

Parent Forum Meeting

24.5.18

INTRODUCTION

Personal introductions + reason for attending

Marion Jones: marketing the school, increase pupil intake

Juliette Williams: celebrate the school

Sonya Corrigan: public relations, offering help

Katerina Skoulatou: offering help

Gabriela Judice: offering help + support of school

Miguel Luis: supportive of Forum, desire to improve communication across school

Adeline Gibbs: wish to know direction of travel

Catherine Harris: want to support marketing

Zoe de la Pascua: joined up thinking with PSA, background in HR

David Sherman: promoting the school

Katie Withers: love the school, increase pupil numbers

Zowie Morris: offering help

Paul Fallon: ditto + governor, disappointed by low September figures, want to boost figures

Louise Weaire: concerned re low intake

James Groth: concerned re low intake

Catherine Brazil

Adamma Oti Okonkwo

Trung Tron

Alexandre Braga

Yasmin Sanchez-Pearson

Evanelos Amitsis

Margot Buller: headteacher

Sarah Bernto: note taker

Paula Costa: IT

Skype

Julie Palmer: interested to think how schools are performing and how can help

Lucy Ring

Charlie Cox: Chair

AGENDA

1. Secretary

Position open

2. Apologies

Sheelagh Bowker (Chair of Governors), Yvonne Mubanga (Vice-Chair), Collette Russell, Kris Kaminski, Pratik Kothari, Jade Folley

3. Key Strengths of the School

What makes the school what it is?

i) Inclusive nature, ethos of school, global message

- For everyone ... all faiths and none

- Community in which the children are at the centre surrounded by a loving community of staff, parents, carers and the parish
 - Virtues promoted and celebrated
 - Every child is valued and supported
 - Older children look after younger (buddy system)
 - Caring attitude of children in and outside school
- ii) Achievements**
- Academic including SATS and next schools
 - Sporting
 - Musical
- iii) Behaviour**
- Outstanding
 - Children are respectful and also confident/articulate
- iv) Small school**
- Children all know and support each other
 - Parents also
 - Small classes
 - Good adult: child ratio
 - Builds quiet confidence
 - Opportunities for children linked to this: every child has the opportunity to undertake public speaking from Reception e.g. assemblies, Masses, plays. Every child has the opportunity to serve on a council e.g. School Council or Worship Council. All children are actively involved in fundraising initiatives and their ideas are valued.
 - Every child has the opportunity to lead e.g. buddies
 - Trips for every year group + Year 6 residential
- v) Builds and nurtures reflective, empathetic and thoughtful children who love learning**
- Curriculum promotes deeper thinking, spirit of enquiry and reflection
 - Engaging curriculum packed with investigation, trips etc to stimulate curiosity and a love of learning
- vi) Partnership between school and parents**
- Recognises that parents are the first educators of their children
 - Parent Forum
 - PSA
- vii) Extra-curricular Clubs for KS1 and KS2**
Include cookery, sport, art, Laserquest, French, Action Adventure, Free Running, table tennis, Glee, musical theatre
- viii) Breakfast and after school club**
- ix) Music lessons**
1:1 available
- x) No catchment**
No distance requirement

Possible contraindications/issues to be addressed

- i) Some potential parents are uncomfortable with the idea of a faith school
MB said the priests have reported that fewer children in both parishes are being baptised. So, we need to look wider than the Catholic parish.
It was suggested that the website needs to make clear that the school is for children of all faiths and none.
- ii) Mixed-age classes
Data over time shows that mixed age classes have not impacted on St Martin's attainment.

Recent KS2 data (2016-2017) was not as high as has been the case but this was due to diagnosed learning difficulties among the children. Greater Depth showed a marked increase.

4. How we can use this information to promote the school

i) Website

MB informed parents that the children will focus on developing the website and contributing to it in Summer 2.

Suggestions by parents included: 20s videos, weekly class updates, inclusion of parent testimonials from individuals of all faiths and none, more modern feel to website (infographics re nationalities, clubs etc.), welcome to be rewritten emphasising that the school is for "children of all faiths and none"

ACTION: any parents with schools to offer in this regard, to contact the school office, please! Julie Simpson, Sonya Corrigan and Paula Costa offered.

Use of Twitter/Facebook page

ii) Production of an on-line prospectus

iii) Improved signage

iv) Visibility in local press

v) Greater celebration/communication of academic attainment of current and ex-pupils

- SATS results (performance against local and national averages)
- Next schools (including grammar + scholarships)
- GCSE and A level results of alumni

vi) More timely dissemination of leaflets to nurseries

vii) Advertising via Catholic parishes in Reading

5. OTHER

Q1. How does this meeting link to governance?

The meeting will be minuted and the minutes discussed with governors.

MB – would like to see the Parent Forum and PSA as a standing item on Gov Body Agenda.

Q2. Tell us about the low number of applicants to Reception

MB: St M is 1 of 4 schools that had a particularly low number of Reception applications this year. It is important to note that St M are not the only school: others are around 1/3 down. The LA has prioritised the school for new entrants. Clearly, demography is an issue. But it seems that mixed age classes have also have an impact. This said, finances mean that mixed-age classes must continue. It is important to remember that St M's has had mixed age classes in the very recent past.

The LA are looking at growth-funding since there is a financial implication of the low intake. MB explained that the school was part of an expansion project on the part of the LA since it was projected that there would be a need for extra child places. However, the children have not materialised. As a result, the LA may give some compensatory funding.

The budget has been drawn up based on 12 children.

The class mixes for next year will be undertaken once the final child-intake list is received.

A meeting was held with the LA last Wed. A letter is due to go out tomorrow 25.5.18 about the low intake.

Q3. Is there potential that the current classes (with child groups as they are) will change?

MB: Yes. We are looking to have Year 6 as a stand-alone class.

Q.4. Was there a more effective way of communicating re low numbers?

The parents have been aware since Day 1 re low numbers. Parents recommend that the school communicates with transparency e.g. notifying parents re the meeting with LAParents requested that leadership communicate openly and in a timely manner about important matters.
MB - Head Twitter will help with communication.

Next Meeting

7p.m. Thursday 28 June