

# Parent Forum Minutes



## CHILDREN COME FIRST.

**Meeting title:** Autumn term meeting of the Somerby Parent Forum

**Date and time:** Monday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 6pm

**Location:** Meeting at the school

**In attendance**

- \* Andrea Brown, Headteacher.
- \* Louise Buckenham.
- \* Anna Duval, MET Clerk.

### Welcome and Introductions

Mrs Brown gave a warm welcome to the first meeting of the Somerby Parent Forum and introduced herself. Whilst there was only one parent in attendance there had been a number of parents who had expressed an interest in attending. Mrs Brown said she hopes that more parents will be able to attend future meetings and that the time will vary each term to enable more to attend. She explained it was a forum for parents to be able to share their views and voice their concerns in a comfortable and relaxed environment. The Parent Forum enables parents to feedback, suggest improvements, and aims to help promote positive and effective two-way communication between parents, the school, and the wider Trust. She explained that these meetings will not discuss items relating to specific pupils, specific parents, or individual staff as these should be discussed one to one with the relevant teacher or herself as appropriate.

### Meet the Headteacher

Mrs Brown said she had held a 'Meet the Headteacher' evening earlier this term for both Somerby and Ab Kettleby schools. As it was held at Ab Kettleby School and parents said that this was too far to attend and asked for it to be repeated at Somerby. The first part of this meeting included the presentation from this event.

Mrs Brown explained that Mowbray Education Trust is a family of six schools and one nursery with a 'pupils first' single vision. The 'why' is because they believe: every child is uniquely important and of equal worth, every child has the right to a world class education whether their parent can afford it or not and, through education, every child should be able to achieve their potential and ultimately improve their lives and the lives of those around them.

Mrs Brown said when she first started her post as Headteacher she asked staff what the school's vision was, and the responses were not found to be clear. She said worked with staff on the first inset day to develop a vision for Somerby and to show why we do what we do for pupils.

Mrs Brown talked about her career progression. She started her working career in a Bank and then moved into teaching. She has worked at several schools including a special school which made her realise she wants to teach in mainstream education. Mrs Brown shared that she has two grown up twin daughters, has a dog named Fudge and recently learnt to windsurf.

### **Behaviour / Culture update**

Mrs Brown gave an update of the behaviour culture that has been introduced. She said behaviour boost days took place in school at the start of the term and they were now six weeks into term since it was introduced. Children know what to expect in all their classes with all teachers and it takes away anxiety, routines become habit and it allows teachers to get the best out of each child. Mrs Brown said that a focus area for children's improvement at Somerby is their behaviour in how they talk to their peers. It was noticed that children are speaking respectfully to adults but not doing so well in speaking respectfully to their peers.

Discussions took place about a youth club in Melton that is attended by some Somerby school children and whose behaviour has improved.

Mrs Brown said she believed that if you get the behaviour right children will learn, if the curriculum is right children will learn and in turn the outcomes and attainment will follow.

She said SLANT was being used in the classroom as it helps prepare children for the outside world.

### **Discussion points suggested by parents**

Mrs Brown contacted parents in advance of the meeting for feedback and questions to raise. The following was received from parents in advance of the meeting. Mrs Brown addressed each one.

- *One improvement though could be to let the children go to the toilet when needed and not just allow them to go once before dinner and once after.*

We do let children go to the toilet when they need to. We do not want accidents! We encourage children to go at the right time (breaks, lunch, before a lesson) and not during lessons where learning can be missed.

- *My only criticism at the moment is that I believe the class doesn't have a teacher on a Wed afternoon, I believe Mrs Allen has to step in. This must take Mrs Allen from her TA role elsewhere in the school.*

All teachers are entitled to half a day non-contact time for planning, preparation, and assessment (PPA). Each teacher is covered by a TA. The timetable is set at the beginning of each year to accommodate this. We are very lucky at Somerby to have a TA in each class – not every class in every school has that luxury!

- *I do feel that the school seems to miss out on equipment and facilities for sport compared to other schools in the trust.*

Our funding is relative to the number of children we have on roll and the ability to have sports facilities is relative to the size of our school grounds, when comparing to other schools. We work hard with local primary schools to ensure our children can experience a range of sports at a range of different schools over the year as well as bringing in a wide range of sports to our PE lessons or lunchtime clubs: e.g., yoga, fencing, basketball (Leicester Riders), Netball (Charnwood & Rutland), Gymnastics (Little Springers), Football (Asfordby Amateurs) Rugby (Melton Rugby Club) to name but a few! We also enter children in a wide range of sporting competitions.

## **Communication**

Mrs Brown said that the school has an open door for communicating with parents. Parents can use Dojo, email, or talk in person.

Parents can become part of the school by joining FOSS, Friends of Somerby School, or volunteer in the school. Mrs Brown said she would welcome suggestions from parents on how their skills can contribute to the school e.g., gardening, fundraising, bringing enrichment to the curriculum etc.

Discussion took place about a well-attended and successful dog walking FOSS event that took place earlier in the week and it was suggested that the local countryside environment allows many opportunities for activities.

Mrs Brown asked for ideas if there is anything she can do differently as Headteacher to increase engagement from parents.

## **Discussion focus suggested by Trust Board**

The Trust Board may ask for opinions on certain areas for focus at the meetings from time to time and there were no items received on this occasion.

## **Next Parent Forum Meetings**

The next Parent Forum is on **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January at 3.00pm to 3:30pm**. There will be activities provided for children to participate in straight after school whilst their parents attend the meeting.

The meeting closed at 6.45pm