



Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

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Parent Focus Groups 2018/19

Summary of issues raised by Parent Focus Group members – Autumn term 2018

Foundation Phase, Meeting date - 5/12/18

1. The general message from parents / guardians is that they are very happy with the school and that their children are also very happy attending school. The teachers and support staff are great and are a credit to the school.
2. It would be nice to see more pupils' work being displayed on the class pages of the website as there is an inconsistency in what is being displayed at present.
3. Many parents of pupils in Year 2 are concerned about the national tests that will be taken in May.
Whilst this concern is understandable, the school will do everything it can to support pupils in preparing for the tests and during the week of the tests. The Spring term will also see Literacy and Numeracy information evenings being held that will help parents to support their children in preparing for the tests, including sharing past test papers.
4. Some parents questioned whether Foundation Phase pupils have enough time to eat their packed lunches during lunchtime?
Pupils currently have 30 minutes to eat their packed lunches, and based on daily observations, this seems to be more than enough time. However, there are pupils who will state that they've finished their lunch or don't want any more food, in order to go out to play early. Whilst staff will always encourage pupils to eat everything in their lunchboxes, the decision on what they do and don't eat is ultimately theirs. If a parent feels that his/her child needs more than 30 minutes to eat lunch, I would ask them to contact the school so that we can make appropriate arrangements for that child.
5. Pupils complain occasionally that the soap and/or toilet paper dispenser is empty.
Whilst the soap and toilet paper dispensers are refilled on a regular basis, this concern will be taken on board and daily checks made in order to ensure that the problem is resolved.
6. Will there be an open evening for Nursery parents this year?
A skills evening will once again be arranged in the spring term for parents of pupils in the Nursery. The evening will focus on the strategies used by the school to develop pupils' skills whilst also sharing ideas with parents as to how they can further support their children at home.
7. A number of parents questioned the decision to move from print to cursive writing this term and expressed concern that this would confuse pupils.
As a school that continually monitors the effectiveness of our teaching

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Dirprwy / Deputy headteacher: Miss Elen Jones





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strategies, we took the decision to adopt cursive writing as the result of a general deterioration in the standard of pupils handwriting. There is considerable evidence to support the theory that cursive writing helps pupils with letter formation and we have already seen a significant improvement since introducing this in September. We will continue to monitor the impact of this decision over the coming year and make changes if needed.

Key Stage 2, Meeting date - 12/12/18

1. A number of parents expressed their disappointment at the lack of opportunities for pupils to play sports against other schools. Whilst we never turn down an invitation to compete at a sporting event, the opportunities to do so are becoming less frequent as a result of transportation costs, health and safety issues etc. Inclement weather has also forced the cancellation of numerous planned events over the past year. However, we will make every effort to arrange more friendly matches and various festivals in future.
2. There is an inconsistency in the level of provision for those pupils receiving instrumental lessons at school, e.g having to share instruments, inconsistent timetable etc.
In order to remedy this, we will be sending out a questionnaire to the parents of all those pupils receiving instrumental lessons in the spring term and reviewing the situation.
3. Parents of Year 6 pupils are concerned that the lack of formal homework at YGG Pontybrenin will result in their child struggling to cope with the demands put on them once they transition to YG Gŵyr.
Whilst there is a slight increase in the homework distributed to pupils in Year 7, the majority of these tasks can be completed in a very short space of time and are not extensive. Having gathered the views and opinions of parents whose children recently made the transition to YG Gŵyr, this was not deemed a concern. As stated in the response to the recent homework questionnaires, the decision to stop distributing formal homework tasks will be reviewed at the end of the school year and amended if need be.
4. Pupils are not changing their reading books as often as they should be. Although pupils are encouraged to change their reading books on a regular basis, some find this difficult when they cannot find the next book in the reading scheme as there are gaps in certain levels of the scheme. An extensive selection of reading scheme books is now on order and will be available to pupils in January.
5. There has been a lot of positive feedback for the work that the school council has been doing so far this year, with the presentation to the governors being a particular highlight.
6. Pupils are unsure as to what they can, and can't do, on the school yard during break times and lunchtimes.
Due to the large number of pupils on the yard during break times, there are

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certain games that cannot be played as they would compromise the safety of other pupils. Touch rugby, football and 'bulldogs' are the main games that aren't allowed as these regularly result in our younger pupils being knocked over or hit in the face with footballs. In order to encourage play on the yard, 'The Friends of YGG Pontybrenin' purchase hundreds of pounds worth of play equipment every year and these are distributed daily by our Year 6 Sports Ambassadors. When the weather is favourable and buses aren't expected in the turning circle, we also allow pupils who wish to play football / touch rugby to access this area, where there isn't as much of a risk to other pupils. These messages are shared with pupils on a regular basis and everyone should be fully aware of what they can, and can't do, on the yard.

7. Parents wanted to pass on their thanks to the staff for the wonderful Thanksgiving concerts that were held earlier this term. The standard of both the Year 3&4 and Year 5&6 concerts were excellent.
8. Have the dates for the remaining INSET days been set?
Of the 4 remaining days to be taken, 3 dates have been set, which are 7/1/19, 22/2/19 and 22/7/19. The final date will be set early next term.
9. Parents were eager to thank the staff for all that they do for the children and to state how happy they are attending Ysgol Gymraeg Pontybrenin.

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 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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