Civitas Academy Bulletin

22/01/18



**NSPCC Number Day: Friday 2nd February**

On Friday 2nd February, Civitas Academy will be raising money for the NSPCC by celebrating Number Day. We will be doing the following:

* Children may come into school wearing clothing with numbers. To do this, £2 must be donated.
* Parents/ carers will be welcome to enter their child’s classroom at the start of the day and stay until 9:25 to participate in number based activities with their child. Parents with more than one child in the school may want to split their time between classes.

**Feedback from Mr Wieder**

First of all, I would like to thank everybody who either attended the question and answer session on Monday 15th January or submitted questions via email. Like any school, there are always ways in which we can do things better and the questions raised have given me an opportunity to reflect on next steps. Many questions were raised both at the meeting and via email. Most fitted within certain categories, so I will summarise the main themes and responses in this edition of the bulletin. Some actions can be immediate whereas others will take a little longer. I would like to apologise for only giving notice of one week for the meeting, but I felt it was important to have a meeting as soon as possible. I will be hosting these meetings on a half termly basis and at a range of different times. The schedule of these meetings for the rest of the year will be released in next week’s bulletin.

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| **Issue** | **Action Planned** |
| **Communication**  Many questions were raised regarding about how the school communicates to parents. Parents felt that certain events were communicated at the last minute. There have also been several changes in types of communication used. For example, Class Dojo being used less and a new website being used. Some parents also requested that events be staggered to accommodate working parents. | Considering feedback from both the meeting and emails, it has become clear that parents/carers have different preferences about how they like to be communicated with. As a small school, we have limited resource to communicate the same message over many different platforms. As a result, I would like to highlight the ways in which Civitas will be communicating with parents/carers:   * Weekly bulletin to be released every Monday via email and displayed on the website. This will also be put in the notice board on the playground. * Events in school for the rest of the academic year to be released in next week’s bulletin with dates and times given. There will be a variation in some of the times to accommodate working parents. * The website is now up to date and will remain updated with information. This will be the first port of call for reference. * Twitter will be used intermittently to highlight particular events. |
| **Community**  Parents felt that there was a lack of community events held by the school. | In the next few weeks a meeting will be held to re-establish the parent staff association. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss events that could be held and draw out the calendar for the rest of the year. Once these events have been pencilled in, further planning will happen through regular parent staff association  meetings. |
| **Clubs**  Parents noted that the clubs provision had dropped from the previous year. | Plans are in place to address this for the Summer term. In the next few weeks, I will be looking at how the school can provide an increased clubs provision. At this stage I would be grateful if the school community could tell me what clubs they are interested in. Also I would be keen to know if any parents or carers are able to run any clubs. In previous schools, I have worked with parents successfully to run extra-curricular clubs and would be keen to establish similar links at Civitas. I am very keen to start the edible playground project again and would welcome any support that could be provided. Please speak to me when I am on the playground or send an email to the office if you are able to assist. |
| **After School Club**  Parents requested a later finish time. | We are plans to extend after school club provision to 5:45pm after half term. In order to do this, we are looking at appointing an additional member of staff. This however will have an impact on the cost of the after school club provision and will be dependent on the number of children attending. |
| **Holiday Club**  Parents requested a holiday club provision. | At this particular moment in time the school does not have the capacity to run a holiday club provision. The focus for the rest of this academic year has to be on reinstating clubs, reinstating the parent staff association and extending after school club. Once these are all established, I can look to see if there is any way in which a holiday club could be offered. |
| **Security**  Why is there security on site? | At Civitas we take the health and safety very seriously. Most schools have a caretaker on site daily that open and lock up the school. However, at Civitas, we only have a caretaker in one day per week. We are using the security company to provide an opening and closing service. They are also around to assist staff moving to and from their cars at the start and end of the day. They will also be providing support to ensure that car drop offs are performed safely. We have been fortunate enough to secure additional funding from Reach2 to fund this. |
| **Staffing**  Why has there been so much staff turnover? | Being new to the school, I did not have the opportunity to perform exit interviews with staff that have left previously. However, I will certainly be conducting them in the future. Some staff turnover has been due to the school using teachers from a supply agency. This means that teachers could leave with little notice. Nationally there is a teacher recruitment crisis and longer term I want to move to a position where all staff employed by the school are on permanent contracts. In order to achieve this, I am having a meeting with Reach2 Human Resources at the end of this month to put out advertisements for teachers.  In my brief time at the school, I have seen all members of staff work extremely hard and do long hours. Being a new school means that everybody is having to work hard to establish systems and processes. I will be looking at introducing a staff survey to monitor how staff are feeling and I have an open door policy where any member of staff can talk to me about any concerns. I would like to hope that I can address concerns at this stage and therefore increase retention rates.  When new teachers are appointed to the school, a series of checks need to be carried out. One of these checks is performed externally and waiting times for this check to be completed can vary. At the moment we are waiting for this final check to come through before the new teacher can start in Matilda Class. We are hopeful that this check will be completed soon.  I would like to apologise to all in the school community that have been affected by these staffing changes and thank everybody for their ongoing support. |
| **Homework**  Further clarification about how homework is communicated, set and collected was requested. | Homework for Y1 is set half a term in advance and will be collected at the end of that particular half term. Homework in Y2 will be set on Friday and collected in on Wednesday. The expectation is that this will be marked and returned by the teacher along with new homework each Friday. Homework is always one of the more contentious topics in surveys. What one family says is too much, another says is not enough. Therefore, longer term, we will be looking into options where there is a core homework set and provide additional opportunities for optional extra learning. I understand that there was an issue where one class in Y2 did not receive their homework on Friday. After further investigation, I have discovered that it was set but not sent out due to P.E. timetable being changed. I apologise to anyone who was inconvenienced by this. We have learned where we went wrong and now have plans in place to address this. |
| **Parent workshops**  A maths workshop and further general information about how they could support their children at home was requested. | I intend to keep adding to the website with additional learning links and I am planning on concentrating on four types of meetings for parents:   1. Progress meetings- these will be the meetings where you can discuss how well your child is doing with their learning. These are essential for parents to attend. 2. Information meetings- these will take the form of either termly curriculum meetings where you can find out what your child is learning that term. Alternatively, they could be to discuss an area such as mathematics. If parents are unable to attend, documents used will be provided on the website. 3. Classroom visits- the purpose of these sessions will be an opportunity to spend some time in the classroom with your child with a focus in a particular area e.g. reading. 4. Celebration events- assemblies or end of project celebrations.   In a future bulletin, I will give you an overview of what is happening and when for the rest of the academic year in order to give parents plenty of notice. |

I would like to reiterate my thanks to everybody who raised questions and also possible solutions. As mentioned in my first bulletin, I believe passionately in developing strong home-school links and as a result welcome all feedback, both positive and negative. If anyone would wish to talk to me further about anything before the next meeting, then I will be around most days on the playground before and after school.