

Emmbrook Junior School Parents Forum - Meeting Minutes

Friday 11th March 2022

09.15 – 10.15 Teams Meeting

Attendees: Jim Usher (EJS Head), Sam Dowse (EJS Parent Governor), Vicky Goncalves (Y4), Mell Morris (Y5), Christine Leddy (Y4/6), Martina Smith (Y4/6), Emma Mitchell (Y5).

Apologies: Helen Venfield (Co-Chair, Y3), Sabreena Peedoly-Brennan (Y3), Sara Bradley (Co-Chair, Y3).

Abbreviations:

SLT Senior Leadership Team

EJS Emmbrook Junior School

EIS Emmbrook Infant School

PPE Personal Protective Equipment DfE Department for Education

SENCO Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator

1) Welcome & Introductions

SD was welcomed to the Forum as a representative from the EJS governing board.

2) Previous Minutes - 10th December 2021

The Forum ran through the minutes from the last meeting. The actions from the last meeting have been completed and closed out. The following comments were noted:

- a) Lost property was displayed at the recent exhibition morning held on 1st March for parents and children to check. Anything not claimed has been bagged up.

ACTION: MS will arrange to collect all the bagged items and sort through. Anything that is not school uniform related will be donated to the Emmbrook School “bag to school” event on 26th March. School uniform items will be kept and parent forum volunteers to wash a bag so that a second-hand uniform sale can be held at the prospective Junior parents evening on 21st June.

- b) Streamlining of payment methods.

ACTION: HV and CL to investigate the options.

3) Parent Feedback

- a) Manor Trip:

Comment received regarding lack of information about the forthcoming Manor trip.

JU advised that all details about Manor were previously available on the school website even prior to the parent’s information evening which took place recently. Following the meeting all updated information was published on the website. It was noted that there had been much positive feedback following the parent’s information session. A further information session designed for the children will take place nearer the time.

b) Recorders:

Concern that children have been sharing recorders which considering Covid is not advisable. JU clarified that each class has a whole class set of recorders; the children have one each and they are not shared during the same lesson. Each recorder is sanitised after the lesson and then put away for a week before being used again. When Covid cases started to rise in the school they switched away from recorders and to glockenspiels instead. Children can of course bring in their own recorder from home should they wish, but there is one for each child available.

c) Toilet Breaks:

Concerns were raised that in Y4 a new rule had been introduced regarding toilet breaks whereby any child needing to go to the toilet during class time gets a house point deducted. JU advised that it has been made clear to the teacher that house points should not be deducted, however it has proved to be a valid behaviour management tool resulting in less learning time being lost and a significant reduction of toilet break interruption. Any child who genuinely needed to go would not be refused and no house points would be deducted.

ACTION: JU will continue to remind the children that there are plenty of opportunities throughout the day for toilet breaks; on arrival at school, break and lunch times and they will be encouraged to go at the appropriate time.

d) Attendance Monitoring:

A concern was raised regarding the tone and content of letters due to attendance dropping below the 93% threshold and more specifically that the letter did not take into consideration the covid-related absences.

JU explained that he reviews absences on a weekly basis with the data manager. Absences due to enforced isolation due to covid, do not generally trigger a letter being sent unless there is a history of regular absence. When a letter does need to be sent, the generic format is usually tailored if the school is aware of other reasons for the absence. JU pointed out that EJS attendance levels are excellent and well above the national average.

e) U-Sports:

A concern was raised regarding the frequently changing staff running the after-school clubs as it has led to a child being unsettled and reluctant to continue.

ACTION: JU will raise directly with U-Sports. He knows that the aim is always to provide the same coaches each week to ensure consistency but will investigate the reasons for the instability.

4) Update from Infants Forum

CL ran through details of Infants Forum which was held on 11 February. Topics included improving the school payments system as we increasingly become cashless, the implementation of a new reading scheme and the changes to their traffic light behaviour system.

5) AOB:

a) Club lists:

MM asked if it would be possible to publish a team list for some of the sports after school clubs. Although it is recognised that permission will be required from parents, it would make it much easier to arrange transportation if required with other parents if the participants are known.

ACTION: JU to pick up with Mr Fisher.

- b) Year 6 recruitment progress:
A new appointment has been made to start in September 2022. Mr Fox will return to Y4, and plans are being made to cover Y6 for the summer term.
- c) School dinners:
The procurement process has gained momentum and JU will be attending presentations and tastings from three providers very soon with the aim being that there will be a new provider in place from September 2022.
- d) Lateness letters:
CL asked about the procedure. JU explained that lateness was reviewed weekly at the same time as absences. Letters would be triggered after a certain number of late marks were recorded in a 10-week period.
- e) Choir:
Choir has resumed and the response so far has been very positive. The forum commented about how nice it was to have regular singing back in school after the last few years. JU advised the intention was to continue this club indefinitely.