



# FLORA NEWS



## Head's Blog

It was announced this week that 26% of places in London schools are not filled. That means schools are only receiving 74% of the budget they need. Running a school at three quarters of the expected income is creating havoc for many schools. A school with only 74% of places still requires the same amount of staff as a school which is completely full, in other words, many schools have 100% costs but only received 74% of the required income. In our local area many schools are asking for voluntary contributions from parents to address the shortfall. To me that is not a free education for every child and puts an enormous burden on parents that have suffered over the last few years from this austerity measures that have been imposed upon us all. This is not a path that Flora Gardens will take.

This week I had it confirmed that the money given to schools to support the nursery is being reduced. At the moment, Hammersmith and Fulham pay for 30 hours of childcare but from 1<sup>st</sup> April they will only fund 15 hours. Worth noting that this has been the status quo across the country for some time but Hammersmith and Fulham have managed to fund the difference from within existing budgets. For some parents that qualify, the government will top this 15 hours up, but for many it will not. To qualify for an additional 15 hours you and your partner (if you have one) have to be in work, and working a minimum 16 hours a week at at least the National minimum wage and your income cannot be over £100,000.00. On the face of it this seems good policy that supports parents that are working, however the pilots for this scheme took place in the leafy suburbs and does not transfer to the reality of life in inner cities.

We've also been given clarity about the pay rises for teachers. For as long as I can remember teachers have had pay rises frozen at 1% and all of this had to be funded from the school budget. This is below the rate of inflation and, in other words, teachers have experienced effective pay cuts. This year some teachers will receive 3.5% of which we are told 2.5% will be funded by the government. Good news you might think! However it appears the funding of this extra 2.5% is based on the number of pupils at that school and therefore those schools that are only at 74% capacity get punished again.

For many schools this is very bleak. They are being forced to merge year groups because they can't afford enough teachers. This then becomes a vicious cycle of decline - the parents withdraw their children because the education that should be offered to everyone cannot be paid for.

But I do have some very good news. At Flora Gardens our numbers on roll have gone up from **78% to 88% in the last 12 months**. This is bucking the trend that is occurring across London and is due to the incredible hard work of the marketing of the school, a reflection on the quality of teachers and leadership of the school. It is heart-warming to know that you, our parents, are spreading the word about the fine education pupils receive at this school. It would be very easy to look at the cuts in nursery funding as a disaster but I see this as an opportunity for Flora Gardens, an opportunity to give more nursery places to local families and children that make up our community. There will be no changes to the nursery offer this academic year, and from September, I will strive to find a way to offer more nursery places than the 26 full-time places we currently have. In the coming months I will be discussing with governors how we take the important steps to achieve this and I will, of course, keep parents updated on turning this financial cut into an opportunity for Flora Gardens and our community.

Difficult times but thanks to the stability of staffing at Flora Gardens, the increasing numbers and thinking outside of the box, we are navigating the stormy waters in fine style. This is a school that is on the up, is improving every term and continues to offer a friendly, family orientated environment that delivers a rounded education that prepares pupils for the next stage in their life.

Thank you for your continued support. I hope you have a wonderful weekend.

We are very sorry for all of the trouble that you have been having with making payments via Sims Agora. The system is not yet fully back up and running and we will let you know as soon as it is.



Class	Attendance
Nursery	95.4%
<i>Reception</i>	<i>100%</i>
Year 1	94%
Year 2	96%
Year 3	92.2%
Year 4	99.6%
Year 5	99.6%
Year 6	91.2%
Total	96.3%

We still have a few spaces left in some of our after school club, including taekwondo, football and dodgeball clubs.

Please see Mr Finney to book your child's place.



Miss Earley is so pleased to see so many pupils wearing jeans today and supporting such an important charity.

Thanks to your generous donations we managed to raise £150 for Genetic Disorders UK.



Early Years, KS1 and Y3 really enjoyed their drama workshops delivered by Drama4All.



Well done to Mohammed in Year 6, Yusuf and Ali B in Year 2 for being Mrs Hughes' first three pupils to earn House point money for the bank!



The PTA International celebration and quiz night will be on the evening of Friday 12<sup>th</sup> October. There will be a crèche available. Tickets will be on sale in the lead up to the event. We ask parents to share foods from around the world and we always end up with an incredible spread!



Windrush Generation: Year 6 are learning about the Windrush Generation this term. We would like pupils to speak with members of the Generation and their families. If anyone would be interested in speaking to Pupils or helping to arrange this, please speak to Mr Jones.

Choir will begin next Friday (28<sup>th</sup> September) at 8.30am in the Hall. All pupils are welcome!



The certificates for value awards will be presented in assembly the following Friday. So the pupils named below will receive their certificates on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September in assembly at 9.00am. Parents are invited to attend.

The PTA are holding a coffee morning at 9.00am on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September to raise money for Macmillan Cancer Support. Come along and have a coffee with great company. Please bring cakes/baked goods to help raise money.



The PTA will be holding their AGM (Annual General Meeting) on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September (next Friday) at 11.00am in the Library. All parents are encouraged to join the PTA and to attend this meeting. We strongly encouraged new parents to attend. If you have any questions about what the PTA do and what it might mean for you then please see Miss Kelly who will be happy to help.

**Value Award Winners!**

Nursery – Sofiya A  
 Reception – Ahmad  
 Year 1 – Maher  
 Year 2 – Cassien  
 Year 3 – Aaliyah  
 Year 4 – Jana  
 Year 5 – Nevaeh  
 Year 6 – Yasir  
 PE – Nadine Y4