



March 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

## Parent Forum

We believe in working in partnership with our parents and as a brand-new school are uniquely positioned to start building these positive relationships before the doors open.

Co-operation and support between school and home can make a real difference to how students see themselves as learners and will certainly help us all get off to a flying start!

One important element of our parent-school partnership will be our **Parent Forum**, which we would like to convene over the next few weeks.

I hope that this letter paints a picture of how our **Parent Forum** will work and that many of you will be interested in coming along to one of our meetings. If you do have any specific questions, please telephone the school directly.

### What is a Parent Forum?

Parent forums are a way for schools to encourage parents or carers to get involved in school life and support the school. They are informal groups that bring together parents, carers, school staff and members of the school community at scheduled meetings, where everyone attending can give their views about matters relating to the school community.

### What is the purpose of our Parents' Forum?

Our **Parent Forum** will provide the opportunity for us to seek and to listen to the views of parents. At our first meeting, we will be asking for your views in relation to certain aspects of our *school uniform*. We also want to give parents the opportunity to tell us about the impact of *COVID* on your families, so that we can feed this into our Year 6/7 Transition arrangements and PSHE programme.

For future meetings, the school will publish topics for discussion in advance on our website. Please note that all issues discussed will be 'general' and not related to a specific child, teacher or incident. If parents do have specific concerns about their child these should always be raised with the school privately.

### Who can attend?

I and/or other members of the School Leadership Team will attend and chair the meeting.

The **Parent Forum** will be made up of volunteer parents of children who will attend the school from September 2021 and is open to all. We would like the **Parent Forum** to reflect the diversity of the community. We hope it will include, for example, parental representation from different cultures and ethnicities; those whose child/ren have Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and from all year groups (when the school grows from 2022).

In order for the **Parent Forum** to be a constructive opportunity for open discussion, we will aim to have between **6-10 families** represented at each meeting, with **no more than one adult**



attending from a family. If more than 10 families express an interest in attending a meeting, the school will select names randomly. The school will ensure that families from all feeder schools are represented over time.

Parents who would like to attend the next forum meeting, should register their interest by emailing:

[thsl@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:thsl@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk)

### **How will I know if I have been invited to attend a meeting?**

One week before the meeting, we will send an email to interested parents asking them to confirm their attendance for that meeting. Those parents who are not invited to attend that particular meeting, will not be contacted. We will invite parents to register their interest for the next meeting once the notes from the previous meeting have been published on the website\*.

### **When and where will it take place?**

Parents' Forums will aim to meet approximately every term – one in the Spring, Summer and Autumn Terms (3 per year) and they will initially be held at Balcarras. Future dates will be published on the school website.

Our first meeting will be on **Wednesday March 17<sup>th</sup> at 4pm** in the main hall at Balcarras and will be held in line with social distance guidelines.

\*The school will write up any actions and publish them on the website after the meeting so that the whole parent community is informed.

### **What authority does Parents' Forum have?**

The **Parent Forum** is a consultative body and has no financial or statutory powers. The Governing Body remains the decision maker and provides strategic leadership. The **Parent Forum** does not arrange fundraising activities (this is the role of the PTFA), nor is it to be the interface for specific areas of concern around individual children.

### **What if I am unable to attend?**

Please do not worry if you are not able to attend a **Parent Forum** – your voice is still important. There will be regular opportunities calendared for us to seek your views and for you to ask questions about the school, not least the usual questionnaires, parents' evenings, and presentation evenings. All parents and carers should feel free to pick up the phone at any time with a query or question and we will always try and get back to you as soon as possible.

I hope that many of you will also consider joining the PTFA and help raise some valuable funds for the school to help support the activities we would like to be able to offer your children.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher

East End Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham GL53 8QF | **Headteacher:** Mrs Helen Wood BA (Hons) NPQH

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