

Emmbrook Junior School Parents' Forum

Meeting Minutes

Friday 29th March 2019
1.30pm

The Bungalow, Emmbrook Junior School site

Attendees: Emma Wilkinson (Yr3) (Chair), Christine Leddy (Yr3), Clare Doyle (Yr5), Rob Fenton (EJS), Rachel Brown (EJS), Jo Tucker (Yr4), Martina Smith (Yr3), Sam Dowse (Chair of Governors)

Apologies: Michelle McLeish (Yr6), Cathy 'Conner (Yr4), Karen Crawford (Yr6), Phil Theobald (EJS), Vickie Robertson

1. Welcome & Introductions

Emma welcome everyone and read out apologies. Rob explained that Phil Theobald had not needed to come to the meeting as Rob was able to attend.

2. Review of previous minutes 15 February 2018

Clare ran through the minutes of the previous meeting and discussed the Action points.

Previous action point was to request more Year 5 reps.

ACTION: Christine to send out a note on Facebook promoting the Forum and inviting more reps.

Clare had raised the suggestion of Amazon Smiles at the recent PTA AGM. The new Treasurers will look into it on behalf of the PTA.

The topic of communication from the school was discussed again. It was previously suggested that EJS could publish the list of dates for exhibition weeks, curriculum evenings, school events etc for the whole year as it would be useful for all parents to have this as far in advance as possible, especially if it involved parents coming into school, costumes etc.

ACTION: EJS to send out dates as early as possible

The issue of an answer-phone at the school had been discussed at the last two forum meetings. Rob confirmed that the school now has an out-of-hours answer machine.

The parents forum had received comments regarding home learning resources as a number of parents have asked for advice on the best websites which can be accessed for home learning, times tables, spellings etc. Rachel provided a list of suggested home learning apps/websites, however, she did not have experience of all of them. The list is as follows:

• Times Table Rock Stars	• Mr Thorne's Times Table Terra
• DoodleMaths Times Tables	• Times Tables Personal Assistant
• 10 Minutes a Day Times Tables	• Maths Loops: Times Tables
• Times Tables Practice Made Easy	• Squeebles Times Tables
• Maths Rockx: Times Tables!	• The Times Table Adventure
• Times Table Mountain	

ACTION: EJS Parents Forum to canvass opinion on these apps/websites;

EJS Parents Forum to ask on facebook if parents can recommend any useful apps/websites

3. EJS Parent Pack - final draft

Emma recapped for everybody that the Parents Forum had re-written the Parent Pack, incorporating comments received from parents via the Transition Survey. The draft pack had been sent to Rob for review. Emma clarified that the Forum would like to see the edited draft prior to its issue to parents so that they could carry out the final tweaks. Rob stated that he had reviewed the draft Parent Pack this week and was happy with what the Forum had produced. EJS is still tweaking and Rob will send the final draft version back to Forum for review. The Pack will be available for new parents at the June new Year 3 parents meeting and will be issued to all parents at the start of the year. An electronic copy may also be issued to all parents at the start of every term. Emma and Clare thanked the Forum for all their hard work with the Parent Pack

ACTION: EJS to send final draft to Forum for review.

4. Amazon wish list feedback - uptake/feedback

Emma asked Rob for some feedback from the school regarding how well the Amazon Wishlist was doing, for example, how many boxes are being delivered per week. Rob explained that specific feedback would be tricky as it meant additional work for the staff. Clare explained that the Forum did not want to make more work for EJS staff members. However, as the Amazon Wishlist was a suggestion which came through the Forum, it was felt that feedback from the school was important to close the loop and demonstrate to parents the valuable role that the Forum plays. The driving force for the Amazon Wishlist at EJS is Jack Fisher so it was suggested that Jack could put a comment in the school newsletter regarding its success.

Post-meeting note: EJS has sent out an email thanking everybody for the huge success of Amazon Wishlist and providing feedback on items purchased.

5. Update from Governors

Sam expressed appreciation for the Forum and explained that the Governing Body would like the Forum to support the Governors over the course of the next academic year. Sam will detail the help that they require in due course. The Forum all agreed that they were happy to help as required and that good interaction would be beneficial to all. It would also help raise the profile of the Forum.

6. Parent Feedback

a. Wording of letters to parents re trips and clubs (previously raised in Transition survey)

The wording of letters for clubs and school trips has previously been discussed. The letters tend to state "wear suitable clothing" or "bring lunch in a suitable bag". Parents have asked for this to be clearer e.g. "wear school uniform with a coat, if weather requires" or "bring lunch in a disposable bag".

For club's letters, parents have asked if the letter can specify what clothes the children are expected to wear and if any additional kit is required, e.g. shin pads, football boots, cricket whites etc.

ACTION: EJS to make the appropriate changes to the letter. Rob agreed that Emma and Clare can liaise directly with Claire Freeman in the office regarding minor admin tweaks.

b. Easy fundraising

Martina enquired as to the status of the Easy Fundraising profile. Clare confirmed that she had raised it at the recent PTA AGM as the PTA had previously set themselves up on Easy Fundraising. It was left with the new Treasurers of the PTA to take it forward and promote it

c. Cross Country compliment

The Forum has received a lovely compliment regarding the cross country club. Mr Fisher promotes a fully inclusive and encouraging approach and the kids absolutely love it.

7. Update from Infant Parent Forum

Christine fed back the issues raised in the most recent Emmbrook Infant School Parents Forum meeting:

- a) The EIS Parents Forum is setting up a Facebook page, in conjunction with the school. The page will be administered by EIS office staff and will be used for general school information and for parents to discuss general school items. The facebook site will be a forum for items to be discussed in a transparent setting.
ACTION: Rob and Sam to discuss with Corrina Gillard how she intends to administrate the facebook site and to observe how it initially works.
- b) EIS Forum discussed whether the PTA could co-ordinate a stack of fancy dress outfits which could be used for the regular dressing up events such as World Book Day, Children in Need etc.
- c) Gender stereotyping : the issue of the lack of girls in Infant football clubs and boys in Infant dancing clubs, choir etc was discussed. Clare noted that this is not such an issue in the Junior school as Jack Fisher actively promotes both sexes to participate across all sports clubs, however all agreed that it was really important for both schools to try to promote non-gender bias.
- d) The issue of single-use plastics was discussed e.g. children taking disposable water bottles on school trips.

8. AOB

The issue of a Junior School facebook group was discussed. There are Facebook groups set up by parents for each individual year group and there is an existing whole school facebook group (*Junior School Parents Page*). This is a closed group for parents of Emmbrook Junior school children and is not an official Emmbrook Junior School Facebook page. It is intended to be used for questions, comments and discussions that aren't PTA, school or parent forum related rather than a place for people's opinions about the school.

Rob confirmed that the school Twitter feed is shown on the school website and Rob confirmed that he was happy for anything that had gone onto the school Twitter feed to be shared by parents onto the various facebook pages. Rob also said that there was a way to automatically link the twitter feed onto a facebook group.

ACTION: Clare and Emma to investigate how the twitter feed could be automatically shared onto the Junior School Facebook page. EJS and Forum to then actively share the link the Junior School Facebook group.

9. Date of next meetings - ~~Fri 24 May~~, Fri 28 June all at 2pm.

It was agreed to cancel the May meeting as a number of people were not available

ACTION: Emma to email the date of the next Forum meeting to the website co-ordinator.