



GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER

Edition 5 May 2017

Welcome to the latest edition of the Silverhill Governor Newsletter.

You will remember that we published the results from our latest parental survey on the previous newsletter. We have since had time to read and digest your comments and have detailed our responses overleaf. Thank you for everyone who took the time to complete the survey.

This term is always a testing time with all the Key Stage assessments to be administered. Thank you to all the staff and parents for their support during this time and also to the children for their determination to succeed.

We wish you all a happy half-term holiday.

Mrs Claire Hunter, Chair of Governors



PARENTAL SURVEY—COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

We asked for suggestions that would improve the provision of food and the overall dining experience for the children.

You told us:

- * that the menu was good with lots of choice, was well balanced and the children were happy with the food;
- * you appreciated a copy of the menu as it informs parents of the choices available;
- * theme days were welcome and would like to see more.

You also told us:

- * that you would like us to review the choices on offer for children, particularly those that are vegetarian, the pudding

options available including fresh fruit options and portion control.

We will:

* Feedback your comments to the catering team and ask them to review the menus taking parental comments on board whilst operating within the mandatory School Food Standard Framework.



We asked for further comments that you felt would help improve the provision we offer to the school community.

You told us:

- that children enjoy coming to school and were making good progress, feel safe and supported with a variety of learning opportunities being offered;
- staff are extremely friendly and helpful and that the school is well run;
- parents would like to be more involved in the school;
- communication between teachers and parents could be improved with more notice of events;
- you would like more subsidies for extra curricular activities, a bigger hall to accommodate these events;
- you feel that some children have too much homework whereas other feel that their children have too little homework;
- the more quieter children are not always recognised;
- you would like evening performances of productions.



GOVERNOR VISITS

On May 12th I joined Mrs Nash, Mr Coupland, Miss Downs and Mrs Mitchell on the Year 6 residential visit to PGL – my first trip with school, and I was terrified!

My fears were unfounded though, as I and the children had a fantastic time!

If you are not aware, PGL is an outdoor activity centre, providing an immense array of activities throughout the weekend to challenge both children and adults alike. But before we got there, we had a stop off at Ironbridge.

Blists Hill at Ironbridge is a restored and rebuilt Victorian town offering some insight into how people used to live and work. The immediate attraction, of course, is the “old fashioned” sweet shop – the queue just to get in there is legendary. This is when I discovered that my childhood sweets are very similar to Victorian ones, leading to some interesting guesses about my age!

This led to a discussion about when things were invented – it still makes me chuckle that a few of the children refused to believe that I didn't have the Internet at their age.

After a fun few hours, we headed on to PGL, and from the minute we stepped off the bus it was non-stop! We, because the children insisted that the

adults took part in activities, did raft-building, abseiling, fencing, zip wire, assault course, giant swing, shooting, survivor and most terrifying of all – trapeze!

I was really proud of all the children, and especially those in my group. Everyone gave every activity a try, even when they were scared. There were also some lovely displays of Silverhill SPIRIT taking place throughout the weekend. I had a fantastic time, and hope the school asks me to help again in the future.

The children also made me proud of Silverhill – seeing the excellent behaviour throughout the weekend made me remember what an excellent school we have, although I'm certain I saw a group dab at one point...

I will leave you with a picture of me at the top of a pole, wondering what I did to deserve this!

Mr
James
Hayward



GOVERNOR VISITS

The Governors met for our meeting on 4th April 2017. We try to hold two meetings every term. One to focus on 'operational' matters such as policies, finance etc and the second meeting to ensure we have dedicated time to focus on 'strategic' matters such as the school's strategic plan and to explore in detail important matters such as safeguarding and special educational needs. This meeting was a strategic meeting and we looked in detail at the comments made as part of the questionnaire parents were asked to complete at a recent parents evening. Overall, the opinions of the parents were positive and where suggestions were made in relation to lunchtime options etc. there were often government guidelines which prevented the school from being able to consider any suggestions.

We then broke into two groups and took a walk around the classrooms. This was a great opportunity to see the learning environment in which our children learn. The classrooms clearly reflect the leadership approach at Silverhill and the passion of the teachers and children for the learning journey. We could see examples of where good practice and ideas developed by one teacher were adopted

by another and that teachers had the freedom to explore, trying new techniques and approaches to learning which would be appropriate for the children.

I found the 'learning wall' or 'working wall' approach really interesting. The displays are a 'work in progress' growing as the topic for the half term develops and are intended to act as support materials for the children. Once the topic is completed the displays are moved out into the corridor as a celebration of learning. Taking the time to walk through each classroom helped the governing team see the transition from year to year. This helped us understand how the learning environment changes to support the changing needs of the children and also the work which reflects the stage at which the children are working. I found the experience really valuable, as did the other members of the Governing Board.

Dr Amanda Baxendale-Newbury



We will:

- * ask for volunteers to create a parent school volunteer forum;
- * recirculate information about our existing volunteer programme – please see website for information;
- * ask staff to communicate to parents within realistic timescales and ensure that the website is kept up to date with key information and dates. We know that the newly introduced DoJo system and home school diaries have helped improve communication between parents and staff;
- * ask staff to ensure that appropriate levels of homework are set within the year groups;
- * we will continue to ensure that the reward systems currently in place, eg, Class Dojos, attendance lottery, gold and merit awards, green play and house rewards recognise a broad range of activities and behaviours for all children.

Please remember to refer to the school website as it is a valuable source of information.

We are unable to:

- subsidise after school clubs/extra curricular activities due to current budgetary restraints. The school prioritises using finances available to ensure that staffing levels, health and safety and resources are funded sufficiently within the school working day to ensure children have access to a broad curriculum;
- the school fully appreciates that extra space within the hall area would be advantageous to the school. At present we are looking at the feasibility of providing extra room within the school but any future building works will be dependent on the funding we have available;
- although we acknowledge the request for evening performances, past experience has demonstrated that parents were unable to commit to bringing children back to school in the evening to take part in performances.

Thank You!

