and fairy cake decorating.

Mrs Elliman is pleased that many children are reading at home and this is recorded in their link books however asked the group how we could support and encourage parents of children who are less engaged in reading at home. Positive use of home link books is important and parents need to make time for reading. Some children may be less engaged by the books they choose at times and may prefer comics or age appropriate magazines. Mrs Elliman encouraged reading in whatever format that the child is willing to engage in.