



Parent Voice 2016

Understanding the curriculum		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of year report • Curriculum Newsletter on topics my child will be studying, dates of events, books to read and places my child will be visiting. • Family Fridays supporting with maths, reading and phonics • Creative curriculum with fun topics to engage children, which makes learning fun. • School website has further information • Meetings with teachers 	Information about how children are progressing was shared more frequently with parents.	We are going to run a Parent Forum session to discuss how this might be possible.
	There was work provided for parents to do with children at home.	We are going to run a Parent Forum session to gather your ideas about this.
	Changes in assessment were explained to parents.	We are holding a meeting for parents in Yrs 2 and 6 to explain the changes.
	Parents were informed about how changes to the school have affected their children.	Good idea! I am going to report on this in coffee morning.
	Children didn't feel pressured by what is expected at school.	We aim to keep down the pressure we put on children whist of course wanting them to achieve their potential.
	Languages were taught for longer each week and started when children were younger.	Children have half an hour of language teaching per week from Yr 2. Children are also taught about intercultural understanding from when they join the school.
	Parents were provided with an outline on the structure of the day.	Please ask your child's class teacher if you would like to know the timetable for the class.
	Children had access to an online maths programme to practise their learning at home.	We're having a whole school focus on maths next year. We'll think about this then.

Additional support for children/ families		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Fridays are excellent. • Maths workshops explaining different methods of applying mathematics. • Reha and Verna's parenting workshops. All parents should have the opportunity to do Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities. I learnt great techniques to support my child's emotional needs. • Ingrid is fantastic with the nature club and gardening club. This is important as I don't have a garden and we learn so much together as a family. • Parents are allowed to run workshops • Parents are happy with the support children are getting from school • Additional support is provided for children who may be struggling with reading and phonics which is brilliant 	Information about how children are progressing was shared more frequently with parents.	We are going to run a Parent Forum session to discuss how this might be possible.
	There was work provided for parents to do with children at home.	We will discuss this during a Parent Forum.
	Strengthening Families course was available to all parents.	This course runs throughout Tower Hamlets. If you would like to be referred for this course, please ask Reha or Verna.
	There was more information about internet safety.	We are running a series of Family Fridays supporting parents with keeping their children safe on line.
	There were more snapshots of class information.	Twitter and the class curriculum newsletter are a good source of information.
	There were English classes for parents	There are! They are on Monday mornings.
	There were more opportunities to engage with the teacher when parents have concerns about how children are progressing.	If you have concerns about how your child is progressing, please make an appointment with your child's class teacher.

School Building/ Environment		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of Activity in playground – from creative play, climbing play, the shelter, active play. All are excellent. • Fantastic that the toilets have been improved • New reception area • New structure in playground has given children more choice and children enjoy their playtime • Adults always at the gate • The building is ok no qualms • Lots of positive changes made within the building and outside eg. School garden which has a positive impact on the entire school community 	The playground wasn't so crowded at the start and end of the day.	Unfortunately, we can't make the playground any bigger.
	There was a scooter stand so they didn't fall over.	Good idea! I'll ask school council to think about this.
	There were incentives to walk to school.	Most children already walk to school.
	There was a Safety Patrol Officer	I am looking at having a pedestrian crossing. If that's successful, we'll apply for a Safety Patrol Officer.
	There were specific areas for parents to wait at the end of the day.	I'll observe the end of the day to see if this is possible.
	There was a stage for children to perform in the playground.	Unfortunately, we don't have enough room.
	The climbing frame was safer and teachers monitored it.	The climbing frame is checked frequently to ensure it is safe and we have increased the number of adults on duty at playtime and at lunchtime.
	There was more space outside.	I agree! We try to make best use of the space available. We have also gained small bits of land outside the school such as the garden and the forest school site.
	There were more activities for children to do inside on rainy days.	We are asking school council to think about how to improve wet play. Currently, Yrs 4, 5 and 6 play board games, Yr 3 can choose to go in the library, play board games or watch a film and Yrs 1 and 2 watch a film. We have also purchased Netflix for the school so there is a greater range of things for children to watch.

Out of hours learning – clubs and activities

What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature Club – Excellent. • Gardening Club – Excellent. • Excellent after school clubs • Lots of opportunity for children. • After School Play Centre provision is high quality – now up until 5.45pm. • Children get a chance to do lots of nice activities – well priced • In an emergency and at short notice parents can access the after school play centre • Recognition and credit to Olly (extension of breakfast club and after school play centre) – for the ability to listen to parents, which is the greatest strength of the school • Forest school – provides our children direct contact with nature • All clubs are free • Parents are happy that children are learning and enjoying themselves • Many changes have been made already which are very positive and appreciated • Edible Garden linked to cooking 	<p>The library was open for parents and children before or after school. Parents happy to help.</p>	<p>We have just reopened the library on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning from 8.30. It is now run by parent volunteers.</p>
	<p>There was more support for parents with phonics, maths and spelling.</p>	<p>We are improving our Family Fridays so they target specific year groups and skills.</p>
	<p>Class teachers had a record of which children were attending clubs so they could remind them.</p>	<p>Good idea. We'll arrange it.</p>
	<p>There were clubs for younger children.</p>	<p>We currently have clubs for Yr 2 and older. Younger children attend family clubs with their parents/ carers.</p>
	<p>There swimming lessons for younger children.</p>	<p>Starting with children in Yr 4 seems to work well.</p>
	<p>There was a homework club.</p>	<p>We'll think about this when we review our approach to home learning.</p>
	<p>There was a greater variety of clubs. There are skilled parents who are available to support.</p>	<p>Parents are now volunteering to run clubs. If you would like to run a club, please speak to Heidi.</p>

Home-school communication		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twitter – fantastic to see photos of children especially when they are away on residential • Texting parents works well • Texts to tell you that your child has a letter in their bag is great • Eco friendly way of communicating • Website is good • Videos on website – maths, phonics • Topic letter ensures that we know what our children will be studying half-termly. • Hand-outs at parent workshops are informative • Text map – literacy is good – you get pictures and this helps children to be more articulate • Texting and paper communication - Brilliant! • Twitter is amazing was able to see all the children learning about a car parts. • School trips on the school website. 	There was more notice of events.	We give at least a week's notice of events and often provide a reminder close to the event.
	There were texts rather than letters.	At the moment we are sending both.
	Hand-outs from workshops were available after the event for parents who were unable to attend.	Good idea! We'll do that and put them on the website.
	There were more newsletters with information – perhaps weekly.	We think half termly newsletters are sufficient.
	All teachers were confident using Twitter.	All classes are expected to tweet on average twice a week. We are supporting those who aren't to become more confident.
	The website was up to date.	It is updated weekly!
	The Early Years Singing Assembly was at a different time so it doesn't clash with Friday prayers.	Good point. Unfortunately, this is the only time of the week Janine is free.
	The parents' notice board was improved.	We try to add any relevant information. Please let me know if there is any other information you would like displayed.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friends of Columbia Facebook great community involvement.• Happy to have no uniform, although some parents would like uniform.• Singing in assembly, parents singing with the children make us feel good inside.• Parents evening• Friends of Columbia, very active in raising money to enrich children's experience – supported by the school to keep it going, office staff allow facilities to be used for admin• Coffee morning• Newsletter very informative• Website and twitter account• Texts and letters as well as face to face		
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How welcoming is our school?		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is very welcoming – Olly is very good at being at the gate so are other members of staff • All staff are approachable and welcoming including support staff • Everyone is friendly – no problems • Olly and Heidi are welcoming, at the gate, always smiling, helpful and knowing all the children names. • Head Teacher knows children by name • Staff are welcoming – make new children/families feel welcome • Approachable staff • Warm friendly environment • If concerns are raised or children have any negative experiences staff deal with it promptly • Friends of Columbia offers good opportunity • Staff visit children at home before they start school 	<p>School Governors did a gate duty at the start or end of the day.</p>	<p>Good idea! We'll discuss this at the next governors' meeting.</p>

Getting involved in school life		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents Group – Friends of Columbia • Parents run clubs after school • Opportunity to Read with child is great • We are happy with what is available to parents in terms of helping • Happy for what is available for e.g. volunteering in reception, after school clubs, reading, singing, walking and trips. • Parents helping to set classrooms up for sessions. • Friends of Columbia • Book swap • Family Fridays • Maths workshops • Parenting workshops 	It wasn't always the same parents attending workshops.	I agree! Please encourage other parents to attend.
	Parents were allowed to come into school to talk about their jobs.	They are. Talk to your child's class teacher if you see they are doing topic which you can talk about.
	There were more frequent Family Learning Days	At the moment, we have a family learning day every two years.
	There were traditional Christmas songs at Christmas.	We sing a range of traditional and non-traditional songs at Christmas.
	All cultures were celebrated.	All cultures are celebrated in assembly and children learn about different religions in RE.
	Parents understood why we refer to Eid but not Christmas	We refer to both Eid and Christmas. We have Eid and Christmas parties and learn about both in assemblies.
	There were more regular workshops.	We have a Family Friday every week and once every half term there is a workshop after school.

Supporting children's learning and development

What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition has worked well which helps children learn better • Resident artists • Support for children with additional needs • Support for children who are underachieving 	There were more meetings between parents and teachers.	We'll discuss this at Parent Forum.
	Parents were able to stay longer during the transition period.	Teachers and parents discuss how long parents stay during the transition period. Often, children are ready to be left very quickly.
	Parents had the website explained to them.	We ran a Family Friday Workshop last term. We can repeat this workshop.
	Parents had support with maths.	This year we have run four Family Friday workshops on Maths and a Tuesday Twilight. We are planning to do two further sessions.
	On World Book Day, teachers explained to children that they should dress up as characters from a book and not a princess for instance.	Good idea! We did this before World Book Day this year.
	Children who are above average are supported to make good progress.	We monitor all children's progress and expect them all to make good progress irrespective of their starting point.
	There were more team sports and that children learn to lose gracefully.	Good idea! We'll think about how to work on this.
	There were more creative opportunities during Golden Time.	Have a look at our Twitter Feed for some examples of Golden Time at Columbia.
	The library was kept open longer.	The library is now open 8.30 – 8.55 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

School Meals/ Breakfast Club		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended hours for breakfast club – 7.45 is perfect timing • Drop in Breakfast club on offer - £1 per day • Children love it • Happy with school meals • Happy with breakfast club • School meals brilliant. And it's free which really helps. • Impressed with Tower Hamlets food - it is well sourced. • Children look forward to breakfast club which is a good sign 	School dinners were as good quality as they used to be.	Senior staff monitor the school dinners regularly. If you have a specific concern, please come and talk to me.
	There were bigger portions.	We monitor the portions at lunchtime and there is always enough for children to eat.
	School dinners hadn't become free for all as it is a drain on school funding.	Schools receive additional funding for the school meals so it doesn't cost us extra.
	Children didn't get as many sweets when someone is celebrating a birthday in their class.	Children are allowed to bring a tin or box of chocolates on their birthday. Each child is allowed one. Over the course of the year, the most any child would have is thirty chocolates.
	The co-op for groceries reopened.	Good idea! I'll look into it.
	Parents were able to come and see their children eat.	If you have a specific concern about your child's eating, please talk to their teacher.
	Children who are slow eaters were encouraged to eat their food so they are not hungry at the end of the day.	We encourage children to eat but don't force them to do so if they don't feel like it.
	There was protein for vegetarians.	On average, two vegetarian options a week include in protein. We'll try to increase this.
	Toast in breakfast club was better quality and the children didn't have coco pops.	The children do not have coco pops for breakfast.
	Children ate off plates and bowls rather than the plastic trays at lunchtime.	In order to serve all the children quickly and wash up from lunch, we need to use plastic trays. We are thinking about how we can make lunchtime more pleasant for all children.
There was a school meal taster session for parents.	During Family Learning Day, parents are able to taste the school dinners.	

Developing links with the local community		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice board to keep parents informed of what is going on around the area. • School is good at targeting parents who need help – signposting is good. • Google group year 1 very good. • Edible garden work in conjunction with community. 	Olly or Lesley visited some of the local secondary schools.	Good idea, we will.
	Parents were informed about clubs in the local area.	When we're told about clubs in the local area, we display in the lobby.
	Parents were able to link up and support each other.	This year we have started a parent led group for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. If other parents want to set up a support group, please come and talk to me.
	Parents could display things on a notice board.	They can - just ask in the office.
	Parents were able to access the parents' room.	Mostly, the parents' room is accessible at the start and end of the day.
	There were more trips to museums and places of interest.	Children go on approximately one trip every half term.
	There were more team sports and competitions within the local area.	Children who attend sports clubs often take part in competitions with other schools.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?		
What works well	Even better if	What we are going to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All parents agree that the school has a good environment • Olly has done a great job • Positive changes have been made – new toilets and new structure in playground • Very pleased about that all the points raised in the previous parents' voice meeting have been actioned and parents are thrilled with the result (eg. the garden) 	There were English and integration classes.	We run weekly ESOL classes.
	There was uniform for children.	We are not considering this.
	The school promoted recycling and not littering.	We do. Our next project is to work with the children on composting.
	There were florescent badges on children's bags.	The school book bags have a florescent strip on the side.