

Parent Forum via zoom

Monday 5th July

In attendance:

18 parents and staff, Jeanette Brumby, Hania Ryans and Emily Bruggy, Steven Aldridge, Leanne Dhillon and Rachel Whitely.

Hania Ryans opened the meeting and took the notes. These are not word for word minutes and the power point from the meeting is also attached.

Hania Ryans:

Good evening and welcome to our final parent forum of this year. Once again, I will be taking notes. Please do add any questions to the chat. We will answer these at the end of the presentation.

In terms of becoming an anti-racist school this year has been a journey for us all. We recognize that this is only the start of our journey at Fairlawn. We are committed to bringing about change with the help and support of our community.

Tonight, you will hear from all the senior leaders at Fairlawn. Kim Clark will be discussing CPD and the impact this has on our curriculum. Then you will hear from Rachel Whitely, Steven Aldridge and Leanne Dhillon and what has been happening in their phases. We also have an update from BLAM and Emily Bruggy will give you a policy update, discuss the rights respecting award and our yearly calendar.

Since the last forum Emily and I were extremely privileged to be invited to attend the Race Equality in Education All Party Parliamentary Group discussion where Carolyn Osbourne, who spoke at our last parent forum was a guest speaker. The focus was on discriminatory hair policies. We heard some very personal stories and the impact the school's policies had had on these children plus the struggles and the fights that the families had to bring about any change.

At the previous parent forum, it was mentioned that all the heads of Lewisham have been working on a pledge and have agreed to Tackling race inequality in education. We will all work to address the inequalities that result from historic, systemic racist policies and practices. We have pledged to take actions that will address access and opportunity for all pupils, by highlighting inequalities and increasing awareness. The pledge has been shared with staff, children, governors and a letter was sent to parents with further details outlining our commitment to change.

KC: Discussed CPD around diversity in children's literature, please refer to the slide. The literacy leader and myself attended training by Darren Chetty, Beyond the Secret Garden. We discussed what our role should be, the stories that we share with children, should act as windows, so that they can see themselves. The key messages from the training were to include BLAM authors and characters. As a book traditionally used in classrooms was actually written by a white author. We need to ensure that we use a range of authors and that black characters in books should not always be defined by their suffering. We also need to think about writing activities and ensure that children are not only asked to write character descriptions of white characters EYFS is where we need to expose children to a wide range of ethnicities. We have as school already changed some of our core texts to reflect black characters. We need to open up the dialogue in the classroom, so that children are able to discuss diversity. We are hoping to get David to do whole school training.

RW: We are diversifying the curriculum in many ways, in Year 1 we have had African workshops and we have celebrated Pride month across the whole school. Through our value of empathy, we are ensuring children see the diverse world we live in. We celebrate empathy day by looking at different authors and sharing all our learning on Twitter. Please refer to the slides for detailed information.

SA: In years 3 and 4 we have celebrated Windrush Day and it inspired us to write Poetry. We had some very powerful discussions in the classrooms. We have been looking at Black sporting heroes and their achievements. For our Oracy projects, children are taught about a range of black role models. We also acknowledged Stephen Lawrence Day and how the family were treated by the British media. During the previous lockdown we changed our whole class reader to ensure we focused on diverse characters.

LD: We were very lucky to have an Urban Synergy workshop last week, where we got to meet diverse role models and ask them many questions. We looked at many different resources during Windrush Day, please refer to the slide.

Leanne explained how diversity was going across the curriculum. In year 6 they had changed a key text that focused on child poverty in India. For RE Year 6 have had a number of zoom sessions with representatives from different faiths.

EB: During Census Day the whole school focused on equality and representation.

Ms Bruggy then shared the BLAM video, of children talking about their Grounded project. The children were learning about Black history but were quite keen to give the message that it is not 'Black' history but 'Everyone's' history.

Ife: (BLAM) Reported that the children really engaged with the project and always did any homework that was set. They were able to link what they had learnt to their home lives. The children were able to link what they were doing at the Grounded project with an assembly they had done during the day. The children had guided what topics were discussed each week and were eager to feedback to the whole school. BLAM expressed that they were keen to work with us next term.

EB: Talked about Rights Respecting Schools award, all the rules are now linked to our assemblies and children learn about their rights. We want to empower children to have a voice.

Emily shared the anti-bullying flowchart. Please refer to the slide.

EB: Racism is always bullying as it builds on any previous incident. We have had feedback from a parent who tried to find the policy on our website but without much success. We have taken this onboard and when we launch our new website we will make it very clear where the new policy can be found.

Emily explained that we record all racist incidences on our online system, so we can have a trail as a child goes throughout the school. All parents are informed of all incidents and if appropriate, the teacher will have a discussion with the whole class. Emily then shared the slide, showing the events we had planned for next year. We are also linking all of our displays to children's rights. We are hoping to hold some of the yearly events outside next year and we will continue to work with BLAM to develop the Fairlawn community.

A general discussion via the chat function followed.