

Notes from Virtual Parent Forum – June 2020

Introduction

Parents and staff introduced themselves. Attendance was: Year 8 - 1 parent, Y9- 1 parent, Y10- 3 parents, and Kate Richards and Beckie Shepherd as staff members. Beckie was welcomed as the new Parent Forum leader for 2020-21 as Kate will be leaving Orchard in the summer.

Topics discussed:

1. Feedback from the lockdown provision

On the whole, students and parents have felt supported and the volume of work set has been appropriate. PDF files have caused some issues for students, word documents have been easier to access. Further resources have been shared with students which has been appreciated.

The feedback that students and parents have received has been useful and crucial in maintaining motivation. Likewise, students have enjoyed receiving the house points and certificates. The newsletter has also been great at celebrating and sharing some of the fantastic work that is being completed.

Whilst parents should have had contact from the school, not all had received phone contact. KR informed the forum that tutors are phoning their tutees this and next week.

It was discussed that it would be valuable if students could be encouraged to work with their peers virtually.

Actions

- Kate R to speak to the Heads of Year about using their videos to update students on what is coming up for the year group and continue to encourage group work virtually.
- Mr Grafton to inform parents of the next steps for year 10 in terms of their English Literature course as the course has not been completed as planned.
- Where possible, staff are to upload word documents to google classroom instead of PDF.

2. Transition

Parents discussed the next steps for transition. KR informed the forum that we are unable to welcome year 6 students into the school this term but we will be phoning all students to get to know our new students. More information about the transition will be shared with parents in due course.

The forum are keen to support new parents, potentially with a virtual buddy scheme advertised through the website.

Actions

- Kate R to organise the parent clips for the transition video

- Kate R to investigate the implementation of a parent buddy system for new parents. This could include parent forum profiles on the website.

3. Forum Format

The forum format has been successful this year and is to be continued next year, with one meeting a term. It has been a real positive that Julia has been able to attend and support the forum.

The promotion of the forum is to be further considered. It would be useful if the forum has an opportunity at a parent event to meet other parents and advertise the forum, welcoming new members.

4. Pastoral Development

The development of the pastoral team was shared with the forum. We will be moving to 5 pastoral managers, with one linked to each year group. The year 7 and year 11 pastoral managers will stay with those two year groups whilst the year 8, 9 and 10 Heads of Year and Pastoral Manager will stay with the year group until the end of year 10. The forum felt that having a dedicated transition pastoral manager was particularly useful.