



PR and communications newsletter (Spring 2020)

Loughton School

Around 18 months ago, Loughton School set up a working group behind the scenes. Our aim is to focus on improving our ongoing communications with our current parents, prospective parents and the wider community. This working group is made up of staff and governors with involvement and support from a senior marketing manager at a local business.

We have focused over this past year on better improving our communications with you all – our current parents – and we have many successes to share with you.

As we approach the final term of this academic year, we are now focusing our efforts on considering prospective parents who may join the Loughton School family in the year 2020-21 and are working on a very exciting project which will hopefully be revealed to you all at the end of the Summer term.

Ellie Frost

Deputy Headteacher (Acting)

On behalf of the PR and communications
working group

Improved communication with our existing families

It's widely recognised that the more interested and involved parents are in their child's education, the better their child performs at school. We are constantly working on trying to better improve our communications between school and home and have already had many successes mid-year to share with you:

- 100% of our parents have a ParentMail account and 98% of our parents use this with 86% preferring the mobile app for convenience. This is our primary way of sharing updates with you.
- This time last year, parents fed back that they did not use the website as much as other methods of communication. We are very pleased to share that we had nearly 100,000 visits to our website last term. This is an increase in traffic of 315% from Autumn 2018 to Autumn 2019. Our website has almost everything you would need to know about our school – please do explore this further if you haven't yet done so.
- 86% of our parents use MarvellousMe as a way of receiving personal, positive

updates about their child. If you have not yet signed up to receive these updates then you have probably already begun to miss out on personal messages of praise about your child such as when they are made the class VIP.

- 75 parents responded to last term's Ofsted Parentview survey and we were proud to hear that 100% of those who fed back feel like their child is safe and happy at Loughton School.
- 94.4% of parents made appointments to attend our 2019 Autumn term parents' evenings. This is an increase from our 2018 Autumn term parents' evenings where 89.6% of parents attended.
- After the success of our family open days last year, we have continued to run these termly. We had 154 family members join their children's class on our Autumn term family open day. We look forward to seeing you again for our next family open day and Sports Relief fun run on 1 April (years 3 and 4) or 2 April (years 5 and 6).
- Parents have previously reported to us that their preferred social media channel would be Facebook. We were delighted to begin using our school Facebook page more frequently this year. 295 parents/carers have already liked and are visiting our Facebook page and the updates posted during the month of January had over 500 engagements! This is a great way to share with you instant news about the events going on in our school on the day they are happening so please do find our Facebook page and like us.



We would appreciate further feedback on the following -

- We have already hosted 8 out of the 9 parent workshops on offer to you about various areas of the curriculum this year. We had a disappointing take up on the number of parents/carers who joined us for one or more of these. We would like to hear your feedback as to what workshops (if any) you would like us to host next academic year and what may make it easier or more desirable for you to attend.

Thank you for all of your ongoing support.

You've said and we've listened!

We reported to you in our headteacher's newsletter (edition #6) about the feedback we received at our first parents' evening of the year. We were overwhelmed with the number of positive comments we received about the things you thought were working well. We have been working tirelessly since then on improving anything you thought could be better.

Here are just a few changes we have made as a result of your feedback:

- You now receive information about the extra-curricular clubs on offer before the end of term giving you longer to sign your child up. We also give you advance warning for when the club bookings will go live. In addition, we no longer run 'invite only' clubs.
- You now receive more feedback via MarvellousMe. Teachers use this weekly

to share positive news about your children such as being awarded class VIP, for example. We are aware that the number of regular updates received are not yet consistent across the classes and are continuing to work on this.

- Our SENDCo, Mrs Millican, changed her working pattern from 5 half days to 3 full days in order to be more available to parents. We wrote to you at the start of the Spring term to inform you of this and how you can get hold of her. Mrs Millican is also now on the gate each Monday after school to make it easier for parents to have a quick catch up with her.
- This year, short handwriting lessons have begun to be taught daily. This takes place in the morning from 8:40-9:00am. It is really important that your children arrive to school on time so that they are not missing the chance to practise this.
- Our topic webs for parents have always been available on our website but not all of you knew how to find these. We now send these home to coincide with the termly newsletter from each year leader. You can access these at any time under the 'Teaching and Learning' tab on our website.
- Our reading records for recording home reading were revamped and sent home as a booklet to make it easier to continue recording your child's daily reading if when they have had to hand in their homework folders. Don't forget that each time evidence is seen that your child reads at home 4 times each week, they will earn a raffle ticket to put in their class jar. A ticket is pulled out half termly

and the winning child gets to choose and place an order for a book prize of their choice from our catalogues. The more raffle tickets your child earns, the more likely they are to be in with a chance of winning.

- We write to you regularly about how we are trying to tackle the ongoing parking issues. We have been liaising with lots of officials to seek their advice and support. These include our local traffic wardens, PCSOs, our local road safety officer, local councillors and even the head of the highways agencies. Cameras have gone up at the top and bottom of Bradwell Road and are being monitored by Highways England and we are in regular correspondence. We also hosted a well attended park and stide event 'Funky Feet Friday'. The impact of this is reduced traffic during drop off time. We have another initiative 'Wheels Wednesday' coming up which we will communicate with you soon. We recognise the importance to reduce congestion, air pollution and to increase safety around our school site at drop off and pick up time for the sake of our children, but we cannot do this without your help.
- We also received some feedback about how to improve our annual Sports days for this year but we are yet to host these.

If you have any further feedback, we always value hearing this. You can contact us in one of the following ways:

**Call our school office on 01908 665971
Email us at head@loughton.school**