

**Summary of the SEND forum: Tuesday 18th October 2022**

The meeting began at 2.30pm with thanks to everyone who attended, both in person and via Zoom.

First up, apologies to everyone who joined on Zoom for the poor sound quality. In future, as we hope to offer these meetings virtually and in person, we’ll make sure that any relevant slides are available, either by sending them first or making them available online...or by sharing the screen.

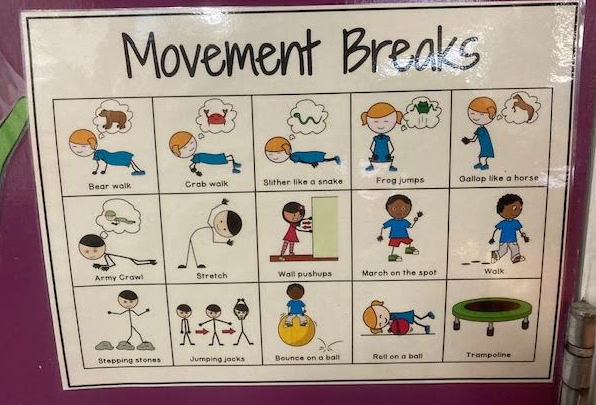
Secondly, whilst we felt that it was important to share with parents particular SEND information about our current practice, what we offer, and the context we are working in, especially for new parents, in future, as we will be making slides available prior, we can ask if there are any questions on them, before swiftly moving on to discussions informed by parents. This is the main purpose of these meetings and so more time should be given to parent voice. Perhaps this initiative can move from a forum to more of a working party, with the ongoing intent to develop practice and provision for our children.

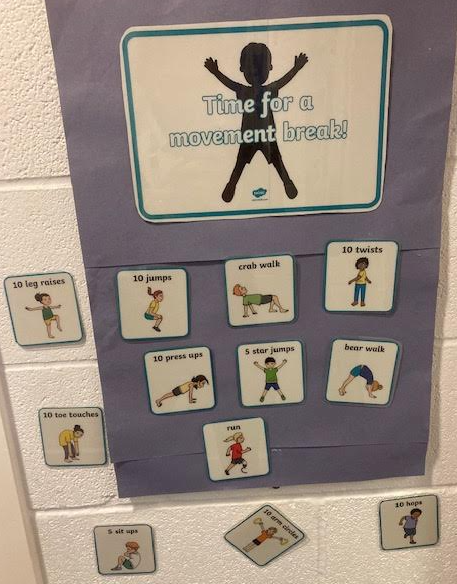
The meeting began with Mr Parker welcoming everyone and Mrs Helyar, Mrs Ball and Mrs Walker introducing themselves and their roles within Urmston Primary. Colin Mills was also in attendance in his role as a school governor and will feed back to the governing body.

Mr Parker and Mrs Helyar talked over some of the slides (probably for a bit too long on Mr Parker’s part!), but the point was made that with public services being so stretched, positive and communicative relationships between families and school is more important than ever.

There were some key items that parents wanted to discuss and whilst more time will be given in future for this, some excellent points were made. Some of these can be broached at the Wellbeing forum on 3rd November at 2.30pm.

* Resilience was discussed at length – in particular the term ‘resilience’. Everyone agreed that helping our children to be independent and determined was extremely important. However, some parents felt that the word ‘resilience’ evoked feelings of having to crack on and being really stoic regardless of the challenges or struggles. Staff present made clear that this was not how resilience was portrayed at school – it is very much for children to be inspired to try their best (their own best, not someone else’s best), and be willing to make mistakes and learn from them. It was agreed that perhaps more can be done to make that clear to children. Copied and pasted below is a ‘Resilience Framework’ that UPS will be looking into, based upon research by Hart and Blincow (2007) and adapted for our context. Thoughts on how to use this and how it might be adapted if necessary are most welcome and might also be discussed at the wellbeing forum.
* Movement breaks and neuro-diverse friendly classrooms were discussed briefly. A lot of work has gone in to this with children having the opportunities to consider ‘zones of regulation’ and how they are feeling, as well as having opportunities if needed to take movement breaks, in some cases in ‘Wiggle Zones’ (see pics below). It was stressed that should parents and children wish, school can still offer numerous resources to support pupils in class, such as wobble cushions, fidget toys, weighted blankets, etc.

* Timestables Rockstars was discussed and how the timer can cause some children to feel such pressure and anxiety that they may associate timetables recall with that feeling. It was discussed how the timer can be taken off (a parent guide is below which mentions this). However, it should also be recognised that whilst we want children to learn without pressure, there are expectations on schools to teach their children to have rapid recall of these facts and we need to support our children in this endeavour – this rapid recall is a tremendously useful skill. It was stressed that what also needs to be considered is ensuring the children don’t have too much screen time. School will discuss options here.
* Transition between year groups was discussed and how although children and staff had the opportunity to meet each other in the summer term, more could be done so that the children know that the staff know their needs. Mrs Helyar stressed that staff do handover and share information about every child, but acknowledged that we can help calm any anxieties of children (especially over the summer holidays), by facilitating more opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants, and children, to get to know one another more before the holidays. We’ll take this on board for the end of the year.
* There was then discussion about children missing break times if they don’t finish their work. Whilst we stressed that this is not common practice or something teachers want to do, we said that there may be occasions when it is appropriate. Staff are fully aware of the importance of play times, especially perhaps for children who are neuro-diverse, and the children’s needs will always be at the forefront of any decisions. It was mentioned that there are numerous considerations in terms of ensuring the children grasp concepts before moving on, as well as children further up the school realising that when they go to secondary school, detention becomes commonplace for a variety of ‘misdemeanours’ and we have to help prepare them for that change of expectation. There was a question raised by a parent on whether children who didn’t finish their work could take it home to complete. This may lead to some children thinking that if they don’t do the work in lessons, they can just do it at home (some may prefer this), and many parents would understandably question why work is needing to be done at home which has been set at school – we’re wary of adding to parents’ and children’s workload outside of school too. Whilst there are some occasions when this happens, more often than not it won’t be necessary. This might be revisited in the wellbeing forum.

The meeting ended just after 3.30pm.

Thank you to everyone who attended and for all contributions. We will be holding our Wellbeing forum next on 3rd November at 2.30pm and as mentioned where some of these issues may arise again. This will be in person but you can join via Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89805957284?pwd=YXNDZ2k3V0R2OTU2dVJsbWx5STg4Zz09>

Mrs Helyar wanted to add that she can be emailed directly at [j.helyar@urmstonprimaryschool.com](mailto:j.helyar@urmstonprimaryschool.com), as can Mr Parker at s.parker@urmstonprimaryschool.com.

Also on the 3rd November, Jo McLeod from SENDIASS (SEND Information and Support Service) will be in at 9.15 to discuss their role. This will take place in the junior hall so please attend if you feel this will be useful. You could also attend via Zoom at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87915924048?pwd=cWVOcms5ZTM3Smg3YnpRbkFISDA2Zz09>

