

Parents Forum 20.10.23		
Attendees: JM, AF (school) (parents) LB, BS, LC, JK Apologies: AB,		Action
Welcome and matters from last meeting	• IT department working on safeguarding website section. New display has gone up at office area. Regular texts now going home. • Work happening to plan suggested workshops. • Behaviour video ready and will share soon. • Dojo trial still ongoing. • Changes made to the teaching of spelling in school and associated homework. Presentation to parents soon.	
To enable all children to learn and lead without barriers Attendance	• National issue post-Covid of dip in attendance and societal changes in view e.g. importance of school and education vs family time/well-being, families taking holidays in term time worsened by cost of living • Drop in attendance will lead to attainment dip • Government expectation of 95%+ and judged by Ofsted. Persistent absence is below 90% • Attendance officers work very hard following government policy but suffer backlash from parents including verbal abuse • AF leads on attendance, lead for CAT and on regional DfE consultancy group/hub • Some parents are aware of chats on social media and know of people who take holidays in term time. Issue has been compounded by teacher strikes too and discussions around later school age in other countries. • One parent shared own experiences of how did take holidays and odd days for long weekends when child in Reception and Year 1 but stopped this for Year 2 and noticed the difference in	AF to take parents suggestion and make information sheet for January promoting the extra week's holiday at May and the money saving options available then. The forum will come back to this issue later in the year.

	child as she didn't feel behind or had missed things. • Parents shared how school already helps parents as having training days blocked together saves parents a huge amount of money by going away that week when other schools are still at school. Perhaps school could amplify their promotion of this to make parents aware – it is already on the attendance letter but maybe could be more pro-active. Could there be a drive in January about that week when people start to think about booking holidays? E.g. compile list of deals which are cheaper during the May week and promote this to parents. • Parents feel it is not just holidays that affects attendance but anxiety around illness. Changes in approach as to during COVID. Also for Reception and Year 1 parents switching mindset as different rules/exclusion periods for illnesses at nursery. • Parents discussed how changes in working practices have an impact too as many parents work from home so easier to keep children off when would have had to send them in before. • School could promote all the things they are already doing to improve attendance including extra week and the rules around illness. Perhaps in long term, parents and school can work together and in partnership with other schools. • School motivational reward system for attendance is for 97%+ to allow for odd days and appointments, etc. School still looking for funding for rewards. Some parents disagree with approach and don't feel will solve problem but others support it as see as it as a short-term solution and to help change attitudes and shape habits to change things in the long term. • Parents queried if national issue why 95% figure wouldn't just drop over time and AF explained how not compulsory to	
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	report attendance figures so average is skewed by schools with good attendance who do report and those with poorer who don't for fear of being judged. • Parents queried what is the biggest effect on attendance and for our school it is holidays as term time holidays since COVID have quadrupled. Many parents don't fear the fine is a deterrent as still feel the holiday is cheaper. Another factor is holidays in eastern Europe not matching UK and EAL families taking time to see family. • Parents perhaps don't see the bigger picture and how those with poor attendance do half as well as those with good attendance and supported by school's internal data and national GCSE results. Perhaps families need to be made aware of this.	
To invest and support all levels of the community allowing them to thrive Governance	• Parents don't understand the role of a school governor enough or find the term "governor" intimidating. • Parents liked the idea of school sharing more information about what a governor would need to do, what skills it would be good for them to have and the time commitment needed including the days and frequencies of meeting. Many parents don't feel they could contribute as don't know much about education but school needs people with other backgrounds too including finance and law or worry about the time commitment. • Parents suggested school make a simple and concise information sheet when promoting it including bullet points.	JM to feed suggestion back to SLT
To foster approaches that support learners' well-being and that of the whole community Admissions	• Parents were surprised that this is not already in place and feel makes sense and should happen.	

To foster approaches that support learners' well-being and that of the whole community Parent consultation	• Many parents loved the face to face consultation and felt they could really get a sense of teacher's personality and for those who took their children too, could see the interaction between the teacher and their child. • Many parents felt they could talk easier face to face than over a screen. • One parent would have preferred to have had the meetings in their child's classroom but other parents with multiple children preferred it in the hall. • School shared how the original plan was to be in classrooms but changed this due to the logistics and timings. • Parents who were happy with the hall voiced how they get to see their child's classroom a lot through come and see events. • Parents didn't feel their discussions could be overheard. • Some parents like the online version as it fits with their lifestyle/work. • Parents are in support of r hybrid model and the school reminded that the first one this year is face to face with the second one online later in the year then will review.	JM to share feedback with SLT
AOB	• Thanks to PTFA for all the Christmas events • Parents enjoyed the nativity • A reception parent queried about the class photo being a compilation of the individual photos. School explained how this has been a discussion issue over previous years and summarised the reasons for it being the way that it is – cost significantly cheaper than other companies and buying photos separately, logistically easier for school as can be done in one day, uptake from parents has been much higher since done	JM to suggest Reception and Year 6 photo to SLT

	this way. Parents understood these reasons and felt that keeping cost affordable for parents is important. A discussion was had about how it would be nice to have a traditional class photo once and perhaps a compromise could be that Reception and Year 6 are offered a class photo option.	
Next meeting: Friday 2 nd February 2024		