

Parent Forum minutes – Thursday, 14th January 2021

The focus of the meeting was Microsoft Teams, the online platform school is using for the remote learning of the children, and issues that have arisen over the last couple of weeks that need resolving.

The Parent Forum will meet on a regular basis during this 3rd lockdown period to resolve any issues relating to the remote online learning and will also be the point of contact for all our families during this pandemic so that issues can be pooled and dealt with.

- We are pleased to welcome three new representatives to Parent Forum for Y1H, Y5P and Y6. Thank you to Mrs Bennet, Mrs Baldwin, Mrs Wardell and Mrs Whitmee.
- The representatives were informed that Microsoft Teams was the chosen platform as bought by the Trust, it enables staff to upload resources and do live lessons. None of the staff have had formal training, inhouse training from other staff that are self-taught, learning through trial and error, so thanked the parents for their patience, understanding and support as the school does not have an onsite IT technician only a weekly visit from an IT technician once a week.

The following issues were discussed and reasons explained:

- Calendar disappearing: was a result of having to switch off email access for the children. The children were able to access emails of other children, staff and staff within the Aquinas Trust. This was obviously a GDPR issue and unfortunately we did not realise that disabling this facility would disable the calendar. So apologies for this frustration and that we did not communicate that straight away but we only found that this was the reason later in the week. The children are now accessing the lessons via the posts function and receive notifications when the teachers set up the meeting. The teachers have also issued a weekly timetable with all the lesson timings on and this is uploaded to Teams and saved in a folder in General.
- Lobby: teachers have now learnt to by pass the lobby situation so chn can be automatically admitted in and if late. However, this does have to be done for every session. Teachers suggest the the children are ready 5 mins before the start of the session then being left in the lobby could be avoided, if this happens.

Please note that once the teacher starts presenting, they can no longer see the children or the list of those waiting to come in. The children need to remember to mute if they are late to a session because when they come in late it disables the all mute function, for the teacher. If at any time a child cannot get in, then DO NOT WORRY. No need to call the school - please continue with the work that is already set on Teams and just try and join the next Teams meeting.

1. The teachers are working really hard to adapt their teaching, deliver online and at home, upload resources and deal with IT issues so support, patience and

understanding is really necessary at this time and the situation will improve.

Everyone needs to be a bit kinder to themselves and others.

2. The teachers are now leaving instructions, information, links to resources, videos in the subject folders that are available prior to the lessons so children are able to look in the folders prior to the lessons. In order to alleviate printing off stacks of paper the teachers have advised that questions are copied down in to books but appreciate that for the little ones it is more challenging so EYFS/Y1 will continue to do the packs for the children and leave them outside of the school in boxes.
3. The teachers have also created folders in which to upload work. They will either give verbal feedback, feedback via Marvellous Me or a comment on the work. Marvellous Me will continue to be used to recognise effort, resilience and trying their best.
4. The EYFS team are leaving reading books to collect on a Monday and return on a Friday, to continue to promote reading.
5. There is now a 2.45pm slot at the end of every day so time for feedback and a story or questions answered about any issues the children are having.
6. Any questions regarding the lesson or if a child is struggling with the task, stay online and ask the member of staff that is remote/working from home and they will sort out the problem, support the learning. Each week there is a T/TA working from home and T/TA in school.
7. If parents are joining the Teams meeting with their children then can they ask the T/TA the question after the lesson. Could we remind parents not to do it in the middle of a session so the teacher can focus on the interaction with the children. The children know to put their hands up to ask a question.
8. We are now on a rota system with a team at home and a team in school. For your information, the teachers at present only have access to their own class and class emails therefore the teacher can only teach their own class remotely.
9. The teacher at home and in school focus on the children online as in school the teacher has a TA who supports the children when the teacher is teaching online. When the T or TA are at home they are able to support the children further after the input of the session.
10. Apologies for cancellation of lessons - with some subjects such as computing and Spanish the teachers are doing their best to think about how to deliver these lessons and so we will be going to pre-recorded lessons for these subjects as they both teach 8 different classes
11. Same passwords for different platforms we use – we have looked in to this and if the children all have the same password for Mymaths or Bug Club it would not save the individual child's work/achievements. The teachers have been/or will be adding the websites that the children often use eg Phonics Play or MyMaths, or Bug Club to their class Teams so access is all in one place.
12. Both packed lunches and school dinners are now in the hall together, as we have a reduced amount of children, the children are not rushed out of the hall so they plenty of time to finish their lunches.
13. Masks are now being worn by all staff in communal areas and when staff are working closely with children, in the classroom.
14. There was mention of the class email boxes being re-instated but we would prefer that teachers are contacted via the admin email and if there are issues with the work

there is a member of staff staying online after the online session. Also teachers will address any queries once they are off line or at the end of the day if they are in school.

15. There was some confusion and miscommunication on Monday regarding key workers and we apologise. Due to the number of children in school, we were basically asked from different channels to reduce the amount of children and staff in school due to the introduction of the 3rd lockdown mid week and the announcement that schools would not be returning after two weeks. Other schools in the Trust and the borough, had asked from the outset that both parents had to be key workers, St George's had stuck to the government guidelines initially because we were originally told that we would be partially open for two weeks but when the 3rd lockdown came we had to think about the safety of the staff and children. Staff were asked to ring round families to see if it would be possible for their child/ren to stay at home. We apologise if this caused stress and anxiety.
16. Request from the teachers that children are dressed ready for the sessions and could we ask that children are not sitting playing with toys, gadgets etc during sessions. Thank you.
17. Whatsapp groups: request from some of our parents that these channels of communication are kept positive, supportive and thanked the class representatives for ensuring they were a useful tool for communication.
18. Reminder to follow us on Twitter and Instagram – Annie has been uploading lots of fun ideas and resources for things to do at home and online learning to follow et Mylene Klass' music lessons, Lockdown learning on the BBC, Sports England etc
19. Overall message is to try not to stress about home learning. We are all trying our best and doing our best. We understand every family is different whether it be both parents working from home, broadband issues, nursing babies etc and family commitments so do what is possible. Please also remember that the same issues are happening with our teaching families who are working from home too.
20. Reminder of the letter the Inclusion team sent out and services available for our families. Please contact Ms Georghaides if there are any issues with FSM vouchers, food packs etc. If families are unable to collect their food packs, then we are very happy to deliver them to your home. FSM meal: the food packages will be replaced with vouches from next week
21. The next meeting will take place on Friday, 5th February at 10am.