



Inspiring everyone to **R.E.A.C.H** through  
**Faith, Hope & Love**

# Parent Forum: Agenda

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**Date and time: Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

**Attendees:** Mrs Howells, Mrs Carr (Minute taker), Mrs Wooldridge (Y6, 5 and 2), Mrs Hitchen (Y3 and 5), Mrs Connolly (Y3 and 6), Miss Pullen (Y1), Mrs Wilkins (Y1), Mrs Tyler (YR), Mrs Ind (Y1 and 4), Mrs Timbrell (Y3), Mrs Hitchings (Y1 and 3), Mrs Farrer (Y1 and 4)

## What to discuss

TOPIC TO DISCUSS	TIME
Introduction of Forum /Terms of Reference	5 minutes
Trips and Transport	20 minutes
Communication	20 minute
Suggestions for discussion at future forums	10 minutes.

## Minutes

Meeting started - best turnout we've ever had, so thank you.

Reason for forum - we want to hear your voice! Introduction on what is a parent forum. There are some things we can change out of forums and opportunities for information sharing.

Although PTA and Governors are here, it's all informal and about parental voice.

Trips and transport:

CH shared overview of what we do and why we do what we do and things that we need to take into consideration. Included class sizes, parents with multiple children/twins, rising cost of living, school ratios (generally a free adult place with 10 children – impact on smaller classes). So why cars? Example of Berkeley Castle, £12 just to go. Then with the extra coach cost it would have been £28+ per child.

Parental response: "very mixed because some parents take an afternoon off which could cost more. Maybe it needs to be a class by class and it goes to parents to decide". "Ultimately, it is a lot on the Admin Team to organise and it takes a lot of time to try and get the cars and parents sorted. Anything that can take it away from an admin office issue. It worked well when we all worked it out." (Year 4) "If you said we had a trip at the beginning of the year, and the cost could be put upfront, then we could spread it out." "Year 3 swimming cost and trip cost came out at the same time and it was quite a lot of money." "It is quite a lot to afford within a month's notice, as much notice would be helpful so I can budget for it." "Can all the things be put out upfront including the Christmas stuff (panto)"



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Panto £28 per child to go to Stroud - "I like it when it comes into school" "the children really enjoy it".

"Is there any way that the PTA can help?"

"PTA have said that we can give a donation to each year group, each year to go towards trips". This was well received.

"PTA maybe could do a donation of X amount per child to cater for different class sizes".

Skillzone £15 a child for the coach in the morning.

"What about pupil premium?"

Our pupil premium % is really low and we have a strategy for that which allocates funding to meet individual children's needs. We go to charities to support for trips.

"Can we have the costing of swimming up front?" Costs have ranged for £24-30 with the driving. With buses, looking at £100.

"Can we have a pool?" We are on a water meter so the cost isn't good!!

"Can we make it a project to have a minibus?"

"My issue is that they have car seat that isn't really suitable. The law about car seats doesn't match up with safety. And then I have to put them in my car."

"I've had a situation where another parent has said "why wasn't my child in a car seat" - when they didn't come with one and said they didn't need one."

"Parents who are offering lifts shouldn't be deciding whether they are safe with the car seats they have."

"I know you ask for business insurance but not all insurance actually covers me for driving children around"

We are following the GCC guidance - but if we ask parents to sort their own lifts, it is then the responsibility of the parents to provide safe car seats.

Discussion about swimming: The school cannot use Sport Premium to fund swimming, unless they reach Year 6 and a child cannot swim 25m – if this is the case then the funding can be used. "So it's on the NC and you don't get funding" - CH: no. In an ideal world, if we only sent those who can't swim but that is not easy to manage.

"But I pay for swimming lessons outside of school so I'm paying for it again" "but they do love it and it is very social"

"Yesterday, we pay for a 30 minute lesson but they didn't swim a lot". CH - things like this are important for us to know so we can raise it with the pool.

Back to where we started: how much would you be prepared to pay for a trip? "depends on where they are going". "If it costs about the same or less as if we went as a family, then it is ok to pay" "that's a really good way of looking at it - if the child's entry+ coach is the same as an adult ticket, that's what I would pay if I was to take them" "If they were going to go further afield, it would be understandable."

"Maidenhill borrow buses" - they won't lend anymore

Minutes continued:

"it is a shame if we said no trips." We don't want that, because of all of the value it adds for children, which is why we are trying to make it more local.

"There are loads of free things around". British Science Week we didn't go anywhere and it was all free.

Health week also. Oddizzi films. People come in as well. We try and get people into us to give these opportunities.

"Can we tap into some business funding - like Bikeability, can a business sponsor us?" Year 6 is an expensive year, so we have tried to move things around e.g. residential is now October because the cost is lower and it's more teambuilding. When we cost up trips we try to keep it £20 or less but it's all going up.

"It might be worth communicating at the start of the year, there will be one trip, the cost is likely to be max £30, we can't give you the exact cost but you can prepare then".

"Cost wise - can you say this is the minimum cost but if you are willing to donate more parents can?"

"That's a really nice idea - is there a way we can have a charity fund"

"This is the cost per child but if you can donate more, that would be appreciated".

"We do that as the PTA, we paid for 5 children to the disco" (this was paid by parents)

"Can we have a bit of a sliding scale, if you can't afford that, this is the minimum."



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"It is a bit of a risk, because you might only get the minimum"

"Does anyone come forward that they can't pay?" - Sometimes, but it, is mostly just chasing. We would rather people be honest if they can't afford it, it would save a lot of time and enable us to help sooner.

"This would need to be really carefully worded to ensure that trips don't get cancelled".

"Some people would really struggle admitting they can't afford things. But even if some parents could spend £2 more, it would help"

"Could we break down the cost for driving vs coach? If it means I could work on a Tuesday afternoon, I'd pay for the coach outright because that means I can work and not incur the costs of not working"

"If you are letting people know in advance, can you have the two break downs and then different year groups would make different decisions and we will let the school know". We did do that recently but Laura collated the responses.

"It'll only need one parent on the whatsapp group to discuss this"

"You know years ago we used to do £100 club. Could we have a similar one for transport fund that people can donate even £1 a month towards it. Maybe it subsidises"

"Could we make it a trip fund?" "And everyone contributes. We are very lucky to be here, we get a good service here so maybe we can help"

"When parents can understand the cost, so many parents don't read letters!"

"It's always on e-schools!"

Moving onto communication.

"I love the communication"

The termly letter - most nodded they read

Newsletter- "we like the subheadings so we can skim and scan" "there are bits that could be more important letters that are on the newsletter but it might have been missed" "It was the parent forum that it was happening in one newsletter, and the time was in another. Because it was new, no one knew what it was." "I miss the pictures of those who had got the certificates"

Topic web - "bulleted list as its very abstract" "Really good visual" Topic web shown. Parents will respond to what they think in term 5.

Class blog - "not checked it for few weeks". "I really like the class blog - took me a while to find out about it, I found out from another parent." "Blogs aren't updated very often"

Class page - most shook head. "If I need to look for anything, I look back on eschools."

School website - "term dates but that's it" "and out of school clubs".

Facebook/Instagram- "love them", "they are really great", if it was reel vs blog what would you do? "Reels are more interesting but the class blogs are more individual" "reels are good advertising but I would use the blog" "they are different needs - reels are a good overview, blogs are individual". Most use it on Facebook.

Teachers on the playground - "when it's about your child and the child is stood there is a bit hard, so I call instead because then little ears aren't listening" "Teachers are at the end of the day, they want to leave, what you have to say is quite important, but if you catch them at the end of the day there is a time pressure.

Especially if there are loads of parents waiting to see them." Staff have to be on the playground until 3:30pm.

"If we do see a teacher after school, there needs to be proper times because otherwise it's not fair on teacher or parents who needed that time". "We also don't want to look like we're listening in too!" Laura won't answer phones after 3:30pm so do leave a voice message or email.

"Loss of REACH time- email only?" "Email with a caveat - if you want to speak to me then do". "If they have lost REACH regularly, then we can go back and see without having to remember."

"You've already put it on CPOMS, so you could put it on email too" But they may be a delay as you hear the child's version and then it doesn't match?

"We get an app with everything in Maidenhill including behavior so we get all notifications".

"How severe was the loss of REACH time? If it is minimal- then an email would suffice"

We send out lots of communications about supporting outside things - "could we have a heading that says "external opportunity" so we can avoid it if we aren't interested" "if we are using social media, use it more on that". If we put "external advertising" this will help more!"



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AOB:

Eschools - "you were emailing us that something is going on the app" "that's just how eschools works, it sends emails and goes to the app". "Then I have to read it in 2 places!!"

"When you review the Behavior Policy is it with children who are directly affected?" yes whole school.

"I hate the reading scheme. It limits massively what they can read and I have so many books for them to read at home".

There will be an opportunity to discuss, some of these things next time

Thank you all for coming.

### Agreed actions

ACTION	BY WHOM
School will give parents an over view of planned trips for the year with an idea of costings.	CH – September 2025
Letter will include the price with coach and price if parents transport - the majority response from parents will be the transport decision.	Class teachers/admin team – from September 2025
Parents will be given the opportunity to pay more if they are able to support families who are unable to. A paragraph will be added to all trip letters.	CH/September 2025
Communication – when sending out flyers/advertising local events add 'external advertising' before the subject so that parents will know that this is not a school communication and can ignore if they want to.	Admin Team – Summer Term 2025
Eschools App – doubling up on emails too? School to investigate and feedback.	Admin team – Summer 2025
PTA to consider a contribution towards the cost of class trips	CH and PTS- September 2025

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June 9am