

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School



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Wednesday 15th January 2020

RE: Parent Focus Group 2020

Dear Parents

With the start of a new year and a new decade I am really keen to improve the communication link between the school, Governors and yourselves, by creating a focus group where I am able to listen to your ideas, views and opinions in a more direct and open way. In the past we ran a very successful Parent Focus Group which proved to be extremely important and beneficial to us all. The success however, really does rely of the participation of yourselves and it will only really work if you were to get behind this initiative. I feel good communication is absolute key and necessary to ensure a good and positive relationship between us all and I really could do with your help to achieve this.

My intention for the Parent Focus Group (PFG) is to provide an opportunity to enhance communication between the parents, the school and the Governors and to create a platform:

- for parents to pose questions and get answers about the running of the school
- for parents to give their views and influence the direction of the school
- for the school and Governors to share relevant information on school policy / developments
- for the school and Governors to get feedback and views from parents

In the past, the group ran extremely well when there was a rep from each class, it was however, less successful when we attempted to run it without a class rep being present. I would therefore like to propose we aim for one parent rep from each class with the intention that they would be happy to be in this role for at least one calendar year. After the first year, at the start of each spring term we would then ask for new reps to come forward ready for them take over in the following September. Please bear in the mind it may take some time for the group to become established so I would ask for your understanding and patience whilst we find our feet setting up this new group.

I know that in the past, decisions have been made which you may not have necessarily agreed with or understood why they have been made. The main purpose of the PFG is to provide constructive feedback to the school while acting as a 'sounding board' for future decisions on school policies. Being part of this group you will be representing the parent's voice within the school to ensure any communication we send out has their views, ideas and opinions considered throughout the process and have a better understanding of how/why such decisions have been made.

Please note, the Parent Focus Group is not the forum to raise complaints or concerns about individual teachers, children or other individuals but it can be a great forum for a two-way conversation between the Headteacher and Governors and parents through parent reps. If at any point during your time at St Mary's you do have a complaint, I would ask you to please follow the school's complaint policy (<http://www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/Media/school-complaints-procedure-2.pdf>).

My suggestion is that for the first year the meetings take place on a Friday morning at drop off time in the small hall. There will be one meeting a term. The first meeting will be on Friday 13th March at 9am.

Parents, stepparents and guardians are able to stand for nomination, nominate other parents and vote in an election for parent focus group rep for the class that their child/ren are in.

I attach a sheet which you will need to use if you wish to nominate someone (please ensure you have their agreement first). Please return the nomination paper to me via the school office in an envelope marked "PFG Nomination". Closing date for receipt of nominations is 3:30pm on Friday 31st January.

I have also created a page on the school's website (www.smi.hounslow.sch.uk/helping-at-home/parent-focus-group.html) which outlines the Key Principles document to give you a clearer understanding of the role and the purpose of the group.

If you wish to be a candidate you will need to have been proposed and seconded. In the event of more than one candidate standing there will be an election in each class and I will issue all parents in that class with a Ballot Form which will give them the opportunity to vote. The counting of votes will be conducted by myself and a governor and candidates standing for election may attend the count if they wish.

I really do hope you will consider standing for this role as I am extremely interested in hearing the views and suggestions of all parents/carers at St Mary's school. Moving forward into 2020, communication and a positive relationship with you all is absolute key in making this school a happy one and the very best it can be.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'F Marsh', written in a cursive style.

F Marsh