



# Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

Ffôn / Tel: 01792 894210

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## Parent Focus Groups 2020/21

### Summary of issues raised by Parent Focus Group members – Autumn term 2020

#### Foundation Phase meeting date - 3/12/20

Parents Present: Michelle Burchell, Helen Gibbons, Abi Hobson, Ceri Metcalfe, Sara Morgan,

Staff Present: Mrs Southgate, Miss Richards, Miss White, Mrs Parkhouse & Mr Scourfield

1. Parents in general are very grateful to the staff for all their work since September in keeping pupils safe and for maintaining an air of normality during what has been a very difficult time for everyone.
2. Many parents stated how efficient the recent Parents Evenings were (held on MS Teams) and asked whether consideration could be given to moving the meetings online permanently.  
Response: Whilst the teaching staff agreed that the Parents Evenings went very well, with appointments being kept to 10 minute intervals, both parents being able to attend etc, there were some parents who expressed a preference for the face to face meetings. Perhaps a blended approach could be taken in future, with parents being offered both options and separate evenings being arranged that could accommodate everyone's needs. A questionnaire will be sent out in the new year asking for your views on this subject.
3. There seems to be an inconsistency in the contents of class pages on the school's website, with some classes having far more content than others.  
Response: Whilst individual teachers are encouraged to put their own stamp on their class pages, there is an expectation that the contents and general standard of these pages are consistent across the school. These pages will be monitored in the new year and changes made accordingly.
4. Many parents wanted to pass on their thanks to the staff for the high standard of Home Learning work that was prepared recently during their children's period of self-isolation.  
Response: A great deal of work was done by the staff earlier this year in preparing for home/online learning during the initial lockdown, and following feedback from pupils, parents and staff, a number of changes and improvements have been made since. Whilst home/online learning can never replicate the experiences pupils receive in school, we do hope that the

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provision is now as accessible and efficient as possible.

5. Are there any plans to organise a Parents Evening for Nursery pupils?

Response: Whilst holding a Parents Evening for the 100 pupils attending Nursery would place an unfair burden on both Mrs Southgate & Mrs Dando, we can certainly look at alternative ways of sharing pupils' progress with parents. We are hoping that the annual Nursery Skills Evening, which is usually held in February, will go ahead this year, albeit at a later date.

6. Some parents have expressed concern that their child's class has occasionally been left without a Teaching Assistant recently.

Response: As a direct result of the pandemic, we have faced an unprecedented staffing shortage over the past month, and this has resulted in the school having to be flexible with regards to staffing. Whilst there have been occasions where it has not been possible to have a teaching assistant in class, there has always been a teacher present and at no point has the safety or wellbeing of our pupils been compromised. Hopefully, this situation will improve in the new year and normal service can be resumed.

7. A growing number of parents have once again expressed their dissatisfaction with the standard of the recent individual photographs by Colorfoto.

Response: Whilst the school is contracted to Colorfoto for the remainder of this year, we will contact alternative providers and look at all options before making a decision on which company to partner with in 2021/22.

8. Why have pupils been limited in their opportunities to learn outdoors this term and can more be done to encourage outdoor learning, e.g can 'The Friends of YGG Pontybrenin' fund additional waterproof clothing and/or an outdoor classroom?

Response: Whilst some classes have utilised the nature reserve more than others this term, there are a number of reasons for this, i.e heavy rain, majority of the class not having wellies, woodland sustainability issues etc. The 'Friends' generously purchased enough waterproofs (of various sizes) for 140 pupils last year and these have allowed us to access the outdoors during wet weather. However, pupils cannot share clothing at the moment due to the pandemic and I think it would be irresponsible to spend upwards of £3300 on buying individual waterproofs for every pupil, when we can return to sharing these items as soon as the pandemic is over. Regarding the purchase of an outdoor classroom, this just isn't possible as past structures in the nature reserve / playing field have been vandalised and destroyed by young people accessing these areas during the evening. Outdoor learning is an important complement to general classroom learning and the school will continue to do all it can to ensure that our pupils have regular access to this learning environment.

9. Foundation Phase pupils are no longer receiving free milk in school. Are there plans to restart this?

Response: The local authority took the decision to stop the provision of free milk at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic. It is our intention to resume the provision as soon as it is deemed safe to do so.

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10. Pupils eating school dinners are being given a choice of dessert or fruit after their meal, but the majority are going to choose the dessert every time. Can they not have both?

Response: Whilst the school teaches pupils the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and promotes good eating habits, it's not our place to tell pupils what to choose from the school dinner menu. The menu currently allows pupils to choose either fruit or dessert, but if parents wish to challenge this, they are more than welcome to contact the schools catering department.

Key Stage 2 meeting date - 2/12/20

Parents Present: Helen Gibbons & Chris Pinnington

Staff Present: Miss Dark, Mr Sterl, Mrs Sartori, Mrs Parkhouse, Miss Gwenter & Mr Scourfield

1. The school's communication with parents since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic has been great, with everyone receiving regular updates and being kept fully informed of developments;
2. The system for dropping-off and collecting pupils at the school gates has been excellent.

Response: The success of this system is due to the willingness of parents, pupils and staff to work together in order to ensure the safety of every member of the school community. We thank you for your continued support with this.

3. Many parents stated how efficient the recent Parents Evenings were (held on MS Teams) and asked whether consideration could be given to moving the meetings online permanently.

Response: Whilst the teaching staff agreed that the Parents Evenings went very well, with appointments being kept to 10 minute intervals, both parents being able to attend etc, there were some parents who expressed a preference for the face to face meetings. Perhaps a blended approach could be taken in future, with parents being offered both options and separate evenings being arranged that would accommodate everyone. A questionnaire will be sent out in the new year asking for your views on this subject.

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Thank you to everyone who contributed comments to these Parent Forums. We will try our best to address the concerns you've raised and hope that you'll notice improvements in these areas soon. If however, you continue to have concerns or

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have any further comments or suggestions to make, then please do contact me at the school to discuss these.

The next round of Parent Focus Group meetings will be held midway through the spring term.

Thank you as always for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Ceri Scourfield  
Headteacher

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