



The BAWB Federation
Bainbridge, Askrigg, and West Burton Primary Schools
Mid-Dale Excellence in Education
Executive Headteacher: Miss Charlotte L. Harper

Friday 24th March 2017

Dear parents and friends,

Thank you to those of you who attended our joint parents' forum last week. I have now had time to read and digest the minutes, put some thought into your comments and suggestions, and speak to staff. The attached report of actions / outcomes is a direct result of the forum and I hope this goes some way towards illustrating the impact of the forums.

Please feel free to get in touch if you would like to discuss any of the outcomes any further, and I will continue to keep you updated via the newsletter.

Thank you to Kath Alderson for taking minutes, and to Georgina Pickard-Sparne for chairing the meeting.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlotte Harper'.

Charlotte Harper

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The BAWB Parent Forum
Wednesday 15th March 2017, Bainbridge Primary School

Issues / Points Raised	School's Response / Outcomes
Communication	
A parent dropping children off at Bainbridge School questioned whether staff should be outside at 8:30am? The parent sometimes had to wait until 8:35am before they could leave their child.	Yes, there should be a member of staff outside from 8:30am. Members of staff are always very busy setting up for the day (and briefing meeting on a Monday) but I shall provide a reminder so that we are outside promptly at 8:30am.
Parents were also concerned that bus drivers at West Burton were dropping children off early, before staff were outside on duty.	I will take this up with the bus drivers. Staff come outside at 8:35am and the drivers should not be dropping off children unattended.
Parents questioned the lack of information with regard to the future of the schools; they had hoped for some decision to have been made by now. Governors present said they shared parents' frustration that no information was available but said that discussions continued with the Local Authority.	I completely understand any frustration; indeed we are also finding the process and all associated discussions extremely time consuming. It is taking longer than we had expected yet we must make sure that we have properly explored all avenues. The finances going forward are a major concern and also significantly complicated. We are working closely with the LA to arrive at the most sustainable and effective way forwards for our children. We are working as hard as we can behind the scenes.
Could Miss Harper clarify the National Funding Formula, especially the effect it may have on BAWB?	It is extremely complicated and still under consultation. However, it is likely that we may benefit slightly, though not in any significant way (i.e. not enough to impact on the size of the growing projected deficits).
The attendance data on the newsletter was well received.	Good – attendance has also improved since this introduction. The children enjoy reading the attendance figure on the newsletter too.
BAWB Fundraising Event	
Discussion took place as to the possibility of a BAWB PTFA, perhaps with West Burton matching any existing funds in Askrigg and Bainbridge's account.	That would be a really positive and uniting approach.
Parents felt that PTFA events were sometimes advertised very close to the event – PTFA minutes are published on the school websites within two weeks of meetings and can be referred to at any time.	We are always extremely grateful for all the support given by our PTFA, not just financially but in terms of running refreshments, contributing to school events and making a generally positive and proactive contribution towards school life. Thank you so very much – always appreciated.
A photoshoot was discussed as a fundraising event for BAWB. It was agreed that the first part of the planned PTFA meeting (3 rd May) would be a good time to have a discussion re the joint event. The venue of the meeting will be confirmed.	
Any Other Business	
The colour of gingham dresses (girls' alternative summer uniform) was discussed. The uniform policy states that dresses should be blue, however parents felt that as the BAWB logo has a red, green and yellow figure that different coloured dresses might be worn, with the BAWB sweatshirt / cardigan? Parents present felt that would be useful and asked that it be minuted for Miss Harper's opinion.	We have discussed this as a staff and the general consensus is that the uniform has been changed under consultation with pupils fairly recently and we would like to keep it as it is (blue gingham dresses as an option for children in the summer). Apparently, though Catterick Tesco does not stock blue, they can be ordered from there at no additional cost. <i>Also, those families who have other colour gingham dresses left over from previous purchases are welcome to use those until they need to be replaced. Thank you.</i>

Issues / Points Raised	School's Response / Outcomes
<p>It was disappointing that not all Y5/6 children had been encouraged to enter the spelling bee. Children didn't have a choice whether or not to go to cross country, could the same rule apply for academic events?</p>	<p>All children were encouraged to enter the spelling bee but no one was forced. Spelling is a particular skill and it would be inappropriate for some children (e.g. those with dyslexia or dyslexic tendencies) to be required to compete in such a high pressure activity in front of the public and/or large audience. There may have been children who would have found this extremely distressing. Equally, we would never force any children to take part in any sporting event. Sometimes, because of logistics, we take all children to an event (e.g. cross-country) but the individual needs of all children are always considered. Children are not able to opt out of spelling (in class) or PE (except in exceptional circumstances) as these are part of the national curriculum but to be <i>required</i> to compete at wider / cluster level without consideration of individual need would be potentially humiliating and would put inappropriate pressures on some children.</p>
<p>There appears to have been a significant increase in the homework given to Y6 children – was this SATs preparation or because the class teacher at Askrigg had returned?</p>	<p>There has. I think hope I was able to clear this up in last week's newsletter:</p> <p><i>Parents of Y6 children will have noticed some additional homework over the last couple of weeks which will continue in the lead-up to SATs. We always endeavour to keep our children relaxed and comfortable about any assessments and our Y6 children currently have a positive and determined attitude towards doing their best – keep it up children! Irrespective of any personal opinions on testing in primary schools, these assessments are an important part of our children's education; the results of which also form our school's data picture on which the Ofsted judgement about pupil outcomes is based. Our children are also learning important lessons about hard-work, resilience and commitment to their own learning. The new curriculum is challenging and the new 'expected standard' has really raised the bar. With the right support and guidance (and a bit of additional focus at this time of year) our children should be well-prepared to meet these expectations. I appreciate your support as we make sure that our children are as prepared as possible and are fully committed to their own achievement. Thank you.</i></p>
<p>Parents felt that homework is sporadic, and there wasn't a consistent approach in all classes. E.g. Maths isn't always given.</p>	<p>I will follow this up with all class teachers this week. Maths should be given each week to pupils in KS2 (Y3, 4, 5 and 6).</p>
<p>There was a positive response to the new spellings format.</p>	<p>Thank you – there has been a positive impact on pupils' spelling, not only in their tests but also in their independent writing and their general enthusiasm towards it.</p>
<p>House points were discussed, although one parent suggested that these points were possibly more of an issue for the parents than the children:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some children had 'given up' as their house never won. 2. Some parents were surprised that the children in all three schools were split across all three houses. 	<p>There will be some inevitable slight differences between the way individual members of staff distribute house points but each class is comprised of a fairly equal number of pupils from each house so it should still level out.</p> <p>Each house has the same number of pupils in it (give or take 1) so it would be fairly challenging to identify the cause of imbalance. However, it has been raised with staff and we have had a discussion about attempting to make it more equitable.</p>