

Loudwater Combined School
Parents' Forum Meeting 18.11.20 at 7pm
Zoom

Attendees:

Nicky Springle (Mum of George Y5 and Chair of Parents Forum),
Shelley Sheppard (Mum of Logan Y5 & Ellie Lou Y3, Chair of FOLS and Yr. 6 Rep),
Annabel Balderson (Mum of Elizabeth Y3 and Year 3 rep)
Vikki Marzana (Mum of Maya and JJ)
Michelle Hazell (Mum of Imogen Yr. 2 and Year 2 rep),
Jacqui Subhan (Mum of Jasmine Yr. 4 and Year 4 rep)
Paul Randall (Chair of Governors)
Clare Cunnington (Head teacher)
Mr Williams (Year 3 teacher)
Jackie Boyce (Parent support advisor)
Sammi Snook (Mum of Pippa Y1 and Y1 rep)
Melissa Walsh (Mum of Lily FS and FS rep)
Kelly Leary (Mum of Oscar Yr. 6 and Yr6 rep)

Apologies:

Jean Howard (Childminder)
Belinda Welland (Deputy Head teacher)
Nancy Smith (Mum of Amy Yr. 3 and Freddie Yr. 2)

School Updates

Mrs Cunnington initially thought little had been happening due to Lockdown – but school has been busier than ever!

First lockdown - school closed to the vast majority of pupils. Approx. 10 children in each day, staff working on a rota system at school and setting work for their classes.

From June FS, Y1 and Y6 along with key worker children were in school. They were taught in smaller groups of 15 so all teaching staff were teaching these groups. Since September we have been able to welcome all children back to school as well as our new FS children.

The children have been overwhelmingly positive about returning to school which has been lovely to see.

Current situation - Staggered start and finish times are challenging but necessary to allow for social distancing. It looks like this is going to be the norm for some time to come.

Since the start of term normal has changed, but new and safer ways of working have been found:

- Staggered play and lunchtimes in bubbles
- PE – some changes to the sports that older children are learning about but outdoor activities take place wherever possible.
- Art week and exhibition. Sadly parents unable to view the work but the children really enjoyed it.

- Some classes have had a virtual visit from a rabbi. We look to arrange similar visits to museums etc.
- House captains represented the school at the Loudwater War Memorial as part of the remembrance day commemoration – filming took place during half term so that social distancing could be observed. It was great to see that as well as our house captains representing the school there were many other Loudwater pupils present because they were rainbows or brownies, beavers or cubs.
- Poppies were sold and Children In Need was very well supported.
- Assemblies have continued on a Monday and an achievement assembly on a Friday. These are held virtually and involve Mrs Cunnington speaking to herself in her office! These have focused on our school values with stories linked to these as well as exploring the lives and achievements of our inspirational people. We also marked remembrance and had a 2 minutes silence on 11.11. Since half term the foundation stage children have also joined the assemblies
- Attendance and behaviour have been good since our return
- Maintained strong links with St Peter’s church. They have supported families over the half term break by offering meals to those families eligible for FSM. They want to continue this support by offering a “box of hope” hamper over the Christmas break. Please let the school know if you or a family you know would benefit from this offer.
- Christmas at Loudwater is going to look very different this year, but we are working hard to try and make sure we do what we can.

Virtual Christingle service with St Peters

Classes recording songs or poems to compile into our Christmas celebration

Christmas lunch for those in FS and KS1, class parties for all and with some party food for those in KS2 – although we are looking into the possibilities of KS2 having a hot Christmas lunch too.

Santa visit to outdoor classroom so children can go and visit him – wave.

- DFE guidelines must be followed, including keeping areas well ventilated. Children who feel cold should be dressed accordingly. Whilst all children should be in full school uniform, the focus is on ensuring children are warm enough.

Academy Update

At this time, it has been decided that the offering from ODBST does not offer value for money and will not be proceeding.

Governor Update

As with everything, governors have had to find new ways of working. Meetings have been remote but have continued. Work has included:

Risk Assessments

Health and Safety work

Pupil premium, Safeguarding, SEN and PHSE

Strengths of the school have been identified:

Staff and pupil commitment

Training / CPD has continued

Flexibility

DFE and Governor guidelines being followed.

PTA

Staff have worked above and beyond. Pressure is huge but they have worked incredibly hard to make the new system work.

Pupils have been incredibly resilient and adapted well.

All backed up by the parents who are working hard to follow all the new guidelines.

PSA update

Challenging to meet parents at the moment, but Jackie is working flexibly to help where needed. Walk and talk has been helping but not all parents want to be so visible asking for help. Social distanced coffees off site have happened. If you need support, please contact Jackie and she will find a way to help!

Friends of Loudwater School (FOLS) Updates

- New ways of working – regular Zoom meetings
- Since the start of lockdown, 2 successful local trails, most recently the Spooky trail which raised around £200.
- Xmas cards being distributed this week
- Bags 2 School completed. Feedback was that people found it much easier to have an evening drop off.
- Virtual balloon race to be organised over Xmas
- Defib is in school – need to organise the training.
- Suggested providing hampers for classes as KS2 cannot have a hot Xmas lunch
- Total raised since lockdown is around £2300 – this is about a third of the amount we usually raise – but we are grateful that parents have continued to support us.

AOB – Feedback from class representatives/others at the meeting

Pick up and drop off

- It was raised that timings can be a bit off and children are concerned they are late when they arrive on time to find the class line has gone.

Mrs Cunnington reiterated that they are not late – but sometimes they move the line early due to congestion or the weather. She will mention it in assembly to reassure the children.

- Can Year 5 and 6 not walk up the hill alone to reduce people on the hill?

Mrs Cunnington advised that Year 6 can now do this. Year 5 can be left in their line.

- Year 5 raised that pick up is difficult as the queue often stretches down the hill meaning children cannot see their parents.

Mrs Cunnington has resolved this issue – both sides of the hill can now be utilised and parents are much happier!

- One way system on the hill to try and reduce congestion.

Mrs Cunningham has put this in the newsletter but there is some confusion with it. She will simplify in the newsletter. Basically, children should always be on the pavement – so walking up the pavement in the morning and parents leaving walk down the road, and then in the afternoon, parents walk up the road to collect and then come down the pavement.

Dogs and scooters

- Parents had raised concerns over the number of dogs on the hill and the clusters of people this generates. Also, children ride scooters down the hill which again causes congestion as people are moving about dodging them!

Mrs Cunningham has sent a letter out asking for no dogs on site. She will also clarify about scooters on the newsletter.

Car Movement on the hill

- Could staff be asked to avoid moving cars off the hill during peak times?

Mrs Cunningham to look at this.

PE Days

- Feedback from parents is that they are very happy with the children wearing PE kit all day and can it be kept ongoing?

Mrs Cunningham is considering this as there are many benefits all round! Also considering the idea of a Loudwater hoodie to make it a little smarter. Those present agreed this was a great idea and would be happy to invest in additional items if worn for 2 days a week.

Uniform suppliers

- Still issues with the quality of PE T-shirts from myclothing. People generally prefer the idea of using a shop for ease of trying on / returns.

Mrs Cunningham to investigate uniform options. Suggestion was also made to make PE tops polo shirts rather than T-Shirts

Clusters of parents (off site)

- Some parents are congregating after drop off by the bridge or through the alleyways which is making other parents uncomfortable due to the lack of social distancing possible to get past.

Mrs Cunningham agreed to add a polite note in the newsletter asking parents to remember to social distance and not block access areas.

Enterprise Week / Green Park

- Parents were wondering if either of these was likely to go ahead.

Mrs Cunningham cannot comment yet on Green Park. Enterprise week will not happen this term but the plan is to hold it later in the year.

Covid

- In the event of schools closing due to another lockdown, would lessons move online?

Mrs Cunningham confirmed that the school has invested in google classroom and would hope to do live lessons.

- If a child is in isolation, will parents be told?

This will only happen if the advice received states this is necessary.

- Facemasks – can the wearing not be enforced?

School sites are not deemed to be an area where they have to be worn, nor can schools ask people to display exemption evidence. Mrs Cunningham will continue to ask and remind people, and generally compliance is good, but there is nothing more the school can do to enforce it.

Temperature in classrooms

- It was raised that some parents are concerned about how cold it is and is going to get in class

Mrs Cunningham is aware of this but the school are following PHE guidelines. They have started closing some of the external doors to reduce the tunnel effect and windows do not have to be wide open. Uniform is being relaxed if needed to ensure children are warm.

FOLS to look at funding thermometers in each class as feeling cold varies per child. The class could do a daily record of the temperature and also use the information in maths and topic lessons.

Final point raised – parents are generally very happy to have the children in school and appreciate the work that goes into keeping the children safe. Could a big thank you please be passed to all staff?

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.