

PiPs Meeting
29 January 2021
11.00 – 12.00, via Zoom

Attendees

Mrs Cahill
Mrs Carter-McQueen
PiPs - All year groups were represented

Welcome

Mrs Cahill opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and remarked on how successful the measures had been in keeping classes open. She thanked everyone for the kind words that had been received by the parents and thanked the PTA for the gifts arranged showing thanks and support for the continued efforts to provide our children with seamless learning.

A formal report will be written up based on the responses to the questionnaire that was recently sent out.

Today's meeting is to give the parents an opportunity to connect with the school, especially considering this blended-learning situation.

Messages

All year groups passed on messages of thanks and praise for the teachers and the school. Mrs Cahill said that these messages were gratefully appreciated.

Parent's Evening

This was the first substantial item; sessions will take place 03 and 10 February. How children are coping with the offer of remote learning will be covered, a slightly different discussion to the usual agenda items, making this more relevant to current circumstances.

Feedback was given that the daytime slots, offered this time round, were not overly convenient. Mrs Carter-McQueen spoke to this and said that the school had tried to identify something that works for all, especially considering these are short appointment times. Staff are doing twice the amount of work at the moment – preparing for in class and online lessons, so outside of school hours there is less free time than there would be under normal circumstances.

Remote learning

It was noted that it is hard to ask questions and to successfully interact when learning at home, as it's difficult to see prompts and gauge when it's OK to speak. More questions are being asked at home than there would be in the class setting. The school is trying to encourage children to build upon their resilience and problem-solving skills. The chat can be used if the child is worried, but they should try to have a go at the task set and assurance should be given to children that getting things wrong or misunderstanding things is OK and that it's all part of the learning process. It is very challenging for someone to be able to answer every question raised, and it can be disruptive to running of the lesson.

If some individuals are struggling to engage and work this way, those cases should be raised directly with the school.

It was noted that children work better in a classroom setting and that home-learning is not ideal, but parents and children should not feel anxious about this way of working. Expectations set should be realistic by parents and in accordance with the way the lessons need to run. Children who might miss something or get something slightly wrong will not get into trouble! Parents should reassure their children of this.

Year 5 asked for some help with managing parents' expectations. Mrs Cahill said that this was one of the main aims of the workshop that was recently held with the parents (there is a recording of this on the web site). Mrs Cahill and Mrs Carter-McQueen will look to putting something in writing to further support this.

There have been occasional changes to the timetables this week, but these were owing to the unprecedented circumstances. Usually the timetables are up-to-date and published on the Google classroom. The Google classroom app can be downloaded on mobile phones, so parents can follow this there too. Mrs Carter-McQueen agreed to look at the communications channel and to make sure these are fit for purpose.

Homework

Year 3 raised that some parents would like access to more work, to do at weekends etc (optional). Mrs Carter-McQueen said that at the start of lockdown this was felt to be inappropriate as there were so many changes to contend with and the amount of screen time had increased. Mrs Cahill said that the school had been looking at ways and opportunities in the curriculum to bring together learners at home and learners in school, whilst also considering well-being; what other schools are doing was examined – some schools are working offline for the odd day and focusing on practical tasks, physical or creative challenges. A quick brainstorm of possibilities was done during the call. It was noted that not all parents can engage with their children in the day to assist with work and challenges. It was felt that projects, with adjustable learning times was a good way of achieving some more flexible learning opportunities. Half term will be challenging for parents, as there is so little to do, so having some project work for children to dip in and out of may be useful. Mrs Carter-McQueen was very keen to stress that there will be no additional pressures, it will be optional.

Mrs Cahill made a pledge for ideas to be emails to New Haw Juniors Office.

The use of social media and Instagram

Mrs Carter-McQueen sought feedback on the social media platforms that are used to promote the work of the school. The recent feedback survey gave little steer on this. Parents are invited to make contact with the school or via their PiPs representatives if they have any ideas/feedback.

Online Reading Scheme

With the current remote learning, those at home have not been able to take advantage of the new reading materials. The online catalogue is being expanded and the PTA has kindly agreed to pay for this. Mrs Cahill thanked the PTA. Audio books are also be available. Access to the books can be found under the remote learning link on the school's web site. Details of how to access this will be sent out again (if parents do not have the child's login details they can email the office).

Next Meeting

The next PiPs meeting will be arranged for some time in the new term.