

Parents Q&A - From Welcome Evening

Can I have your view on PE?	PE is hugely important and a real motivator for students. My first step will be to ensure that PE lessons in the school are as engaging, skills led and progressive as possible. Mr Cripps (Subject lead for PE) shares this passion and is investing in a new PE curriculum that provides staff with clear and effective planning, resources and assessment tracking to help boost the ability of all of our pupils. Another aspect to this is getting additional opportunities to boost fitness - this year we are planning a sports and fitness week in July 2020, as well as regular opportunities to engage in fitness activities - look out for some morning playground workouts coming later in the year. A final aspect of this response is to have as many opportunities as possible (without impacting on other learning) for children to take part in healthy competitions with other schools (inter-sports), squads and even within more House competitions.
Can we please have onsite after-school clubs?	This is not something I have fully considered yet and maybe an option for the future; however, we will always look out for additional providers who can offer wider diversity for after-school clubs. However, a more 'Tall Trees' type service would need careful planning and may not be possible. Also, we will continue to look at providing as much diversity from our staff run clubs as possible.
Can we have a copy of the welcome evening presentation?	Yes - certainly, the presentation has already been posted on our school website.
Can we know more about the topics being taught so we can offer support if required?	Topic overviews will certainly be made available to parents for future topics, as will a new approach to home-learning, which will give you a much deeper understanding of the topics we are teaching. Expect these from the next half term. However if you yourself have any special skills, work experience or contacts that could really benefit the school or the children's learning please pass this onto the school reception team as we would love to produce a directory of contacts allowing staff to contact you if we require your kind assistance.
Are the annual pupil awards going to change their current format?	We will certainly be reviewing all of the rewards systems and looking closely at how best to reward all of our students - this will also mean reviewing the award ceremony in its prior format.
Can we see the new behaviour policy?	Yes - the new behaviour policy needs to be fully ratified with the school governors and then it will be posted on the school website. It will also be the focus of a parental workshop planned this term. Date TBC. Additionally, many of our updated policies will be added onto the website, such as reviewed safeguarding and child protection policies.
Will more staff be training as an ELSA?	Students who might require ELSAs would be assessed on an individual basis and so answering this question is challenging. However, my plan for SEN provision is set out in an answer below.
Can we see where monetary contributions are are going?	My vision for parental funds - be it through PTA raised funds or money donated directly to the school is to utilise this either for a specific school project (e.g. development of the school library or purchasing of mobile computing equipment); investment in the school staff (see SEN vision below); or finally towards specific operational resources required at the school. In addition, the school will be raising money for a specific charity project, the student council will identify possible charities and the families of the school will help select which charity to focus our fund raisers towards. Both in terms of the charity and school fund raising we will be as transparent as possible in terms of how much we are aiming to raise and how close to this mark we are. A final aspect of note regarding parental expenditure will be to clearly mark out where school trips, fundraisers and school events are for each year group throughout the school calendar. This will allow you to plan and manage out going contributions / expenditures at the school for the whole academic year.
Could we know the vision for SEN Provision at the school?	In many ways the "normal" child does not exist any longer, perhaps they never did. Our teaching staff now need to be equipped with the widest array of skills and knowledge to understand and challenge the learning needs of our diverse student population. They need to do this for all pupils in their care and they are accountable to each pupil making progress. It is not an easy job! So, my vision for SEN provision is not one of recruiting more and more staff to 'deal' with the growing diversity in our school - this is not sustainable, financially efficient or in my opinion best practice. My vision for SEN provision is to up-skill and equip our current staff with the knowledge and skills required to really get the best from each pupil, whether they are working with them as a class, in groups or one to one. As a school we need to consider supporting the needs of our pupils in creative and engaging ways and where <i>appropriate</i> move away from the convention of constant 1:1 support. I couple this vision with a continued investment in educational research and updated resources to ensure the Priory continues to support the need of all of its children.
What is your view on in term holidays?	Children need to be in school as regularly as possible. Time off for holidays will impact on the children's learning journey and should be avoided wherever possible. Of course, children are sick and sometimes there is a very special occasion such as a family wedding - and such occasions will be regarded as authorised absence. Holidays - whilst a wonderful family (life) experience, should be limited to the school holiday dates. ALL in-term holidays will be regarded as unauthorised.
Can we have more games and playground activities?	This is something we are looking into and eventually it is my hope to have improved playground markings, more resources and games and a greater focus on the Y1 and YR playgrounds being outdoor learning and free-flow areas.
Can school council have more to do?	Yes - I am passionate about student leadership and we have a leadership focus week this week. The student leaders will have a chance to work with me for formal training in their role and on leadership skills. The House Captains and School Council will meet regularly and will have specific objectives and projects to work on.
Is there going to be a gifted and talented programme?	Gifted and Talented' is a very broad educational term and covers everything from sports to writing. Having a 'programme' would be a longer-term aim, however what is essential is to have scope to stretch and challenge pupils in all areas of the curriculum. The Maths Hub approach very much fits this philosophy with opportunities to apply and develop a student's learning on a daily basis - a 'depth' as opposed to a 'do more' approach is very much the future of the curriculum at the Priory Primary.

How do you ensure privacy and online safety?	There are two angles to this - firstly our development of the children's own awareness of online safety - which we do with explicit teaching in the children's Computing lessons. This starts in Key Stage 1 and builds throughout the age groups. As regards to the school's own use of social media - we currently have two avenues - our website and our new Instagram account. We have a strict photo permissions policy and so identifying photos of pupils will only be uploaded with parental permission. Equally the Instagram account will be carefully monitored, with limited administration through the school's leadership team. Future plans to have photos and videos being uploaded to an application that will only be able to be viewed by parents of the children and / or their class. This process will again only occur with parental permission.
Can I have your view on rewards?	School rewards should be motivational as this is the basis of the updated 'positive' behaviour policy. The children should be really encouraged to receive a school reward of any kind. Rewards should also be progressive - allowing children the chance to earn increasingly positive outcomes for making positive choices. Rewards should be applicable to all and distributed fairly. And my final view on rewards is that they should empower staff to inspire children to strive for their best - so at times rewards needs to be reviewed and updated to ensure they don't become too common-place. In this vain we will be looking to review the effectiveness of the current school reward systems over the next couple of months.
Can we buy a bigger projector screen?	Our first priority will be to ensure the projection 'screen' allows us to project on a surface more efficiently - particularly during a sunny day. Any purchases will be based on a 'what is the greatest need' priority basis.
Will we have an update on the financial situation of the school - will promises of government funding have an impact?	I think all schools are waiting to see if government financial promises will come to fruition and how this suggested increased income will balance against a proposed increased payment to staff pensions and salaries. So, in this regard - time will tell. What I do however aim to do is make parental financial contributions and PTA funds more transparent; with the school focusing on a series of development projects with funds being measured until reaching a required goal.
What are your thoughts on introducing more music into the school?	The school has already introduced an updated Musical programme (Musical Express) to help support the delivery of the Music Curriculum by staff. To further increase musical provision, we would be looking at volunteers to offer time to further develop musical opportunities at lunch or possibly via an after-school club.
Will there be an end of year celebration that everyone can enjoy?	Having discussed this with both staff and parents we are certainly looking into this for the end of the school year and it would fit into my developing the 'community of the school' philosophy.
Will the Priory Mile continue?	We won't be reintroducing the 'mile' on an every day, every class basis. But the 'mile' will be a part of the school year ahead at different points.
Are there plans for French lessons to run again?	French will be part of the curriculum for Y3 - Y6. Due to SATs focus Y6 will be shelving the weekly lessons until after the SATs, but after the tests will be having a more concentrated French language experience. More on this later. French club at lunch time no longer occurs (however Spanish is ongoing) – we will look to restart French lunchtime club if there is enough interest and if we can find a suitable adult to lead the sessions.
What is your plan for developing emotional health and for PSHE?	PSHE is an invaluable part of the school curriculum alongside all of our curriculum reviews we will consider how and what we are teaching. At the moment we are developing the philosophy of Growth Mindset, but staff will also implement circle times to discuss specific issues relevant to the class as well as how to develop their students' positivity and emotional health.
How will the Y6 students benefit from the changes you are proposing?	Many of the initial changes will indeed benefit the all students throughout this year – such as the focus on Growth Mindset, the changes to the curriculum (PE / Maths) and the updated policies (positive behaviour) – some longer term changes (such as the development of the playground) may not be ready in time for this school year. As with all change it has to be mapped carefully and strategically applied – too much change too soon can be disconcerting for all – however this being said, I hope that everyone will begin to feel the influence of positive change almost from day 1.
Growth Mindset isn't an instant change, are there some quick wins to establish the culture of growth mindset across the school and with staff?	The process of establishing a Growth Mindset culture has already begun, displays will be in every classroom and at the end of this half term we will be having a Growth Mindset and Well-being week - with specific whole school and class-based activities. Staff are involved in this culture and are not just enacting the culture. I have been really impressed with how well the children have embraced the Growth mindset culture in the short time we have introduced it at the school. This is very much due to the hard work of the staff, the willingness of the pupils and the support from yourselves.