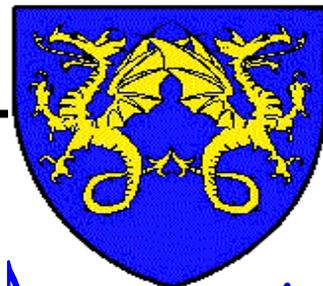


School Change Team Newsletter July 2010 (Issue 2)



Dore Primary School

Welcome to the annual **School Change Team** (SCT) Newsletter. The SCT is now in its second full year, and has become a well established forum comprising staff, parents and governors, and also seeks input from pupils. It meets three times a year and aims to evaluate the strengths and successes of the school, and also to put forward and review concerns, and areas for development.

A parent questionnaire was completed just over a year ago. This exercise highlighted the many strengths of Dore Primary School, and reflected that our children enjoy school, with the majority of parents endorsing the view that school has a strong team which delivers high quality teaching.

Development needs highlighted by parents matched many identified by the SCT and the school Senior Leadership Team, and enabled the development of what has essentially become a 'programme for review' under a number of headings or 'domains'. As with all things, some issues can be dealt with quickly, whilst others take a little more time. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of what has been achieved so far, and to give an update on areas which are still 'works in progress'.

Another questionnaire will be sent out at the start of the next academic year, to help guide further developments.

For the SCT to be effective, it needs to secure input and representation from new parent members. If anyone would like to join the team for September 2010 to 2011, please e-mail Mrs Hopkinson (headteacher@dore-pri.sheffield.sch.uk).

Existing team members should also inform school if they would like to continue on SCT for the forthcoming academic year.

SCT Dates for next year (7.15 to 9.00pm):

Monday 4th October 2010

Monday 8th November 2010

Monday 27th June 2011



We Need You !

As well as SCT, there are a number of other fantastic ways for parents to become involved in school life and activities—see below !

- **Dore Parents Association**
- **The Growing Club**
- **Walking Bus**
- **Library Support Team**
- **Lunchtime Supervision Support Team**

The support of volunteers helps the school to meet some of the aspirations highlighted by parents (and staff) for many things raised through SCT meetings. If anyone can give any time (requirements vary for each initiative and can involve just an hour or so a month) please contact Mrs Hopkinson or Mr Winson — they will put you in touch with the right people

All support is welcome and very much appreciated.

The SCT programme for review deals with issues under the following headings:

- **Enjoy and Achieve**
- **Positive Contribution**
- **Economic Well-being**
- **Keeping Safe**
- **Keeping Healthy**

Some Actions — 2009/2010

1. Keeping Healthy

- **Concern** - *The current lunch supplier offered limited choice with food sometimes running out before all children had eaten*
- **Solution** - *A school working party was convened which now meets with the meals supplier. Improvements have been considerable with a very popular sandwich option now available—this area of work will remain under review*

2. Keeping Safe

- **Concern** - *Child road safety on roads around the school*
- **Solution** - *2 crossing wardens in place. On-going contact and support with local police established. New officer starting in August*

3. Enjoy & Achieve

- **Concern** - *more information needed to help my child at home.*
- **Solution** - *More parent information sessions have been set up, including events for Maths strategies, and ICT awareness.*



Growing Club Meets the DPA!!

Many parents have mentioned the significant improvements to the school site which have been brought about with the help of initiatives from two different parent groups.

The DPA has raised an amazing amount of money through various events, including a record breaking £3000+ from the summer ball held at Whirlow Hall.

Many pieces of equipment which were identified for updating under 'Keeping Healthy' were achieved with the help of these fund raising efforts. The play area in KS1 has a new 'train' and picnic tables are now available in the grounds as requested by Dore Democrats, these were funded by the DPA. The school has also dealt with the lack of shade for the younger children, and there is now a fantastic outdoor classroom plus a sun canopy in the infant playground.

The Growing Club is reliant on parent volunteers who give up their time to help the children with gardening projects, and to undertake planting schemes, which have included a wonderful display of spring bulbs. Planters by the children were also displayed as part of this year's Dore flower festival (sponsored by the DPA). The core team is supported by parents who volunteer on an ad hoc basis. The grounds have never looked better or more productive. The children have been inspired by the great opportunities for out-door learning.

Walking Bus

The Walking Bus continues to do well, despite a lack of new volunteers, thanks to generous help from a small number of parent volunteers. School is keen to maintain and expand this initiative - so if you are able to volunteer your support please contact school so that they can discuss this



with you!!

Positive Response to Code of Conduct for Dog Owners



Some parents had raised concerns about dogs being allowed on the school site on health and safety grounds. Following a request made through SCT, the school agreed to undertake a consultation with parents about allowing dogs within the school parameters. The returns submitted were very responsible, and enabled the issue of the code of conduct for dog owners. School would like to thank all dog owners for their support, it is greatly appreciated and has allowed a workable compromise.

School Photos for January Starters

School is pleased to announce that from January 2011, arrangements will be made for the photographer to attend so that the second wave of reception children have a year photo.

Report Format Update

Parents will already have received a new and more comprehensive end of year school report. Introduction of this new format has required a significant level of input from the teaching staff, who will need to evaluate the process and the time commitment required.

This is, however, a very welcome development.

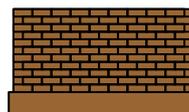


Home School Chat Books

The introduction of the Home School Chat books has been a great success. Parents have responded positively to having mid term updates and the opportunity to enter into dialogue with school through the books.

School Safety

The moving of the school fence to meet OFSTED requirements took place last



term. Security is now greatly improved and the inclusion of the wildlife garden within the fence has increased opportunities for learning, and has thankfully reduced vandalism. A 'level crossing' system has also been installed on the doors which give access to Kingswood Nursery. This ensures the safety of the children as they move around school.

Work In Progress

Keep Safe Pilot

- The School will be implementing the Keep Safe system, which is the Sheffield Council parent communication system via text messaging and emails. Information about this initiative has now been issued, and updates will be given throughout the implementation process.
- **Privacy for Parent Evenings**
The lack of private space for infant parent evenings is still under discussion. It is acknowledged that the building itself limits available privacy, and staff were not keen to move to a school hall based system. Effort has been made to ensure that the children's work is set out away from the area where the parent/teacher meetings take place, and school is keen to re-assure parents that any discussions which are potentially sensitive can be arranged separately.

School Reward Systems

- Information to staff, children and parents about the merit schemes has hopefully increased understanding of how and why merits are awarded, in order to ensure that systems are equitable and transparent. It is acknowledged that there is still some work to do to ensure consistency. Many more children this year have achieved a Gold award or beyond.

Environment

- Parents have expressed concern about the lack of toilet paper and soap in the classroom toilet areas, and this is to be addressed. It is anticipated that soap dispensers will have been installed before the end of the summer holidays.

Other New Developments

Mixing classes

The SCT supported the school's proposals to mix classes at other intervals beyond the reception year.

After full discussions with the SCT, Governors and staff in November 2008, it was decided to mix children at the end of Y1, Y3 and Y5.

It is hoped that this will give the children the opportunity to develop new friendships throughout school, and to help them develop skills which will ultimately support them in their transition from primary to secondary school.

A number of parents who were understandably anxious during the mixing process last year have reported that with hindsight the process was beneficial.

Residential programme

Each year group in the Junior School is now given an offer of an extra-curricular residential. These are a great way of learning outside the classroom and supplement curriculum learning. They build up from 2-4 days away from home.

There is also an annual weekend option at The Oakes Holiday Centre in Sheffield open to Y4, 5 and 6. (Just 4 places are left for the trip in 19th-21st October 2010). See Mrs Hopkinson if interested in attending.

Y3 Austerfield—Rocks and soils, exotic animals, star gazing and orienteering.

Y4 Oakes—RE, team building, adventure and arts and crafts.

Y5 Castleton—outdoor adventure and challenge by choice.

Y6 Stratford—Shakespeare, drama and Warwick Castle.

Finally, for those parents who are new to the school, we felt it to be appropriate to show the results of the last parent questionnaire.

Parents gave the following responses (demonstrated in order of rank value):

	Total	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
My child is stimulated and challenged in school	87	38	43	6
My child enjoys being in school	80	59	18	3
Teachers respond to poor behaviour effectively	35	1	7	27
Teachers let me know about my child's strengths and weaknesses	33	4	10	19
Pupils are treated fairly in school	26	4	9	13
Meetings between parents and teachers are helpful	21	4	5	12
Pupils respect teachers in our school	16	1	6	9
Teachers respect pupils in our school	10	1	3	6
Pupils' achievements are celebrated by the school	9	1	6	2
The school offers a good balance of extra-curricular activities	8	1	1	6
The school has shown me how I can help my child at home	7	1	3	3
Our school has a good reputation in the community	7	1	0	6
As a parent I feel welcome in school	4	0	1	3
There is a wide range of visits that support pupils' learning	3	0	2	1
School buildings are kept clean and in good order	2	1	0	1

SCHOOL CHANGE TEAM 2009/10

Parents: Wendy Ridley , Julie Turner, James Hope-Gill, Richard Wroth, Sarah Craig, Maria Holmes, Jo Smith, Andy Stratton, Anita Hine, Shamim Haan, Simon Bee, Jill Bush.

Staff : Sue Hopkinson, Abi Thorlby, Jane Farrell, Matthew Winson, Sian Granville, Marie Gleadhill, Pippa Tidy, Linda Addis

Governors: Steve Thomas, Lisa Bradshaw, Andree Reed, Mark Barratt

Last but not least, The School Change Team would like to say **“Thank You”** to everyone who has contributed their views, ideas and support. If you would like to discuss any of the changes that have taken place, raise concerns, or comment on what is working well in school, then please do not hesitate to speak to one of the SCT. There will also be a School Change Team suggestions box in the school reception area. Please post any suggestions into this for consideration by the SCT. But we ask that you supply your name so that we can clarify your suggestion if necessary and communicate what has been done as a result of your suggestion.

We would like to wish you a very relaxing summer holiday and look forward to working with some of you in the new school year.