COLLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL
PARENT FOCUS GROUP
19 May 2017

MINUTES

PARENT FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS

School:

Kevin Hogston	Headteacher & Chairman
Jane Way	Deputy Headteacher
Dan Bates	Lower KS2 Coordinator

Parent members:

	Year Grp	Children	Representation
Sally Owen	Reception	Rec, Yr2	
Alison Driver	Year 1	Yrs 1, 2	
Sandra Horsfield	Year 2	Rec, Yr2	Working mum
John Kirwan	Year 2	Rec, Yr2	Working dad
Jennie Alexandre	Year 3	Yr3	
Helen Samuel	Year 3	Yrs 1, 3	Working mum
David Tregear	Year 4	Yr 4	Working dad
Salwa Wardeh	Year 5	Yr 5	
Jane Bates	Year 6	Yrs 1, 4, 6	

Governors:
Julia Combe
Denece Hart

CSA:
Amanda Beningfield
Frances Wells

Apologies:
Denece Hart, Helen Samuel, Sally Owen, Frances Wells

'WHAT IS WORKING WELL'

1. **Orchestra Trip** to the RFH for a special concert for children by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. It was a wonderful experience and the children loved it.

2. **SATs.** Parents commented how the KS1 SATs had been administered in a very relaxed environment putting no pressure on the children. For the second year, Year 6 children started their morning with breakfast together which made sure they were in school in good time, relaxed and settled beforehand.

3. **Netball/Football Tournament.** This was enjoyed by the parents as much, if not more so, than the children, it was a real family day and raised over £2,000 for the school.

4. **Science Week/Art & DT Exhibition.** Both events were a huge success and enjoyed by the children and parents.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. **Parent Fund**
   Our charity status has at last been finalised enabling parents to gift-aid their donations and details of how to donate for the current academic year have been distributed. https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/collis-primary-school/UploadedDocument/d2219cb6ed62442c9af9e5c81cda4a0f/school-fund-letter-march-2017.pdf

2. **Parking**
   KH reported that since further parking restrictions were introduced around the school gates, congestion has reduced, but not gone away. Police & traffic wardens patrolled the areas before Easter and issued penalty notices. The No Turning signs have been installed and the school is pressing for Zebra crossings to be installed.

HOMEWORK

KH reported that homework is regularly discussed by the Leadership team. Latest research by Professor John Hattie and the Education Endowment Foundation shows that homework for primary children has little overall effect on their learning. However, the school feels the following home learning areas are important:
Reading/learning to tell the time, times-tables and using money. KH explained that homework is particularly important in years 5 & 6 to prepare the children for their transition to secondary school.

Parents expressed how they are keen to reinforce school work at home. Homework gives parents an insight into what the children are focussing on. Parents are keen to support an activity that a child may not have fully grasped, to reinforce their understanding.

Some parents felt they wanted to help more but did not know what the children were studying. Parents are reminded that there is a lot of information on our website that includes curriculum information, guidance for parents, reading and spelling lists. In particular KH referred to the Wandsworth LA Calculation Policy that can be found on our website under Children\Mathematics\Collis Calculation Policy and shows how different topics are taught and gives more examples to try at home. KH to highlight again in the next newsletter.

The important point was made that parents can often cause confusion, especially in maths, if they introduce a child to a different method of problem solving from that taught in class. Collis wants to work with parents, but a balance is important, we do not want the children to be anxious.

The use of homework books in the juniors enable parents to see feedback from the teachers. It was suggested they be used in the infants as well. Dan Bates stressed that if a teacher has concerns about a child they will always speak to the parent.

KH summarised the school's policy on homework:

- Homework is used to develop the important link between home and school.
- It is an opportunity for parents to reinforce what the children have learned.
- Homework will not introduce new learning that has not been taught in class.
- Parents should write comments on the homework about how much help has been given.

Please take a look at our homework policy on the website.

MIXING UP CLASSES (end of year)

KH reported that there are no plans to mix the classes; it is not something we do at Collis. Sometimes there are problems within a particular class and individuals may be moved, if the balance or dynamics of the class are not working.

Parents expressed a strong preference that classes are not mixed up as the children have formed strong bonds, as have the parents.

AOB

1. Members asked for a budget update. KH confirmed that the budget has now been ratified by the Governors (24/5/17). The school has worked very hard to minimise the shortfall. With revenue from clubs, lettings, the parent fund and other sources, we have managed to balance the books for this financial year with no staff redundancies. KH will be writing to parents after half term with more details of how we have put pressure on the DFE regarding the lack of school funding and what our plans are moving forward. It was recognised that during the election period and pre-budget setting it is difficult for the school to fully update parents. However, this gap will be addressed in early June.

2. Concern was expressed about the lack of shade in the playground. KH explained that when the weather is hot the children must wear a hat and sun lotion. More shade can be created by erecting the pergolas, but it is difficult to establish permanent shady areas while plans for the position of the new infant building are yet to be finalised.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

1. Fund raising
2. Communication with home
3. Gender neutral role models - breaking down gender stereotypes

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 30 June, 2.00 pm