HEAD TEACHER'S Q&A SESSION FOR PARENTS
8 March 2019

MINUTES

Kevin Hogston, welcomed parents to the first Head Teacher's Q&A Session. Its purpose is to give parents an update on what is happening in school and to provide an opportunity for parents to ask questions.

KH introduced:

Jane Way, Deputy Head Teacher
Mags Thomas, Chair of Governors
Helen Wilson, Maths Coordinator

Vision of the School

KH talked about the Vision of the school that was launched at the start of the year. The 5Cs, Care, Challenge, Collaboration, Courage and Creativity sum up our approach to learning and are the essentials of a complete and rounded education. The school's focus is to give the children a strong academic, social and emotional education that will give them the best possible start in life. http://www.collis.richmond.sch.uk/aims-values/

Well-being

The Government and Ofsted have raised mental health to the very top of their agenda. It is acknowledged that children will learn better if they are emotionally strong. Children can find it difficult to manage their emotions and many issues can trigger larger problems that hinder their learning. Preventative work starts in primary schools before problems become much more deep-seated later in life.

Mental health and well-being are very much a focus at Collis. Our new Well-being room is a dedicated space for PSHE lessons. It is also used for activities such as yoga, relaxation and Circle Time. Our Wellbeing teacher and play therapist, Rachel Cronin, works closely with children who need extra support. The school also subscribes to Jigsaw, a scheme of learning that integrates personal, social and emotional health education. It deals will all topics that come under the PSHE umbrella. Staff have been fully trained in its use and classes are timetabled to use the room every fortnight.
http://www.collis.richmond.sch.uk/well-being-room/

National Support School

Collis is a National Support School and a centre for CPD training. We have a programme of training sessions throughout the year that all our staff attend and local schools are invited to join us as well. This year we have secured some of the very best speakers in the field of education and details of their inspirational training sessions can be found on our website. We also work closely with the heads of other local schools, we work as a team, supporting each other and sharing best practice.
http://www.collis.richmond.sch.uk/new-thinking-training/

School Building
As everyone knows, we will be replacing our nursery and infant building. It is still at the planning stage, as we have still to reach an agreement on the location of the building. The best place would be on the site of the current building, but this would be very disruptive for the children and funding temporary classrooms would be expensive. We cannot build on green space, i.e. the field, so we are now focussing on other areas. Once finalised, we expect progress to be much quicker with a six month lead time to the start of the build and then a 12 month build time.

Staffing
Jane Way talked through the structure of our staff.

Governing Body
Our governing body comprises 15 members: five staff, four parents and six governors from the community, all of whom are volunteers. The role of the governing body is to:

- Ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- Oversee the finances of the school and to make sure its money is well spent
- Oversee the educational performance of the school and its pupils

Its aim is to enable our children to achieve their very best possible outcome. "The children are at the very heart of everything that we do". *Mags Thomas.*

Budget/Funding
KH talked through the challenges of the school budget. Collis is being proactive in creating new income streams to help balance its finances. These include the Parent Fund, an expanded programme of clubs, increased capacity at CATS and money raised by the CSA. This year the CSA has contributed £81,000 to projects in school, two of the largest being towards the creation of the Well-being room and the upgrade and replacement of computer equipment. The CSA appeals for more parents to get involved to spread the work load so it can continue its amazing work that is vital to the success of the school.

PARENT QUESTIONS

1. Can you update us on the new rationale for teaching Mathematics at Collis

Helen Wilson, Maths Coordinator for the junior school explained how Collis is changing the way Maths is taught by introducing mixed ability teaching.

The worldwide survey of children's attainment (the PISA rankings) puts the UK in 26th place in mathematics. As a result, the government turned to the top performing countries and looked at how they teach maths and how their methods could be applied to UK schools. One of the most significant factors is that maths is taught in mixed ability groups.

There has been a lot of research over recent years concerning children's attitudes towards, and achievement within, mixed ability mathematics groupings rather than in traditional ability groupings. The negative effects of ability groupings on attainment and self-confidence are well documented. Importantly, the research states that the progress of the more able pupils is not negatively affected, while critically, the self-esteem and progress of the average and less able abilities are boosted. As a result, the majority of primary schools and some secondary schools in the borough are following this mixed ability model of teaching mathematics.

Currently, the mixed ability model of teaching mathematics is being trialled at Collis in all years except Yrs5/6.

2. How is progress measured at Collis in relation to the published league tables for primary schools?

ATTAINMENT

The table below shows attainment across the school, compared with the local authority and national statistics. In all areas Collis is well above national average figures. Compared to the local authority we are also doing very well, especially given that Richmond is the top performing borough in the country.

		COLLIS	LA	NATIONAL
Reception	Good level of development	85%	81%	72%
Year 1	Phonics screening	87%	88%	83%
Year 2	Reading, Writing, Maths	79%	75%	65%
Year 6	Reading, Writing, Maths	83%	80%	64%

PROGRESS

The table below shows the progress of all pupils in Years 2 – 6. Where the national average score = 0, the table shows that, on average, pupils have made more than the national average progress.

	Reading	Writing	Maths
Collis 2018	1.0	0.1	3.0
Collis 2017	4.3	1.0	2.8

An average point score is calculated based on a child's performance in reading, writing and maths in Year 2. Children are then placed in a prior attainment group based on this score. Their actual KS2 SATs score is then compared to the performance of other children in this prior attainment group. If a child's actual KS2 score is above this average, a positive progress score will be achieved. An average of all progress scores for each individual is found to give the school's final progress score.

3. How effective is Homework from an educational point of view and what should we focus on as supportive parents

Research shows that homework or home-learning in primary school does not make a lot of difference to the children's performance. However, parents are encouraged to help their children in the following areas, which do make a difference: reading and asking questions and ensuring comprehension; working on times tables and mental maths; telling the time and spellings. Preview Learning is also important. We ask parents to help their children research and read around the next topic to be studied in class, giving them a head start.

4. **Can you highlight some of the special needs provision you provide.**

   An outline was provided – see below.

   Nessy Dyslexia Screener Years 1 & 2
   DST (Junior) Dyslexia Screener Years 3-6
   Tracks Literacy (Dyslexia Programme) Years 1-3
   Units of Sound (Dyslexia Programme) Years 4-6
   In school staff training – Speech and Language, Dyslexia, Attachment, Code of Practice
   Outside school staff training – Autism, Downs Syndrome, PDA, Foetal Alcohol Syndrome, Lego Therapy, Dyslexia, Numicon, Working Memory, Early Bird Plus
   Electronic Provision Mapping and introduction of new format Support plans - EduKey

5. **When are you due for your next Ofsted and how has the Ofsted framework changed for Outstanding schools?**

   There are four Ofsted grades: Outstanding, Good, Requires Improvement and Inadequate. Schools rated as Good are inspected every 4-5 years, those that require improvement every two years. For outstanding schools the timeframe is not fixed and it can be as long as ten years between inspections. Our last inspection was in 2014, so we expect to be inspected anytime within the next 2-3 years. From September the government is introducing a new framework for inspections, we wait to find out more details as this is still in the consultation stage.

ANY OTHER QUESTIONS

1. **Why does Collis not mix classes, especially in Years 5 & 6 to help the transition to secondary school?**
   KH explained that there are pros and cons to mixing up year groups. In the majority of cases, classes are harmonious units with established friendships. The children are mixed for maths sets and in some other lessons in the upper juniors. We also have house teams and house afternoons. KH will discuss again with the senior leadership team.

2. **Can the school expand the number of clubs and/or the number of spaces available to give more children the opportunity to join.**
   KH explained that Collis now offers more than 40 clubs and whilst they are mostly fully subscribed, most children are successful enrolling in their first choice club. He explained that there are limitations to expanding the clubs further as we rely on staff giving up their time and we have a limited amount of space in school, especially in the winter months when outdoor clubs are at the mercy of the weather. He acknowledged that there are more clubs for the junior children and that we will look at the possibility of increasing the choice for the younger children.

3. **Can the school give parents more guidance on the methods used to teach maths so they use the same methods when helping their children.**
   KH reminded parents that detailed guidance on how we teach maths can be found on the year group pages on our website. He emphasised that homework should only ever be reinforcing what has been taught in class, not looking at new learning.
   http://www.collis.richmond.sch.uk/mathematics-curriculum/