

## Parent Forum

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 6:30pm

### Notes

#### **In attendance: -**

**Parents:** Rachel King, Alicia Watson, Jessica Kitt, Silvia Aldaz-Ullrich, Robert Balm

**Staff:** Mark Askew – Headteacher, Charlotte James – Deputy Headteacher

**Governors:** Stuart Wood – Chair, James Pilgrim – Vice-chair

**Anglian Learning Trust:** Prue Rayner – Primary Executive Headteacher

#### **Stuart welcomed the Parents and thanked them for attending**

#### **Mark Askew set the context for the meeting and outlined the School's current priorities: -**

- Coming up to 3 years since conversion and joining the Anglian Learning Trust. It had been a positive journey with a helpful level of support and challenge
  - In Mark's 3 ½ years, he felt the Staff was the best they had been – committed, strong, talented
  - Current priorities: -
    - Curriculum
    - Early reading and phonics
    - Therapeutic approach to managing behaviour – STEPS
    - Spirals of enquiry – to understand more about Pupils' wellbeing and learning
    - **Also, a priority around engaging with Parents: -**
      - Shaping policy
      - Influencing direction
      - Idea sharing
      - Seeking the views and mutual support of Parents
- Overall as a contribution to improving the School and the wider relationships
- Mark reminded the meeting that we are a Community Primary School and that our goal is to be the best we can be

#### **James Pilgrim shared the Parent Survey Results & Feedback: -**

James shared a graphical representation of the outcomes of the survey conducted in Summer Term 2019, highlighting the positive responses and a focus on the outcomes that were of concern to Parents. (Powerpoint slides available). Areas highlighted for attention included: -

- The quality of communication – day to day, about Parents supporting their children, and information about progress
- The impact and knowledge that Parents have of Governors – who they are, and their role
- More about the role of Anglian Learning
- Understanding of bullying
- Clarity around the way classes are populated, mixed age groups, class sizes

James asked if Parents felt the survey had worked. Responses included: -

- Always difficult because questions can be ambiguous, to secure a greater response is important and to compare outcomes to see what has been improved.
- Potentially include a question around whether participants want or do not want to respond.
- Where completed for more than one Child, ensure that questions that cover School practice are only answered once.
- Ref bullying to start by asking Parents if their Child has experienced bullying, knowledge of the School's approach and how issues are dealt with.  
There was clearly some correlation between Parents whose Children have had a negative experience and their overall evaluation of the school.

There was feedback from the Parents present about how effectively they felt the School had responded to their raising of concerns: -

- One Parent has raised concerns and has a recurring incidence with their Child  
Mark responded by reflecting on the expectation of how Parents can engage with the School to manage an issue where they have concerns and how the School makes clear what the procedure for managing concerns is.

Mark explained how the structure of learning sessions has been changed to start the week with a PHSE lesson to support managing personal and emotional issues and finishes on a Friday afternoon with a review of the week.

**Mark invited the Parents present to reflect on how the School could communicate better with Parents, and how the Governing Body could do the same: -**

Feedback included: -

- Parents have different needs and communicate in different ways because of their differing circumstances, thus the way that information is shared can and, perhaps should, vary
- Potentially consider only making the information available in one medium
- Possibly improve the use of the website and operate the system through the website with links to e-mails. Possibly also include text and print out the website page and place in the book bag
- One Parent expressed their wish to be able to access all the information from the website and be able to use the website to tick permissions through a response format such as SIMS Agora.
- A positive example from Stapleford with Google classroom was highlighted.
- Duplication of information through Parentmail and in letters sent home.
- Suggestion that a set day for communication would support ensuring that Parents are not inundated, with a special marking for anything urgent. School is already working towards this, but Mark & Charlotte to consider how this can be strap-lined and taken forward.
- Homework – the new scheme is preventing Parents from understanding what mathematics and literacy the Pupils are engaging with. The School will respond to this and provide Parents with more information. Difficult for Parents to understand and engage with the curriculum. It would be useful for Parents to understand when new concepts are introduced and what will be happening so they can support their Children as they progress through the curriculum. Mark & Charlotte stated that overviews for each year group should be available on the website.

Mark invited Parents to continue to offer feedback on this issue at any time.

### **Stuart followed up his letter about the Swimming Pool Area: -**

The extent of the finance needed to sustain the swimming pool was again highlighted, and the decision had been to move on with the removal of it and to replace the area of the swimming pool with facilities that can be used all year round for a wider range of opportunities.

Stuart showed a slide pictorially highlighting the scope and size of the area in question.

In general, Parents are supportive of the decision. Mark explained the statutory requirements for Children leaving Year 6 to be able to swim 25 metres. Parents are keen for all Pupils to have equal opportunities. Stuart explained that costs changed from year to year, as for example, this coming year some funding has been made available. However, the School is committed to providing swimming lessons.

Discussion took place regarding the vision for the permanent replacement of the mobile buildings and the potential growth of the School. Prue highlighted the difference between projects completed using the Capital funding allocation that came from the Trust and monies that would come from the Local Authority if the school expanded and increased its Pupil Admission numbers, given the current number of successful appeals and the likely increased demand for places.

The School and Governors are seeking the Parents' views on the development of the external area.

One Parent mentioned the potential of making funds through letting the swimming pool.

There was a suggestion about whether it would be possible to make space that could be made available to the community, although there would be implications regarding access to the School out of hours.

Parents are interested in how the external environment can support the School to achieve a positive Ofsted outcome. Charlotte explained the content and focus of the Curriculum leadership group organised by the Trust.

One Parent mentioned St Faith's as an example of the cross-curricular approaches that can be developed. Also reference to the specialist provision available at secondary school and the establishment of similar provision moving forward.

### **Stuart asked about future Parent Forums: -**

- Were there issues that Parents would like to be addressed?
- Stuart highlighted issues that were about changing the culture of the school and it would be important to have parental input into the discussion. For example, how do we improve the issues of concern around drop-off and pick-up: -
  - Parking outside the school
  - Includes etiquette and community respect
  - One Parent suggested the PCSO was a helpful deterrent
  - Suggestion that Highways could be invited to support the discussion
  - We want Parents to come with solutions rather than opening it up to discussion – we know the issues.

- What is the key - what is the motivation and driver? Stuart responded that from a School & Governor perspective it was about safety
- Agreed once a term as reasonable – 18:30-20:00 as an agreed time.
- Publish an agenda so that Parents who are interested can attend.
- There had been some issues with Parents securing childcare.
- Recommendation that Parents are asked to contribute to the focus for the meeting in addition to an item requested by the School.
- Agreed that dates for the rest of the year will be shared with the focus for the meeting.

Stuart mentioned that there was a Parent Governor vacancy, but we also have 3 Trust Appointed vacancies if any Parents were interested. He would be happy to talk with anyone further.

Stuart again thanked the Parents for attending and closed the meeting at 20:05

Attachments: -

- Powerpoint slides of the Survey results
- PDF map of the School