



Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Pontybrenin

Heol Casllwchwr, Gorseinon, Abertawe, SA4 6AU

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Parent Focus Groups 2017/18

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

Nursery & Reception - Meeting date - 5/12/17

1. The Home / School contact books (reception pupils, not nursery) are wonderful and are a big help in both supporting pupils and getting messages to school.
2. A number of parents expressed concern with the delays in receiving their child's school photo from Colorfoto. The problem seemed to be with online orders as opposed to those ordered through the school (the office has passed on these concerns to Colorfoto).
3. Parents, particularly non-Welsh speaking parents, would appreciate the opportunity to view and hear videos / songs of the nursery rhymes & songs pupils sing whilst in school on the website so that they can support their children at home. If the vocabulary and phrases that are used frequently in class could also be uploaded to the website, that would be of great help.
4. The video clips and photos of pupils on the class pages are wonderful and allow parents an opportunity to see their children at work in school.
5. Reception pupils have really enjoyed attending school assemblies for the first time this term. (Nursery pupils will begin attending assemblies in the summer term in order to prepare them for reception)
6. The 'Meet the Teacher' event for parents of pupils moving from Nursery to Reception didn't take place at the end of the Summer term. The school apologises for this. Ultimately, this was as a result of not knowing which staff would be teaching and supporting the various classes until the very last week of term. Arrangements for this vital transition meeting will be made well in advance this year.
7. Nursery and Reception teachers and support staff are great and a credit to the school.
8. The 'Pori Drwy Stori' assembly was wonderful and it was great to see the children performing so confidently through the medium of Welsh.

Years 1 & 2 - Meeting date – 7/12/17

1. Parents seem very happy with everything so far this term.
2. A number of parents expressed concern with the delays in receiving their child's school photo from Colorfoto. The problem seemed to be with online orders as opposed to those ordered through the school (the office has passed on these concerns to Colorfoto).
3. Instances have arisen recently where pupils have not received fruit on days when they haven't paid, even though they usually pay for fruit. Can't the

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Dirprwy / Deputy headteacher: Miss Elen Jones





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school provide these pupils with fruit on condition that they pay the next day? (Clearer guidance needs to be issued to both parents and staff as to paying for fruit money. The use of 'Squid' should help with this going forward).

4. Although the Home / School contact books have been welcomed again this year, a number of parents feel that they are not being used to their full potential. Problems include staff not receiving messages that have been written in the books. Clearer guidance needs to be issued to pupils, parents and staff as to how to maximise their use. These will be sent out in January

Years 3 & 4 - Meeting date - 6/12/17

1. A number of parents have expressed concerns about the general cleanliness and smell of both the boys and girls junior toilets. Whilst both toilets were refurbished last year and continue to be in excellent condition, the lack of good hygiene habits by numerous pupils, including not flushing toilets and urinating on walls, means that this continues to be a challenge. Regular monitoring of the facilities and new odour neutralizers will hopefully remedy the situation.
2. Pupils seem very happy in their new classes and are working well with their class teachers.
3. Parents feel that class teachers are very approachable and that the 'open-door' policy is a strength, with parents happy to approach staff for anything.
4. Both classwork and homework is being marked on a regular basis and is constructive.
5. A question was asked whether homework could be presented bilingually. Whilst homework for younger pupils is translated in order to help parents understand what is required, Key Stage 2 pupils have the ability to translate and explain their homework to parents.
6. The new topic based homework is proving very popular with both pupils and parents and allows pupils a degree of independence in how and when they present individual pieces of work.
7. A number of parents expressed concern at the lack of support staff in Key Stage 2. Whilst the school shares these concerns, the ongoing cuts to the education budget have resulted in a number of voluntary redundancies and forced redundancies amongst the support staff. With a gloomy outlook moving forward, this is not expected to change anytime soon. However, a letter inviting parents, grandparents, family, friends etc to volunteer their services to support the school with reading etc will be sent out in early January.

Years 5 & 6 - Meeting date - 29/11/17

1. As also noted by Year 3&4 parents, a number of parents have expressed concerns about the general cleanliness and smell of both the boys and girls junior toilets. Whilst both toilets were refurbished last year and continue to be in excellent condition, the lack of good hygiene habits by numerous pupils, including not flushing toilets and urinating on walls, means that this continues

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- to be a challenge. Regular monitoring of the facilities and new odour neutralizers will hopefully remedy the situation.
2. Some parents expressed concern that pupils in the Year 4&5 mixed class were not having enough opportunities to socialise with their peers from the same year group on the yard (as break times are split between 3&4 and 5&6). As of January, pupils in the mixed class will alternate their daily breaks between 3&4 and 5&6, whilst also having the full lunch hour.
 3. A number of parents asked if all the KS2 classes have 'Amser Aur' (Golden Time) on a Friday afternoon as this seems to be inconsistent? Whilst 'Amser Aur' has always been a strategy for rewarding pupils and classes for good behaviour, completing work to a high standard etc, its use does seem to have become an expectation. The new term (Spring) will see Friday afternoons becoming far more structured, with KS2 pupils having the opportunity of choosing activities such as games, art, reading etc once they have completed their tasks.
 4. Following on from the previous question, parents also enquired whether pupils are kept in at break time if they haven't completed their work. Whilst all pupils are given ample time to complete tasks, there are occasions when some pupils will not have accomplished this. When this is as a result of a valid reason, i.e the pupil has struggled to understand the work, had to leave class for a music lesson etc, then additional time will be given to complete the task. If tasks are not completed as a result of poor or unacceptable behaviour, then pupils will be asked to complete the work in their own time, be it during break time or at home, if appropriate.
 5. The new topic based homework is proving very popular with both pupils and parents and allows pupils a degree of independence in how and when they present individual pieces of work. However, some parents feel that the marking of homework is inconsistent. The school will monitor this over the coming term.
 6. Overall, parents and their children are happy with their new classrooms and their new class teachers and are grateful for the efforts of the staff.

Thank you everyone for all your comments. We will try our best to address the concerns you've raised in these Parent Forums 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 further.

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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