

Parent Voice
Monday 31st October 2016
The Barn Cedar Studio

1. Welcome and introductions

2. Minutes of the last meeting and action points

• **Homework**

- Mr McIntosh apologised that the clarification letter had not yet been sent out due to him needing to receive certain details from each Year 3 class. This would be issued with the next 'In Flight' menu.
- A lengthy discussion took place about the merits or otherwise of the current homework system. Mr McIntosh outlined the route on which the school had journeyed in order to arrive at this approach and the benefits involved but acknowledged that no one system would suit all children or all families. Feedback is always welcome because we want to improve all aspects of school for all our pupils and though we would not rule out changing homework in the future, for now, the current system will remain as it is.
- A question about Abacus online homework was raised, regarding the compatibility with ipads. Some parents had found that some of the games did not work on ipads because of the need for Flash player, while others had not encountered difficulty. Mr McIntosh was aware that there could be some issues with some of the activities and if they could not be resolved, he suggested parents speak to their child's class teacher and request an alternative activity be set instead.
- *NB: Subsequent to the meeting, Mr McIntosh had investigated further and had been able to find some troubleshooting advice that is now added to our website (**Teaching and Learning > Home Learning > Abacus online homework**) and to these minutes. Also added to the same area on our website is further guidance for parents on how to use Abacus.*

• **Eschools mail**

The feedback received so far was that this system was working well, though emails sent in the afternoon sometimes arrive at odd times during the evening.

• **Break and Lunchtime arrangements**

The new arrangements had been well-received by pupils, who were making good use of the additional facilities made available (MUGA, fixed football area, use of the field when not very muddy). A question was raised about what the new equipment bought was. Mr McIntosh would check and provide a list.

A parent noted that they had seen some older children playing a game where they flipped a water bottle in the air in order to catch it and this seemed quite dangerous. Mr McIntosh would remind children about appropriate games in an assembly and also alert staff on duty at playtime and lunchtime.

3. Lunch menu

A parent asked if the new lunch menu could be formatted as a non-graphics version to reduce ink use. This had been done before and Mr McIntosh would request this of the catering provider, Ashlyns.

*NB: This has been added to the website since the meeting in **School Info > School Meals > Barnes Farm Infant & Junior Menu Autumn 2016 Black & White version***

4. Forest Schools

A question was raised about the possibility of the Junior School taking part in the Forest Schools initiative being run this half term by the Infant School. Mr McIntosh confirmed that the Junior school was aware of this project and would be discussing with Mrs Welch how successful it had been later this term. Any future thoughts of collaboration or replication by the Juniors would be considered after that.

5. Head lice

A question about guidance for dealing with head lice was raised. It would be helpful if the school provided some guidance or links to guidance regarding how to respond to incidents and how to help prevent its spread by tying up long hair. It was also noted by a parents that head lice infestations are most prevalent now, during the months of October-January. Mr McIntosh confirmed that messages are sent out to affected classes/year groups when we are informed about an occurrence of head lice and that the school's policy on long hair is that it must be tied back, not just for this reason but also to help set the best physical circumstances for a pupil to work. Mr McIntosh would investigate what links or guidance could be placed on the website and remind parents on a newsletter about tying back long hair.

*NB: A link to the NHS webpages regarding the detection and treatment of head lice has been added to our school website (**School Info > Health and welfare**). A downloadable and printable guide has also been added.*

6. Flu immunisation

A parent asked if the school would be offering the flu jab to children again this year. Mr McIntosh confirmed it would be; the school had been contacted by the local NHS trust and this had been arranged and would be on offer to all year groups with parental permission. He thought it would take place in later November but the letter would likely be sent out this week or next where that would be confirmed.

NB: The letter was sent out later that week, confirming the date as Monday 5th December.

7. Photos

A parent asked about the change regarding the taking of photos of non-Barnes Farm Schools siblings on a Saturday. Mr McIntosh explained that this was to enable whole families to have their photos taken if they wished to do so. In previous years there had also been frustrations surrounding the system with some parents and children having to wait lengthy amounts of time. The Saturday booking system should help alleviate this

and Mr McIntosh would be interested to hear from parents after the day about its success.

8. Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 30th November at 8pm (tea/coffee from 7.45pm) in the Barn.