



Parents' Forum Minutes – Halsford Park School Tuesday 17th March 2026

Attending Staff	Claire Spencer Amanda Metters	Headteacher Admin Assistant
Parents/Carers	Rebecca Scott Alex Dewdney-Bell Michelle Lyon Rachel Bennett	EY Yr1 Yr2/5 Yr3
Apologies	Emma Pickering	

How we will be:

Non-specific (not about individual children/adults).
Respecting others' opinions.
Keep it kind.
Solution focus.
Non-Repetitive

Please note: A rep is still needed for Year 6. Please contact the school if you are interested in the role.

Meeting Started: 09.05am

1. Last minutes actions

The action points from the last meeting were reviewed.

1. Forthcoming sporting events information to be sent out at the start of each half term. **Actioned**

2. Successes of the Term

- There was positive feedback from all year groups on Steel from Gladiators visit:

“My child LOVED Steel.”

“Such a buzz having Steel come into school, my child even went into school that morning without a fuss. Well done for getting him to our school - more things like this please!”

“My child was so excited to meet Steel from the Gladiators and think about some questions he would like to ask.”

“Both mine loved the gladiator coming in and they've both been making an effort to drink more which is really good.”

“Well done and thank you to the PTA for arranging the gladiator visit as such good promotion for fitness and nutrition.”

- Mrs Spencer advised the children will all be receiving a signed Steel postcard to bring home.
- Rachel Bennett suggested other celebrities such as Ellie Simmonds (who has a class named after her) could be invited to visit the school. Michelle Lyon suggested approaching East Grinstead Hockey and Cricket clubs as many players are also in the England teams.

Early Years:

- Enjoyment of world book day.
- Enjoyable topics and good teachers.

- Staff extremely good communication and very good at arranging time to help when help is needed.
- Quite a few of the students love the amount of arts and crafts they do.

Year 1:

- Lots of love for outdoor learning.
- Lots of love for puppet making - kids really enjoyed it!

Year 3:

- The children have really enjoyed the volcano project and the seasonal art project.
- Pleased with reading progress.
- Positive praise for both teachers and support staff.

Year 4:

- Good engagement and comms from school around Hindleap trip. Flexibility around children who don't want to/can't stay overnight is appreciated.

Year 5:

- **Bikeability:** My child really enjoyed the Bikeability course held at school the other week and was very pleased with his certificate!
- Also, having had older kids do both the Bikeability levels in one week in year 6 previously, I think it makes good sense to do level 1 in year 5 now.
- **General:** My child also really enjoys show and tell.

3. AOB

- **Book Fair:** Similar to comms from school, some parents found new book fair ordering process not straightforward. There was also a lot of surprise about how expensive books were compared to buying online. Some parents said they'd prefer to buy a cheaper book and donate difference to school. *The idea was to promote a love of reading. We switched because it was proving tricky to facilitate parents coming into the school due to JAG and clubs in KS2 hall. Scholastic claimed this would be a quick and easy solution to the problem - which it wasn't. We agree that the system is confusing and can see how it would put unnecessary pressure on some people. Therefore, we have made the decision not to do the book fair next year. However, the PTA will be supporting the school with a second-hand book sale at the summer fair.* Rachel Bennett suggested asking the local rep for Usborne books if she would also like to attend.

Year 1:

- **Read Write Inc:** One parent saying they've spoken to quite a few parents and they aren't enjoying not having actual books. *This is due to the cost. We are slowly but surely buying books – with the support of the PTA so in time our books will increase. We did say in the letter if anyone is struggling to access the books online via Oxford Owl to speak to a teacher as we have a small number of black and white books. Colour books will cost £4776 (20 books of each book of each stage), whereas the black and white cost £1501.*
- Concerns from parents their children have been put in reading groups well below their abilities and losing the enthusiasm to read as it's too easy. One parent flagging that he will never pass the

assessment in class to move up a level because he rushes and doesn't stop to read properly... even though he can. The design of Read Write Inc. is for the children to read books where they are secure with the sounds and words to work on their accuracy, speed, and fluency. Any concerns re children's grouping will need to be addressed with the class teacher. The assessments are rigorous and we have quality assurance from the English Hub termly. We have spoken to parents who have raised concerns.

- Alex Dewdney-Bell commented that some parents have mentioned the screen functionality on Oxford Owl isn't great. The benefit of Oxford Owl is that we can track who is reading and follow up if needed. If you do not have a suitable device at home, please speak to the class teacher. We do have copies we can send home – signed in and out and provided with folders to keep help the books safe and clean.
- Miss Loftus has suggested holding a follow up workshop on Read Write Inc. for Year 1 parents just after the Easter holidays. This has been booked in for 2.30pm Friday 17th April with Mrs Sloane, our Phonics Champion.
- **Family Learning Conferences:** Feedback from a couple of parents saying they'd much prefer if parents evening was without kids. They don't request a private child-free appointment because they don't want to miss out on the opportunity to go through their child's books with them if it's the only opportunity. Parents have the opportunity to have a child free traditional parent evening instead of the Family Learning Conference approach. We do hold separate celebrations of learning throughout the year, or similar, child can wait outside if preferred. We believe that this is a great opportunity for the team around the child to celebrate their successes but also the child is at the centre of any improvements/ targets that need to be made. Separate meetings with parents can always be arranged should parents want to discuss anything without their child present at any time during the year.
- **Outdoor Learning:** One bit of feedback that they don't have time to get changed so taking in a spare pair of clothes doesn't make sense. A question as to whether they can do it in the morning, or after lunch instead. Children are expected to come to school wearing their outdoor learning clothes. They might only need to put on their waterproof trousers and wellies.

Year 2:

- **Homework:** Students get no feedback with homework done teachers don't seem to mark the work - the kids do the homework and work hard on it to just be put back in their bags not marked - bit deflating.
We've only seen homework book once since they were given to children. As the other parent said above, homework is always returned and sits screwed up in bags.
In line with the homework policy leaflet, homework is checked every Friday in class and the children are given dojos. The children mark their own work, sharing with children who have not completed it so that everyone sees the work and has chance to discuss it. There are also opportunities for show and tell of creative homework or extra activities the children have completed. Children share creative project assignments during the last week of the half term.

Year 3:

- **Why only one parent to fab finish?** Due to health and safety regulations we are restricted with numbers (60 children plus adults and tables). Of course, in cases of separated parents we would

absolutely make an exception. This is something different we have tried this year, we could look at a different option for a fab finish next year.

Year 5:

- **PE:** Clarifications sort regarding regularity and timings of PE lessons.
- Last week was the Friday INSET day and the week before we had Bikeability, which we explained to the children counted as their PE for that day. In terms of the timetable: Tuesday – Gym (afternoon) Friday – Cricket (morning)
- **Purple T-shirts:** Questions regarding purple T-shirts for PE from September. Which shade of purple? Can white still be worn? Purple T-shirts for PE will be introduced from September, but children will still be able to wear white T-shirts. We will have a set of purple T-shirts available for children representing the school at sporting events. Details to follow in the Summer term.
- **Lost Property:** Please can KS2 lost property be out every other Friday for parents to have a rummage now we have better weather coming (hopefully). It's not in a very accessible location to look through it at every pick up or drop off. Agreed to trial putting it put on Friday mornings (so Mr Beal can collect it back in) – Will put dates out when it will be out for collection.
- **World Book Day Vouchers:** Can we have them earlier next year as it is valid 12 Feb - 15 March and we only got them last week which has not left much time to use them. Is there a reason why we got them so late? We apologise for sending the vouchers out late, these unfortunately got mislaid, and then with the INSET on the Friday, we were not able to send out until the following Monday.
- Rebecca Scott asked how the funding for the Learning Labyrinth was going. Alex Dewdney-Bell advised the PTA are researching grants to help raise more funds.
- Rebecca also asked who is responsible for the noticeboards. Mrs Alsbury updates the school noticeboard. Alex will remind the PTA to update their noticeboard.
- Michelle Lyon asked about the Amazon wish list. Mrs Spencer advised that sensory items are most needed if anyone would like to purchase anything.

Actions

1. Arrange date for follow up Read Write Inc. workshop for Year 1 parents/carers. MS/OFFICE.
2. Lost property to be put on KS2 playground every other Friday morning. Discuss with Mr Beal. CS.
3. Look into purple PE T-shirts – shades of purple, where to purchase etc. CS/OFFICE.

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 5th May at 9.05am in the Meeting room

Upcoming Focus:

- TBC

Parent Forum dates:

Term	Halsford Park
Summer 1	05.05.26
Summer 2	23.06.26