

Parent Forum No. 12 – Friday 11th November 2022 at 9.00am

It was lovely to be in the school hall again with a group of parents sharing ideas and questions.

The opening questions came from a new parent with a child in Reception. The query regarded when the school and teachers give feedback to parents on their child's progress over the course of the academic year and whether these details could appear in the new parents' brochure. There was a secondary question as to why the summer dresses are blue when the winter uniform is dark red and gold.

Mrs Collins explained that this term there had been 2 "drop-in" sessions and a "Meet the teacher" event. Dates for important events across the year had been added to Tapestry following a request as part of the Class Rep meeting. The dates for parent teacher meetings were included in these. The dates for specific consultations are in the school calendar on the website and appointments are booked on Tapestry closer to the dates next term. She will be happy to add the dates to the brochure as well, but most parents felt the calendar on the website and the dates in the Friday Flyer are most helpful.

The school summer dresses have been blue for as long as anyone can remember. The logic behind the question is perfectly understandable. At the time it was the most readily available colour at the most reasonable price and the school will maintain this so as to keep uniform at its most affordable, bearing in mind we have an active second-hand system in school. Government guidance emphasises the importance of affordable school uniforms.

Whilst on the subject of uniform there was a comment from one parent that she had been very disappointed to find that the new school hoodies both lost colour when washed quite soon and were very easily torn when the pockets caught on door handles.

Mrs Turney has already contacted the suppliers to see what they can do to provide hoodies without pockets and in a fabric which will not lose colour in the wash.

There was also a discussion about whether girls could wear leggings for PE. Mrs Collins explained that the jogging bottoms were in fact warmer and a far better protection in the event of accidents. The school also has a certain amount of school strip for competitions and that has been on show recently. As we have been taking part in a lot of competitions with other schools this term, there was discussion about whether it would be possible to have a stock of special Competition PE kit for the children to be lent for these special outside events. It was thought this is something the PTFA might be interested in making a funding project.

The PE kit conversation emerged from the recognition that this term a full PE programme launched by Miss Mitchell, has been operating with opportunities for every year group to take part in some form of sporting activity in competition with other schools and it has given the children immense pride to be representing the school as well as "Being the best they can be". A broad range of sports are always represented. There was also a suggestion of identifying caps to be worn on school trips.

In the absence of further parental questions, Mrs Gage and Mrs Collins asked parents how they felt about the way online safety was taught and if they felt confident in their knowledge. It was felt the children were made well aware of the dangers when in school, but this is an area which changes constantly. In the School Parliament, classes meet in advance and gather information on the most popular apps at the time. Mrs Collins regularly includes links to supporting information for parents and has undertaken to keep a dedicated space on the website where all the links are accessible to

parents in one place. She has also already started to look in to booking “The 2 Johns” who are trainers we have used in the past to train children, staff and parents, and who have the highest reputation. One piece of advice they always give is to take the journey with your child – don’t just ban the use of an app, but discuss with your child why and how to take the decisions on usage together.

Mrs Gage also asked about the use of special vocabulary in certain PSHE topics to ensure that children and parents have clarity of understanding. Mrs Collins said parents were always well prepared in advance of any difficult topics in PSHE.

Finally, there was a reference to absences and Mrs Collins was able to reassure parents that she kept a close monitoring eye on levels of absence in all children and understood the context in all cases. She will make contact with parents when the absence becomes concerning, taking the context in to account, to offer support in getting the children back in to school. The policy is followed with a positive mindset.