

The Bellbird Primary School

Parent Forum – Meeting 3 Minutes

Date: Wednesday 15th July 2026

Time: 5.30pm – 6.30pm

Venue: The Bellbird Primary School

Chair: James Puxley (Headteacher)

Present: James Puxley (Headteacher), Amie Clarke, Steph Popa, Nicola Francis-Newton

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Headteacher welcomed everyone to the third Parent Forum meeting of the academic year and thanked parents for giving up their time to attend. The purpose of the forum was reaffirmed as providing an open and constructive opportunity for parents to discuss school developments, share views from the wider parent community and help shape future improvements.

2. Review of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and all agreed they accurately reflected the discussions.

Wellbeing: Parents commented positively on the increased visibility of the Senior Leadership Team during lunchtimes. The additional leadership presence has been noticed by families and pupils and has contributed to a calmer atmosphere across the school. The Headteacher confirmed this arrangement would continue into the new academic year.

After-School Clubs: Parents welcomed the revised club allocation system, due to commence in September. The Headteacher explained that the intention is to provide a fairer system by prioritising pupils who were unsuccessful in obtaining a place previously.

Parents queried whether children who had already attended a club would receive lower priority in future allocations. It was confirmed that this is the principle behind the new system, although some exceptionally oversubscribed clubs may still require a first-come, first-served approach.

A suggestion was made to offer additional sessions of popular clubs where staffing permits. The Headteacher explained that many clubs rely upon staff volunteering their own time and capacity remains the limiting factor with Mr Pauley running a club every afternoon. He aims to offer a variety of clubs.

End of Day Collection: Parents confirmed that dismissal times now appear much more consistent following the synchronisation of clocks across the site.

School Events and Volunteers: Parents discussed communication regarding volunteers for school events. It was suggested that once enough volunteers have been secured, the school office should inform parents that sufficient helpers have been allocated. Parents also felt it would be helpful if those selected to help could be confirmed in advance so that everyone knows the arrangements.

Action

- School Office to notify volunteers when sufficient helpers have been secured for events and confirm those who will be assisting.
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3. New Behaviour Policy

The Headteacher shared an overview of the new Behaviour Policy, which will be launched in September/ early autumn.

The policy has been developed around a restorative approach that promotes positive relationships whilst maintaining high expectations and clear consequences. Key principles include:

- recognising and celebrating positive behaviour;
- consistent routines across every classroom;
- clear expectations for pupils, staff and parents;
- proportionate consequences where required;
- ensuring behaviour is managed consistently throughout the school.

Parents were supportive of the overall direction and welcomed the emphasis on consistency.

Discussion focused on ensuring parents clearly understand:

- behaviours that may lead to suspension or permanent exclusion;
- the positive behaviours expected from pupils;
- how positive choices will be recognised and celebrated;
- the language and systems staff will use.

The Headteacher explained that whilst the statutory policy necessarily contains detailed legal guidance, staff and parents would also receive concise guidance explaining the practical day-to-day systems used in school.

It was agreed that Parent Forum members would receive an advance draft before publication to allow further feedback.

Action

- Circulate the draft Behaviour Policy to Parent Forum members before publication.
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4. Class Mix-Up

Parents discussed this year's class organisation.

Those present reported that they had received very little negative feedback from other families and generally understood the rationale behind keeping Year 5 classes together moving into Year 6.

The Headteacher explained that class organisation is considered individually for each cohort. Decisions are based upon educational need, friendship dynamics, behaviour, additional needs and ensuring balanced classes.

Parents particularly welcomed the wording used on pupil questionnaires asking children who they "work well with", as this focuses upon successful learning relationships rather than friendship alone.

Parents appreciated the opportunity to provide additional information where there are concerns regarding relationships or family circumstances.

Overall, members felt the process was transparent and carefully considered.

5. Extreme Heat

The forum reflected on the school's response during the recent period of exceptionally high temperatures.

Parents were overwhelmingly positive about the school's decision to hire industrial air conditioning units and industrial fans at very short notice.

Many parents recognised the significant effort made to source equipment when demand was exceptionally high nationwide.

Communication

Some parents felt communications during the week became confusing.

Whilst teachers indicated that parents could keep children at home if necessary, subsequent newsletters emphasised that the school remained open. Parents felt future communications should make the school's expectations clearer.

The Headteacher accepted this feedback and agreed that future messaging would distinguish more clearly between the school remaining open and parents exercising discretion where appropriate.

Financial Contributions

Parents expressed mixed opinions regarding the voluntary contributions requested towards the hire costs.

Some felt providing suitable classroom conditions should remain the responsibility of the school.

Others felt the request was entirely reasonable given the exceptional circumstances and welcomed the school's proactive approach.

Several parents sought reassurance that this would not become an annual expectation.

The Headteacher confirmed that the request was made only because the emergency hire cost exceeded £1,000 per week and could not be accommodated within the existing budget.

Governors are now exploring purchasing permanent portable air conditioning units during the autumn or winter when prices are considerably lower.

Learning During the Heatwave

Some parents commented that learning activities became less academic during the hottest days.

Whilst recognising that children's wellbeing had to remain the priority, some felt more structured learning could have taken place.

The Headteacher acknowledged this feedback and explained that staff had adapted learning rapidly in unprecedented conditions. The experience has provided valuable learning should similar weather occur again.

Local Authority Guidance

The Headteacher expressed frustration that there was no clear Local Authority guidance regarding temperature thresholds for schools.

Future planning will focus upon ensuring classrooms remain suitable for learning without requiring any reduction in school opening hours.

Actions

- Improve communication during future periods of extreme weather.
 - Develop a longer-term investment plan for permanent portable air conditioning units.
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6. Parent Working Parties

The Headteacher explained that attendance at Parent Working Parties has gradually reduced since the first events.

Parents suggested several reasons:

- Saturday mornings often clash with children's sporting activities.
- Families may have greater availability during autumn or winter.
- Greater detail about planned tasks may encourage attendance.
- Advertising jobs nearer to the event date may help families decide whether they can contribute.

The Headteacher agreed that maintaining enthusiasm can be challenging and welcomed the suggestions.

Actions

- Explore different timings and seasons for future working parties.
 - Publicise specific tasks closer to each event.
 - Continue encouraging wider parent involvement.
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7. Information for New Reception Children

Parents spoke positively about the welcome information sent to new Reception families.

The children's booklet was particularly praised for helping children become familiar with the school before September.

Parents suggested including several additional key dates, including:

- uniform ordering deadlines;
- when class allocations will be released;
- teacher information evenings;
- transition events.

The Headteacher agreed these additions would strengthen future welcome packs.

Discussion also considered the phased induction programme.

Whilst parents recognised the educational benefits of staggered entry, it was acknowledged that the arrangement can present challenges for working families.

The Headteacher explained that the Early Years team believes the current model provides the strongest start for children but confirmed it will continue to be reviewed periodically.

Action

- Include additional transition dates within future Reception information packs.
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8. Parent Forum

Parents reflected positively on the Parent Forum itself.

Members felt meetings had become increasingly productive because actions from previous meetings had clearly been implemented.

Parents agreed that the forum provides valuable opportunities for meaningful discussion which cannot always take place through day-to-day conversations at the school gate.

A suggestion was made to increase the visibility of Parent Forum representatives so that parents know who represents each year group.

The Headteacher welcomed this suggestion.

Members also discussed ways of gathering wider parent views.

It was agreed that representatives could use existing class WhatsApp groups to collect feedback before meetings. However, parents felt this would be far more manageable if only two or three key agenda items were circulated beforehand rather than asking for opinions on every agenda item.

This would allow representatives to gather focused feedback while keeping discussions manageable.

The Headteacher agreed that future agendas would identify two or three priority discussion items for representatives to consult upon before meetings.

Parents agreed that termly meetings remain the appropriate frequency.

Actions

- Publish Parent Forum representatives for each year group.
 - Circulate two or three key agenda items before each meeting to support consultation through class WhatsApp groups.
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9. Next Steps, Actions and Gathering Opinions from Parents/Carers

The forum discussed how communication between Parent Forum representatives and the wider parent body could continue to develop.

Members agreed that representatives should actively seek opinions before meetings using existing communication channels.

It was recognised that this approach would broaden representation whilst avoiding additional workload for the school office.

10. Any Other Business

School Reports

One parent sought clarification regarding the meaning of "Expected Standard" within end-of-year reports.

Whilst parents understood the assessment terminology, they felt additional context would help families better understand what pupils are expected to achieve at each age.

The Headteacher explained that reports provide an overview of attainment against national expectations rather than detailed assessment criteria and reminded parents that Parents' Evenings remain the primary opportunity to discuss individual progress.

It was agreed that a simple parent guide explaining assessment terminology could be useful in future.