Headteacher Forum – 8 October 2026

1. Purpose of the Headteacher Forum

The Headteacher Forum provides an important opportunity for parents and carers to engage directly with the school, share ideas, ask questions and contribute to discussions about the education and development of our children.
The forum provides a platform for the Headteacher to:

- Share important curriculum and school information.
- Discuss key areas of interest and focus, such as home learning and Religious Education (RE).
- Invite guest speakers to discuss relevant topics.
- Listen to the views, experiences and suggestions of parents and carers.
- Gather ideas and feedback from the parents and carers of approximately 900 children.
- Communicate the school's priorities and vision for the children.

The Headteacher emphasised that every voice matters and that the school is committed to listening to parents and considering what could be done differently or improved.
Any actions arising from the forum will be communicated through the school website.
It was also clarified that the Headteacher Forum is a communication and engagement opportunity and is separate from the school's procedures for reporting and managing pupil absence. Parents and carers were reminded to refer to the school's Attendance and Absence Policy, available on the school website.

2. Parent Engagement

Parent engagement is an important priority for Grafton Primary School.
The forum provides an opportunity for parents and carers to hear about:

- The school's priorities.
- The school's vision for pupils.
- Progress and achievements from the previous academic year.
- The areas the school will focus on during the current academic year.
- How parents can support their children's learning at home.

The school also communicates regularly through the weekly school bulletin, which is issued every Friday. Key information, data and updates are shared with families through this bulletin.

3. School Performance and Outcomes

The presentation included information about pupil attainment and progress.
Parents were reminded that attainment relates to the standards children are achieving, while progress considers the development and progress children make in relation to their starting points.
The school's latest results are showing strong outcomes above national figures, which represents a significant achievement for the school and its pupils.
Parents were encouraged to visit the school website for further information about school performance and published outcomes.
The school identified six key areas for further development, with the overall approach being:
"Strong, but even better."

The school remains committed to ensuring that every child matters and that potential barriers to learning are identified and addressed.
There is also a continued focus on professional development for teachers, supporting staff to further improve their practice and enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

4. Supporting Learning at Home
Parents were given suggestions about how they can support their children's learning when they are at home.
Parents were encouraged to:

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Use different types of questions, including **"W"** questions such as *what, why, when, where*
- Use key vocabulary and feelings words when talking with children.
- Encourage children to explain their thinking.
- Engage in meaningful conversations with children.
- Repeat important information and revisit learning regularly.
- Encourage children to remember and apply what they have learned.

The importance of repetition and retrieval was highlighted, as regularly revisiting learning helps children to remember and retain information.

5. Upcoming Parents evening' Meetings
Parents were reminded that parents' evening meetings will be taking place shortly.
Parents were encouraged to:

- Prepare questions in advance.
- Discuss their child's progress.
- Ask how they can support their child at home.
- Work in partnership with teachers to ensure children continue to make strong progress.

6. Attendance
Attendance continues to be an important priority for Grafton Primary School.
The school's expectation is that pupils should achieve at least 96% attendance.
Parents were reminded that term-time holidays can have a significant impact on attendance. Attendance below 90% is considered persistent absence and may be flagged to the Local Authority in accordance with relevant procedures.
The school highlighted that every day of absence can result in children missing important learning, including multiple learning objectives.
Parents were encouraged to understand the link between attendance, learning, progress and behaviour.

7. Behaviour and School Routines
Behaviour and routines are a particular focus for learning this term.
The school's Behaviour Policy is available on the school website and parents were encouraged to familiarise themselves with it.
Grafton Primary School has high expectations and does not accept persistent low-level disruptive behaviour. The aim is to prepare children not only for their

education but also for life beyond primary school, including understanding responsibility and consequences.
The school recognises that children make mistakes and that learning from mistakes is an important part of their development.
Parents were encouraged to:

- Support the school's expectations.
- Talk openly with their children about behaviour.
- Help children understand the consequences of their choices.
- Trust the school to support children when difficulties arise.
- Work with the school to identify what could be done differently or better.
- Encourage children to learn from mistakes and make a fresh start.

The message was that children should be given opportunities to make mistakes, reflect, learn from them and move forward positively.

8. Screen Time and Communication
The school shared concerns about the impact of excessive screen time on children's communication and social development.
The school's observations suggest that some children are spending significant amounts of time using screens and consequently may have fewer opportunities for face-to-face conversation.
Parents were encouraged to consider how they can support children to:

- Talk and communicate more.
- Share experiences with others.
- Socialise.
- Develop interpersonal skills.
- Build confidence in communicating with adults and other children.

These skills are important for successful learning and positive relationships within school.

9. Personal Development and Enrichment
Alice Carroll delivered a presentation on Personal Development and Enrichment.
The school continues to support UNICEF and its Rights Respecting Schools principles, ensuring that children understand their rights and responsibilities.
Pupils are encouraged to participate in:

- Charity work.
- Decision-making.
- School activities and initiatives.
- Voting and sharing their views.
- Opportunities to influence aspects of school life.

The importance of giving children a voice and allowing them to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting them was highlighted.

10. Healthy Schools
Grafton Primary School currently holds a Bronze Healthy Schools Award and will be working towards achieving Silver Award.
The school has listened to pupils' views about food and responded to their feedback.

Following pupil feedback, the school changed its catering provider to **Nourish**.
Children have been encouraged to share their views about the quality and variety of food provided.
Parents were encouraged to speak with their children about school meals and, where appropriate, choose meals together. This can help children to develop positive attitudes towards healthy eating and increase their enjoyment of school meals.

Packed Lunches

The school is currently reviewing packed lunches.
Where a packed lunch does not meet the school's healthy eating expectations, parents may receive a packed lunch reminder slip.
The same expectations apply to packed lunches provided for school trips.
Parents were reminded that there are alternatives to crisps which are high in salt such as veggie sticks/ hummus or veggie crisps, in line with the school's healthy eating expectations.
The school emphasised that good nutrition contributes to children's wellbeing and helps provide a positive foundation for learning each day.

11. Parent Questions and Suggestions

Parents raised a number of suggestions for future Headteacher Forums.

Statistics and Outcomes

Parents requested that further **statistics and school performance data** be shared at the next Headteacher Forum.

Comprehension and Home Learning

Parents asked whether the school could provide additional support and activities relating to comprehension and home learning for pupils in Years 3–6.

Reading Records

Parents requested further guidance and ideas about how to use reading records more effectively at home, including practical suggestions for supporting children's reading development.
These suggestions will be considered as part of the school's ongoing parent engagement and communication work.