



## Parent Forum: Questions & Answers Bainbridge Primary School on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2025.

**Q:** Please could school leaders explain the reasons for the changes to Celebration Assemblies? Some parents feel that they have fewer opportunities to be involved with school as a result of them happening less frequently and also feel that it is a shame that Pupil of the Week and other certificates are no longer being given out.

**A:** We are very keen for parents to feel welcome at our schools and we are really pleased that we have parents who want to support and visit us. The leadership team are currently discussing ways we can facilitate that; more to follow in the very near future!

We reduced the number of Celebration Assemblies to one every half term for four reasons:

- 1. The heavy workload they were placing on staff.** All our staff work very hard and it is important to protect them from additional workload wherever possible in order to help them maintain a focus on our most important role: teaching and learning.
- 2. The impact they were having on lesson time.** The primary curriculum is very demanding, with a set amount of time that needs allocating to each subject area. It can be very challenging indeed to ensure that all subjects receive this allocated time. Our Celebration Assemblies were taking place instead of one of these lessons each week, making that even more difficult to achieve.
- 3. The pressure that a weekly Celebration Assembly can place on our working parents.** It can be very challenging for working parents to attend Celebration Assemblies every week. A half-termly one is easier to achieve.
- 4. It felt like the right time for a fresh approach.** We have been doing Celebration Assemblies in the same way for over a decade and it felt like the right time to change the format. We still have rewards and certificates but we have changed them to reflect our behaviour policy and school vision. They include:
  - Teacher postcards: these are sent home when the teacher feels very proud of a child's efforts in class. The immediate nature of these make them more meaningful and effective.
  - Class Dojo points: a Dojo point can be given by any member of staff when a child is seen upholding our school 'promises': Be Kind, Be Safe, Learn Together.



- **Class Tokens:** children can be awarded a class token which is placed in a jar in the classroom. The class as a whole can earn a class treat once they earn enough tokens.

We are very open to parent views about Celebration Assemblies and recognise that there have been some teething problems with the new style events. However, we are working hard to rectify these and parent suggestions have been very helpful with this.

**Q:** Many parents feel that Class Dojo is a positive change and are enjoying the more regular updates from their child's class. Would it be possible for school to provide a training session to help parents who aren't yet confident when using the app?

**A:** Following the parent forum, we put on two drop-in sessions for parents to learn more about Class Dojo. These took place at Bainbridge School on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm and at Askrigg School on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January at 9am. If any parents who were unable to attend these sessions would like some support, please contact the school office to make an appointment.

**Q:** Parents recognise that attendance is important but there has been an issue with children looking at the attendance information that is sent out half-termly and feeling disheartened because they haven't got 100%. This is particularly hard if they have been genuinely ill or if they have attended medical appointments. Is it necessary to send this information home?

**A:** In October, we shared information via the Newsflash about the Department for Education's updated guidance on attendance. This guidance included raised expectations of what school leaders must do to promote attendance and also tightened the rules about which absences headteachers were allowed to authorise. It was as a result of this guidance that we introduced the half-termly attendance letters for parents. In order to reduce the chances of children opening this information and feeling concerned, we will send these letters via email in future.

**Q:** Please could you provide parents with more information about the purpose and format of Parent Forums?



## The BAWB Federation : Bainbridge, Askrigg, and West Burton Primary Schools

*Inspired by the compassion of the Good Samaritan, we  
treat one another with respect and kindness,  
using courage and creativity as we grow and learn.*

Executive Headteacher: Ms Vicky Collins

**A:** Yes, certainly. Parent Forums are an opportunity for parents to become more involved in school life. The format of these varies from school to school but they are usually organised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team and are chaired by a member of staff or a parent. They are an opportunity to share views, discuss issues and to consult parents on school policies and planned changes.

To improve participation and representation in Parent Forums at our federation, we would like to take a more formal approach to these than has been the case in the past by asking for a parent representative from each class who is able to commit to a half-termly Parent Forum meeting.

If you would like to put yourself forward as a class representative, please click [here](#) to access more information and a form where you can put your name forward. Alternatively, please contact the school office to request more information.