



Parent Forum

Date | Time **28th November 2019 at 7PM**

Present

Mr Elliott (Headteacher)

Mr Davies (Deputy Headteacher)

Mrs Reed (Assistant Headteacher)

Parent Name	Gender of child	Year group of child
Clare Watkins	M	12
Melanie Hudson-Scott	M	7
Robert Bagley	M	7
Dorothy Higgins	F	11
Melanie and Mark Hill	M	10
Olivia Wilson	M	9
Erica Ash	M	7
Rebecca Howe	F F	8
Sarah Carnell	M	10
Joy Fitch	F	8
Afshin Yusrebi	F	10
Nicky Clements	F M	8 11
Amanda Bradley	M M	7 12
Nicky Loveless	F	9
Yingxi Zhuang	F	8
Roger Ollive	M	12
Michelle Wetherill	M F	8 7
Justin Wanstall	F M	10
Andrea Frisch	M	9
Tamasin Jarrott	F	9

Review of previous meeting agenda and recap of previous action points

- Student voice meetings
- Parent forum focus
- Changes within the school, interim Headteacher and Governing Body
- Teaching and Learning review-personalised curriculum and subjects added (drama and food)
- Careers
- Pixl Build Up
- Term 1 review
- Staff moral and inset day in term 1
- Parents evenings- timings and booking concerns
- Lack of homework
- Open events and successes- Saturday and Thursday event- 200-300 families
- Lack of communication
- Sixth Form- time within school and uniform
- Positive class sizes



- Fire drill concerns and improvements
- Eucharist and dedication
- Late buses
- Bike shed

Current Agenda

1) Parent Forum structure and parameters:

Important to set agenda and timings for parent forum meetings- the meeting discussed the need to be inclusive of all families and give people opportunities to attend the parent forum no matter personal circumstance. Challenges surrounding day time meetings regarding parking on school site discussed. Website as a platform for parent surveys and feedback shared as an inclusive means of giving all parents the opportunity to be a part of the forum even if more remotely. Many raised that if people ask to add items to the agenda, the meetings may become unmanageable- DE will need to oversee what is actually added to the agenda. Need representation of all school years (audit of those attending the meeting was carried out). Do we use social media to allow people to engage- meeting discussed the work required in gathering viewpoints and this becoming 'too big' a project. Agreed need to share agenda well in advance (use website more effectively to have this information shared) - all interested parties could then submit points. Plan to share parent forum meeting timetable for the complete academic year.

2) Timetable and start and finish times for the school day

DE shared the challenges surrounding this and the need to focus on this as a longer term piece of work, alongside bus companies, KCC etc. Meeting discussed the lack of after school opportunities. Meeting discussed the length of the afternoon and behavioural challenges faced by the final period of the day. RD shared the interim changes already made to the makeup of the day- bringing break earlier in response to student voice. Timetabling needs to be addressed moving forward and is an ongoing project- DE mindful of challenges with 'block' subjects such as those in KS3 are experiencing. Need to move forward with a model in which core subjects are spread out effectively over the two week timetable and practical/option subjects are given bigger blocks of learning time.

3) Website

DE shared update regarding timescale, 2 weeks until it is made available for the school with three days to then fact check before it goes live. Website will have curriculum information, exam boards, specifications etc. The website will be a powerful platform in engaging parents and improving communication. Needs to be the window in to the school.

4) Sixth Form

Discussion surrounded the decision behind uniform expectations and unease between the year 12 and 13. Parents representing these years groups felt the Sixth Form were not working together. Lots of ill feelings from Year 13s that the Year 12s brought about the uniform decisions. Year 13s moving sofa within common room to bring to 'their side'. Sixth Form now wear smart uniform on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Sixth Form open evening upcoming. Sixth Formers feeling let down by decisions that have not been followed



through- lack of kettle, unable to go home early for private study, Sixth Form fobs not working. Parents agreed need for a dress code- necessary to ensure decorum, meeting had varying views surrounding whether business dress was necessary. Self-expression was discussed. Parents shared concern that Sixth Form had been offered a more adult learning environment in which they could study from home but felt they had been met by rules. DE encouraged individual consultations if parents wished to authorise students studying from home/attending driving lessons- to ensure safeguarding and duty of care was clear. Challenge if calling the uniform 'office wear'- could this not be moved towards smart dress. Importance of student ambassadors and giving these young adults a platform and a voice as they are increasingly feeling no one is listening.

5) School buildings

Girls toilets- concerns with cleanliness of these toilets. DE shared that there is now a lock on every door and soap was in both of the dispensers. This needs constant monitoring as unfortunately students have been vandalising the facilities. The update to the boys toilet in the summer has been received well and students are taking better care of the facilities now. Hope to do similar to improve the provision for girls moving forward.

6) Results

GCSE results were below average- parents asked what we can do moving forward as parents/staff etc.

RD shared teaching and learning update:

- Completely changing teaching and learning- learning walks five times a week from all in SLT. Greater accountability placed with staff. 96 lessons visited by SLT- ability to share good practice, praise staff, observe weaker staff and offer support.
- Faculty leaders - strategic change
- Subject Improvement Plan- departments note the challenges faced in their curriculum area at GCSE/A level and then filter this down to the KS3 curriculum- road map of education towards examinations
- RD chairs middle leader meetings- weekly- metacognition and wider curriculum challenges discussed
- Student discussions surrounding their learning journey- 1:1 meetings with all year 11s- advice and discussions. Found to be highly valuable as 1:1 - will now filter down in to KS3
- Obstacles to improvement- staff absence and homework
- Homework - previous project learning in response to parent voice (2015). Parents could access the projects from home and support completion. Inconsistency of marking. Feedback from all parties said this system was ineffective. Departments now setting specific homework. Inconsistent setting. DE honest about concerns here. Show My Homework App discussed- will link to school website. January launch of this as school aware of number of changes in place, need to stagger introduction with other changes within the school. Must launch and use effectively from the outset. Allows school to ensure accountability of staff and departments regarding the delivering, marking and style of homework set. Homework must be meaningful and supplementary to the core studies in lessons. DE acknowledged shortfall and challenges regarding homework and improving this system within the school. Will be a school focus as intrinsic to teaching and learning. No homework build no study habits in KS3- concern felt by KS3 parents that their children would not be ready for independent learning at KS4. Parent fed back positive appreciation to school for the year 11 material sent home regarding revision- really useful pack. Need a realistic turn around for marking of homework- likely to be 1 week for short task, 2 weeks for more substantive project. Homework must be functional and measurable. Homework needs to be



accessible- meeting discussed the challenges some parents may face in supporting students. Some students travel a distance to reach school- this also needs to be factored in. Many parents did not wish homework to become combative and an unachievable challenge for students.

- After school year 11 tutoring- plan to deliver through external tutors- English and Maths already starting next week. Full programme from January. Focus on year 11- 'here and now'.
- New website - curriculum information. Parents can see progression in subjects. This will be a highly valuable tool to promote teaching and learning and communicate this with parents.
- 2 parent's evenings for all year groups- better spread- giving better information to parents and a more realistic picture of their child's progression
- Simplified tracking sheets currently posted- will link to the parent app in the future to ensure more effective communication
- Extra Curricular opportunities- 'Older' in style- less attractive to the students. Poor turn out as not the type of club they want. Work with student voice to ensure we are delivering as a school what the students want. Lunchtime clubs are important for engagement and academic attainment as well. Lots of social and emotional benefits.
- Parents evenings - significant changes in how we engage parents to ensure they are attending parent's evenings. Year 11 was discussed as the most current example. Head of Year phoned parents who historically had not engaged. Built rapport with parents. Attendees signed in, 80% attendance rate for Year 11- those that didn't attend were phoned by Head of Year afterwards. Staff absence is always an issue at parents evening and is unavoidable. Parents were asked to request a phone call and the meeting shared positive examples of feedback emailed/phoned to parents after a staff member had been absent at parents evening. Busy periods at parents evening lead to organisational challenges. Need to use technology and parent app booking system moving forward. Parents will then be able to select parents evening times, not being reliant on students who often 'select' who they want their parent to see.
- Sourcing technology to support independent learning at home - Educake and GCSE Pod. Maths Whizz at KS3. All of these need to be shared with parents as many in the meeting had not heard of these.
- School has acknowledged the need to start some GCSE content in year 9- especially Maths and Science where the demands of GCSE exam has increased in recent years- need more time to complete core material hence starting in year 9. School must look at the linked curriculum- ensuring that skills are embedded in KS3 and then developed towards GCSE and A Level.

Any Other Business

- Error in calendar regarding inset day - DE will honour this day for any parent who makes contact- explained that additional day of inset was added incorrectly to a year 6 in to 7 transition pack prior to his start. Similar message shared about unclear dates for the end of July. DE will happily discuss with any parent who has made bookings etc. Website will be a significant help here, however a parent newsletter will also help clarify key information moving forward.
- Year 7 disruption when having supply cover- DE shared current staffing concerns and number of staff out with long term issues which could never be planned for. This term worse due to weather and cold/flu season. Although the school have to use supply, they are not using any supply teacher seen to be ineffective. Longer term arrangements are also being considered- advert for cover supervisor being made- need to have consistency and allow students to build positive relationships with staff- this can never be achieved with high turnover of supply. Behavioural issues will always follow. School is doing all it can to minimise impact of absence on the teaching and learning of the students.



- Peripatetic music lessons - school has a number of lessons available- contact details for parent to be shared with head of music. Need to ensure we advertise the music lessons we offer moving forward.
- Thanks was shared by the parent forum to DE and the wider team for the considerable efforts made to date. Meeting acknowledged the journey the school has been on and the improvements seen in such a short time. DE thanked the meeting but shared there is still more to undertake- with behaviour, uniform and homework being tackled within the forthcoming term.
- Meeting questioned DE regarding plans for his position moving forward. DE updated the meeting on the plans to recruit a substantive Headteacher. Currently no appointments after unsuccessful recruitment drive - but adverts within local and national media. DE feels very loyal to the school, however added that the journey from Tunbridge isn't ideal when considering longer term arrangements!

Actions

- Bring data from student and parent surveys to next meeting
- Install Sixth Form kettle
- Start dialogue early between current year 11 and year 12 to ensure greater unity and decision making moving forward for next academic year for the Sixth Form
- Speak to student council to gauge viewpoint of Sixth Form expectation regarding attendance and dress as felt by lower years
- RD to enquire regarding ease of parents evening bookings via app for twins
- DE to offer individual consultations to any parent in the Sixth Form who wishes to discuss home study/driving lessons
- DE resend school calendar to whole parent body to ensure dates are correct - especially regarding end of academic year
- Compile and share parent forum meeting timetable for complete academic year (and link to website)

Date of Next Meeting | Tuesday 21 January 2020 at 7pm at The Archbishop's School.