

Notes from Parent Forum 1 – October 2019

Introduction

Parents and staff introduced themselves. Attendance was: Year 7 - 2 parents, Year 8 - 5 parents, Year 9 - 2 parents, Year 10 - 3 parents, Year 11- 5 parents, and Kate Richards, Julia Hinchliffe and Fiona Fields as staff members.

Purpose and expectations of the forum

We agreed to be respectful of others opinions, keep it brief, individual names of students and staff not to be used, be confidential, share positives and negatives.

Minutes will be emailed out and added to the website.

We will post a phone number on the school door so late arrivals can get into the building easily

Action: Send an email reminder to the group and to all parents, and the topic for discussion before the forum takes place (KR)

Topics requested to be discussed over the course of the year

1. Lunchtimes

Parents felt queuing was too long and students were not able to finish/ digest their food. Parents would like input into what we serve. Staff explained about BAM/ PFI history and we don't own the Catering outlet. It is run by Caterlink who are subcontracted to BAM, our PFI provider. Parents commented that the PFI does impact on frustrations, e.g. staffing in the kitchen will always be low as the PFI is profit making.

Some parents were concerned about the time from 12.35 to end of school on a Prep day (3.50) without access to food. Parents were also worried that on a few occasions school senior staff ended up serving food as no agency staff had turned up. An offer of volunteers from the parent body was put forward, but recognised that DBS/Food Hygiene qualifications could be an issue.

Parents were concerned that the school building is closed to students on rainy days. Staff explained that due to split lunches, some students were studying while others had lunch, so we have closed down some corridors. However, the library, assembly hall, dining hall and often the Sports Hall/Additional Lunch room are open on wet days. Parents commented that they liked the split lunches and that horizontal tutor groups have been very successful.

Parents commented that some students were not able to access toilets at lunchtime. Staff confirmed that toilets in the open corridor are available. Parents felt that some students who have a toilet pass were not able to use them.

Actions:

- a) **invite BAM into parent forum (KR)**
- b) **staff to be reminded that toilet passes must be honoured (JH)**

2. Home Learning and Revision

Parents were not clear on how homework is being set and on what platform (e.g. Hegarty Maths, Quizlet). Parents requested support and advice on electronic homework. Some parents concerned

that detentions were issued for homework not completed where a family weekend had meant it was impossible to complete the homework in the short turnaround time. Staff recommended using the Student Planner to contact the teacher and let them know there was a problem.

Electronic homework support has already been planned in for all parents at Parents Evenings. Parents requested further information to be shared via the newsletter.

Actions:

- c) Arrange for staff to provide intro to Parents Forum on electronic homework (KR)**
- d) Send out information to parents in newsletter on Quizlet, Hegarty etc. (KR)**

3. Communication

Parents really like the newsletter. Sometimes the dates on the website are out of date and don't tally. Not all people are receiving (these may be going into spam folders)? Can the newsletter be translated? Staff replied that we could advertise it is on the website so parents can use the 'translate' tool.

Settling in calls- from tutors were really appreciated and helpful.

A request that texts for detentions identified the reason for the detention. Parents would also like the opportunity to see when their children are getting 1s and 3s through the day.

Parents Evening format was much better than a few years ago. A variety of dates would be helpful if parents cannot make the one date for the year group. Parents however recognised that they could follow up through tutors and receive calls from teachers if necessary.

Actions:

- e) Amendments to Detention text to be introduced (FF)**
- f) Updates to website calendar to be reviewed with 2018-19 removed (JH)**
- g) Check on emails used to send out newsletters will be carried out (KR)**
- h) Identify if newsletter on website can be advertised with 'translate' tool if needed (JH)**

4. Extra-Curricular Events

Some parents felt their child had not been on many/any school trips. Staff confirmed that Trips was a school focus this year, and that some whole year group events would be planned into the curriculum during the year. Parents felt that sporting events are few and far between, and there is lack of clarity on which after school and before school clubs are being run.

Actions:

- i) List of Clubs running before or after school will be published in the School Newsletter (KR)**
- j) List of inter-school sports competitions we participate in to be provided for next Parent Forum (KR)**
- k) KR/parent forum to consider how events can be organised to raise money, e.g. for enrichment, trips etc.**

5. School Results

Questions around school results and when they were being finally published were raised. Staff expected the first set of results published by the Government in the next week.

A concern was raised about entering English Literature one year early at the end of year 10 and whether students were ready for it. Advice from other parents was that the experience (and outcomes) were positive.

Action:

- l) Results to be published in the next newsletter (JH)**

6. Bullying

Parents commented that although teachers deal well with bullying, supply staff are not consistent in dealing with it. Staff explained that there is a consistent policy with staff and there is ongoing training with supply staff.

End of Forum

Thank you to the Catering students for providing delicious food.

Parents requested open email group to share information

Action:

- m) KR to look at the best way to share the information via email**

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 18 December