



Empowering children to lead fulfilling lives

Parent Forum: Thursday 1st May 2025

Parent Reps: Mr Nicholl (Reception) Mrs Budd (Year 1), Mrs Page (Year 2), Mrs Wollaston (Year 3), Mrs Sjouerman (Year 4), Mrs Stow (Year 5), Mrs Cassell (Year 6).

Apologies: None

Actions from previous meeting:

Class	Action	Status
Reception	Transition information for parents moving from Reception to Year 1 would be useful. Parent Reps are going to devise a plan for this	In progress
	School to investigate delivering Parent Workshops online	Complete
Year 5	School to explore parents being able to use the Child Care Voucher Scheme to pay for clubs	Complete

Items discussed

Year Group	Points Discussed	Actions
Reception	Comment: Thank you to Mrs Kemp for all her work since February. The children are doing so well and are loving class. They are happy and settled. A huge thank you to all the Reception team for the fabulous class assembly. A: Thank you for these lovely comments. We will pass them on to the Reception team. We are really proud of how well Reception pupils dealt with the unexpected change.	
Year 1	Qu: We appreciate that staff leaving mid-term is neither anticipated or easy to navigate. Parents would have appreciated clearer communications regarding the staff changes which impacted Year 1. Please can you share plans for this term in terms of the Year 1 teacher and TA A: Please accept our apologies if the communication on this topic to Year 1 was not sufficient. It is always difficult when a member of staff goes on unexpected long term sick leave. Staff at	



	<p>Manland will often be redeployed, depending on the needs of the pupils and the whole school on any given day. I do also want to take this opportunity to thank staff for their flexibility during this time; we are so grateful to have such supportive and understanding staff. For the summer term, Ms Shorthouse will be teaching Year 1 and she will be supported by Mrs Talley, Mrs Ebbs and Miss Jackson.</p> <p>Can you share how it was managed last term - we understand that TAs were teaching Year 1 at various points, as well as other stand-ins? Is this the case?</p> <p>During the spring term, Ms Shorthouse increased her hours to teach Year 1 and she was supported by Mrs Talley, Mrs Ebbs and Miss Jackson. There may have been other short term redeployments, but this is normal throughout the school, dependent on staffing, pupils and the needs of the whole school on any given day.</p> <p>Can you share any other vacancies and how it might affect current plans?</p> <p>A: There are no vacancies which will affect Year 1 in the current academic year.</p> <p>Qu: Everyone in year 1 is delighted to have Ms Shorthouse and we are very grateful for the continuity that she is providing to year one. Please can you pass on our thanks directly to her for all the incredibly positive impact she is having on the year group during this time of instability.</p> <p>A: Of course. We will pass this on to Ms Shorthouse.</p>	
Year 2	<p>Qu: Can more evidence of work be sent home for my child, rather than waiting for the parent teacher evening?</p> <p>A. We have passed this is to Miss Davies and it is in progress.</p> <p>Comment: Thanks to Miss Davies and Mrs McFarlane for the effort put into to making special days so great.</p> <p>A: Thank you for this feedback, we will pass it on to the Year 2 team.</p> <p>Qu: Can parents be notified of what children have been told regarding staff absences/movements - so that parents can be consistent with what the children have been told in school (and to help alleviate concerns that the children might have, fretting about the staff member).</p> <p>A: There have been no staff changes in Year 2 this current academic year.</p>	



	<p>Qu: What is the standard pattern for TAs taking classes during the week and for movement of teaching staff between classrooms?</p> <p>A: Teachers are contractually entitled to a proportion of their working week as non-contact time (out of class) for planning, preparation and assessment. During this time, like many other schools, we use our highly trained support staff to deliver the lessons that teachers have planned. Due to the complexity of whole school timetables, and taking into account staff absences, this can change.</p>	
Year 3	<p>Comment: Thank you to Mr Jones for all his hard work. The children really enjoy his lessons; he is "engaging and creative", a "role model" and has created "fun and interactive environment" for Year 3 and they seem to be thriving under his teaching.</p> <p>A: Thank you for this wonderful feedback. We will pass it on.</p> <p>Comment: Thank you also to Mrs Gourlay who is a steady and experienced presence in the Year 3 classroom. Parents are grateful to her.</p> <p>A: Thank you. We are really proud of our teaching assistants. We will pass your feedback on to Mrs Gourlay.</p> <p>Comment: The class trip to Tring was fantastic, on topic and lots of learning opportunity. The behaviour from children was impressive and teachers were completely in control and engaging.</p> <p>A: Thank you, the children really enjoyed the experience and it really enhanced their learning on the topic.</p> <p>Qu: Can homework to be marked by teachers, rather than the class, so that learning/progress can be better monitored</p> <p>A: Teachers have a heavy marking load and we would rather teacher's time and focus is on the work that children do in class which is planned and delivered carefully. Progress is rigorously monitored at Manland as reflected in our outcomes. It is also an important skill for children to be able to look at their own work, spot mistakes or errors and make corrections.</p> <p>Comment: Thank you to the office staff for the great communication and friendly welcome.</p> <p>A: Thank you! We will pass your message on to the office.</p>	



	<p>Qu: Could we please have some further information about what the children are learning/topics for the week/half term would be welcome so that parents can reinforce at home (appreciate we have the curriculum spine on the website)?</p> <p>A: All curriculum, subject specific learning intents can be found here: https://manland.herts.sch.uk/curriculum/subjects/</p> <p>Comment: Thank you for the variety of clubs in the summer term. A particular thanks to TAs and teachers who are running clubs. As a side note, some of the communications from the external music club was not always good.</p> <p>A: Thank you. We work hard to put on a wide range of clubs and we are always open to club suggestions as we are keen that our clubs reflect the children's interests. We agree that some of the communication from external clubs could be improved. We undertake a range of checks on clubs we work with and we will continue to emphasise with them the importance of communication.</p> <p>Qu: Can the school participate in more competitions beyond sport? It would be nice to get more involved in music initiatives.</p> <p>A: The school will always try to take part in a competition, provided it can staff it appropriately, it is safe and well organised, and it is not cost prohibitive. Recent non sport events have included the Chess Jamboree (where our team came 3rd in the Small Schools event!), inter-school poetry competition, 'Get caught Reading' competition and the Maths Challenge events which various year groups take part in.</p> <p>In terms of external music events, the school takes part in the Year 6 Spring Festival and the choir represents the school at the Rotary Carol Concert. Year 2 children take part in the KS1 music Festival.</p>	
Year 4	<p>Comment: Thank you for the recent parents evening. Parents appreciated the informative and useful feedback that Mr Brittin prepared about each of his pupils.</p> <p>A: This is wonderful feedback and we will pass it on. Thank you.</p> <p>Qu: Thank you for the recent Spring Concert – it was really enjoyable and appreciated by all. It was a bit difficult to hear the poems being read. Also, is it possible to publish approximate end times for events like this to make it easier to plan time away from work.</p>	



	<p>A: Thank you. We also think the Year 3 and 4 pupils sang and performed brilliantly during the festival. We will ask the office to publish approximate end times for these types of events going forward.</p> <p>Comment: A huge thank you from the parents for the class trip to The Tate Museum in London. It was an incredible experience for our children.</p> <p>A: Thank you. We agree!</p> <p>Qu: Are the school able to share known staffing changes for the next academic year with the parents?</p> <p>A: Teachers often move on for their own professional development and we may see some change this year. As with prior years, we will publish staffing for the next academic year as soon as it has been agreed. This is usually done in the school newsletter towards the end of the Summer term.</p> <p>Comment: The new caretaker is doing a great job; the school and grounds look good.</p> <p>A: Thank you for recognising Mr Dwyer and all his hard work. The impact he has had on school in a short space of time is incredible. We will pass on your comments.</p>	
Year 5	<p>Comment: Thank you to Mrs Barker, Mrs Talley and Ms Jackson and all involved in organising the residential. The impact of the trip was all very positive.</p> <p>A: Thank you also to all the parents and carers for supporting children to attend this trip. A big well done to Year 5 too; staff praised them on how well behaved and mature they were throughout the trip.</p> <p>Qu: Can school share the photos of the residential trip?</p> <p>A: Yes. These have been shared via Dropbox.</p> <p>Qu: Can school share photos of the children during the Year 6 residential trip? A whole week without photos would feel too long.</p> <p>A: Yes, we always do this for the Year 6 trip.</p>	



Year 6	<p>Comment: It would be good if the school could make a push (maybe amongst TAs?) for someone to cover the empty crossing guard position on Ox Lane. With Year 6 kids going to and from school on their own, it would make me a lot more comfortable to know there was someone keeping things safe at that dangerous intersection.</p> <p>A: We appreciate parents' concerns over this crossing section. We are hopeful that Herts County Council can recruit someone for this role. In the past, several parents reached out to local councillor, Paul De Kort, about the issue and various ideas were discussed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An upgraded set of warning lights about children crossing;• Some vegetation cutback to improve visibility for drivers and pedestrians alike• The design work necessary to be able to install a zebra crossing, when funding can be secured. <p>Parents are welcome to raise the issue with the local council again. Unfortunately, we cannot ask Teaching Assistants to support with this, for safety and insurance purposes. We politely remind all parents and carers that it is their responsibility to get their children to school safely.</p> <p>Qu: How often do Year 6 have the opportunity to visit the school library? A: Library time is scheduled for once per week, but if the time is needed for catch up work, feedback, SATs prep etc., these are prioritised. The class also has a fully stocked reading corner of books which is available to children all the time. Miss Noonan rotates the books in the reading corner regularly.</p> <p>Comment: Thank you for putting together the residential trip; all the children are really looking forward to it. A: We are really looking forward to it too – the children always gain so much from it and they really deserve it after all their hard work and preparation for SATs.</p>	
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