



Parents' Forum Minutes

Wednesday 14th November, 2:15pm

Attendance

- 12 parents
- 1 governor (Tony Regan)

Agenda

- **School data 2017-18**
- **School Development Plan**
- **Behaviour Policy**

	Mr Lerner explained the purpose of these new meetings. He values the input of all stakeholders on the direction that the school should take. He is keen to develop how the school gathers feedback from parents so that parents can make a positive impact on how the school moves forward.
School Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See attached PowerPoint for details • Very positive data in all statutory assessment year groups (EYFS, Y1 phonics, KS1 SATs and KS2 SATs) • Our positive progress scores show that children at Dedham on average perform better than other children with the same starting points at other similar schools.
School Development Plan	<p>Parents were asked what they think the school should focus on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The less academic areas, e.g. music, sport, and drama to ensure a breadth of curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mr Lerner shared that his experiences at other schools helps him to see that we do have a great deal of sporting opportunities on offer. This was acknowledged by some parents who said that since having a Competitive Sports Administrator (Sarah Simons) there have been many more opportunities, especially in years 4-6. ➤ A suggestion was made to participate in the 'daily mile' and Mr Lerner said this was something he was keen to investigate further. ➤ A concern was raised over PE timetabling and children missing lessons if it rained and the hall was being used. Miss Valentine explained that usually, the timetable ensured staff had access to both the field and the hall for a lesson although that recent taster days in the hall (e.g. badminton) had meant that other PE lessons were unable to take place.

- A discussion over indoor playtimes was had and whether it was possible for children to get outside/be active in wet weather.
- Different learning styles being catered for, e.g. working outdoors
- Nice to have opportunities for cross year group working
 - Discussion that there is a real community feel around the school which helps the children to feel safe and supported.
 - The reading buddy system is liked and a suggestion that perhaps it happens more throughout the school. Also a comment that it's a shame that Class R children lose their buddy when the buddy leaves at the end of Year 6.
- Children have missed the conker competition, celebrating birthdays and golden time this year
 - Miss Valentine explained that Year 6 children usually coordinate the conker competition if they want to have one. It's a child-led activity.
 - Mr Lerner said that feedback from staff and children about the length of assemblies led to no longer celebrating birthdays as a whole school. They are now being celebrated in classes and birthdays are still valued.
 - Golden Time had ceased being a useful behaviour management tool because the same children were ending up in 'Time Out' on Fridays and receiving a consequence on a Friday for something that potentially happened on a Monday isn't meaningful for children. The mixing up of classes however was a really positive aspect of Golden Time though and we will seek to do this more. E.g. mixing up classes to create artwork for Remembrance.

Mr Lerner then shared the outline of what will form this year's School Development Plan (see Presentation). He explained that usually an SDP would be in place for the start of a school year but that it was important for him to see the school in action for half a term to get an accurate picture before proposing changes.

- Regarding Forest Schools, Mr Lerner is currently working with Laura Hedges, a Forest Schools practitioner from Essex Wildlife Trust about running 3 week taster sessions for the whole school with a plan to building on this next year.
- The outdoor area is a fantastic resource which Mr Lerner feels could be further developed. For example, installing an outside gym using money raised by the Dedham Run and turning the quiet area into more of an outside classroom with seating for thirty using Parent Group money. The School Council began formulating ideas in the summer term and they will play a big part in the development of this area.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A suggestion was made by Mr Lerner that perhaps a 'Dedham Force' day could enable the outdoor area to be tidied/repainted/weeded etc by a team of willing volunteers. • The splitting up of the ICT Suite into smaller rooms has allowed for a space to be designated to sensory/well-being activities and Thrive activities. Mrs Woolston is currently receiving Thrive training (10 days) to become our school practitioner. The whole staff will receive training on February 14th and Mrs Davies will attend Thrive leadership training in the spring. One parent said that they had very positive experiences of Thrive happening in another school. • Mr Lerner, Miss Mortlock (Senior Midday Assistant) and Mrs Grice (TA/MDA) will be attending some training on developing positive lunchtimes. The plan is to develop the activities on offer at lunchtimes so that football does not dominate the field. There was agreement that football at lunchtimes tends to be the root of many problems.
<p>Behaviour Policy</p>	<p>Parents were asked about their thoughts on behaviour at the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's generally very good • It was one of the reasons why we chose Dedham • The values help the children • There's a community feel • More variety at playtimes would help to reduce some of the problems. Agreement that it's a key time in the day and when problems are most likely to happen. <p>Mr Lerner shared his thoughts on what the policy should include (see Presentation) and said that he hoped to have it finalised ready for the spring term. He explained that he felt it was important to seek input from the children and parents first before being finalised by the staff.</p> <p>Parents were asked about their views on what the policy should include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A visual code would be helpful so children know the expectations • Ensuring that the policy is fair and consistent across the school is important
<p>Any other questions or suggestions for future agenda items?</p>	<p>A query was made regarding class teachers for September 2019 and who might be teaching year 6. Mr Lerner explained that recruitment may be necessary. Parents were assured that they would be told when plans were finalised and fixed.</p>
	<p>The next meeting will take place on Thursday 28th February 2019 at 2:15pm.</p> <p>A suggestion was made that an evening meeting may attract more parents. This will be considered for future meetings.</p>