

Present: Jo Bishop [JB]; Deborah Kaye [DK] (Chair); Kate Jarvis [KJ]; and Christina Ruso [CR]. Catherine Attwood [CA] joined the meeting. (Parents)

Gemma Irvine [GI] (Headteacher); and Anita Shelton [AKS] (Office Manager)

1. **Update on Rumour of St Mary's becoming a Beach School**

GI categorically assured the meeting that this is not happening; the class names are based on the Creation story. GI explained that to be a Beach school would involve taking the children to the beach frequently/regularly for their learning.

However, GI did suggest that becoming a Forest School is a possibility at some time in the future. The school already has a suitable area on site, therefore being more accessible for use. Funding will be required for this; GI has found that an online application can be made to Tesco for inclusion in their token scheme. This can also be made to other supermarkets.

KJ offered to work with GI to prepare a bid after the half-term break. *AP*

2. **Update on Changes to Outside/Environmental Area**

There was much discussion last year about changes, including siting of a Beach Hut for FoStM. GI confirmed that she is now looking into this, with the aim of increasing the size of the play area – e.g. by filling in the pond and covering it in fake grass. A final quotation is awaited, and then the school will negotiate a reduction if parents/carers do some of the work of clearing the ground!

Catherine Attwood joined the meeting.

Concern was raised that the area is not screened from the public in any way. GI agreed to looking into screening possibilities. *AP*

3. **Review of Meet the Teacher Sessions**

These were well received, but not consistent across the classes. A Summer term introduction to new teachers/classes was requested; GI agreed to look at the possibility of a playground 'meet and greet' on Transition Day. Also the 'A' board showing photographs of the staff with their class information may be reintroduced. *AP*

6. **Clarification over Sex/Relationships Education and Journey in Love** was provided. Journey in Love is about relationships, based on our relationship with God, and starts in EYFS with loving our family members. There is a progression each year, and in Year 6 eggs/sperm are introduced. The powerpoints are provided by the Catholic Education Service and cannot be shown to younger children than prescribed. The school was asked if resources could be made available to support parents who wish to speak to their child about puberty, etc., prior to these lessons. *AP*
7. **Communication re Teacher Absences** was raised as a concern. Some parents believed that the Year 3/4 class teacher was on holiday! GI advised that the teacher had been on sick leave but would be returning on Monday 16th October. She acknowledged that, once the absence was confirmed as being more than 2-3 days, it would have been appropriate for parents to be advised of the arrangements made. GI

agreed that parents could be notified of planned supply cover days, but pointed out that with ad-hoc cover it is more difficult.

8. **Short Notice of the October INSET Day** was raised. GI pointed out that this was unusual, and for exceptional circumstances; she had become Headteacher at short notice from September, and needs to ensure all staff are on board with the vision for the school.

KJ thanked GI for the list of dates for the term, and requested a similar list for the year. GI expressed concern that dates may need to change due to circumstances beyond the school's control; she was therefore reluctant to notify parents too far in advance. The changes already made were commended; and it was suggested that dates could perhaps be notified but as provisional. GI asked all parents to encourage other parents/carers to sign up for email communications.

8. **Clarification of the support required for Showcasing events** was provided. Tea/coffee and biscuits are made available at the back of the hall, and parents are also available to respond to questions from the visitors. The spread of dates was queried; GI advised that this is to enable as many prospective parents as possible to have a productive visit, including those who leave it until late or move from another area.
9. There were no **Urgent Matters** but
 - it was asked that parents have the opportunity to visit classes in the same way as grandparents.
 - GI advised that the next School Improvement Newsletter will provide an analysis of the Parent Questionnaire responses.
 - Evaluation sheets may be provided in future following TLCs and 'Meet the Teacher' sessions.

The next Parent Forum will be on Thursday 14th December, at 3:15 p.m.

Action Points:

Item / Description	By whom	By when
1. Bid for Tesco Token Scheme re Forest School	GI/KJ	30/11/2017
2. Investigate screening of the playground	GI	20/12/2017
3. Look into 'meet and greet' on Transition Day	GI	Summer 2018
3. Consider reintroducing 'A' board with photos	GI	Summer 2018
4. Consider recommending resources to parents re talking to their child about puberty	GI	20/12/2017