



PARENTS' COMMITTEE

Thursday 2 May 2019 at 6.00pm
Conference Room

MINUTES

Present:

Shahidun Begum
Jaime Beard
Rebecca Price
Karen West

Emma Bennett
Debbie Fines
Emma Gobourn
Rose Tope

Claire Reynolds
Lynsey Bolton
Katie Wilcox

Helen Newey
Richard Hutton
Rebecca Evans

Apologies

Apologies were received from Tracy Dunleavy, Alison Checketts, Caroline Hawkins, Helen Berry, Stephanie Hignell, Shelley Parkes, Lisa Watson.

Minutes of the Last Meeting & Matters Arising

KS3 Exam Timetable

KAY wished it to be noted that she had previously stated her son had 13 exams in 2.5 days not 2 days as recorded in the minutes.

Initial Year 7 Parents/Carers Evening for all Year 7 Parents/Carers

SDN has discussed this with colleagues and it has been agreed that this would remain an evening for selected students only at present. The introduction of GO4SCHOOLS and the information it can provide to parents should however help keep parents better informed from the outset of how they are settling in.

Careers

Year 10 went on their Work Experience in March. This week was moved from when it previously had taken place and has resulted in the availability of better placements for students as we are not competing with other secondary schools. Also, waiting to do this at the end of the year meant it lost some of its impetus as there was no time for reflection and follow up. We have received really good feedback from placements with regards to the conduct of our students with many glowing reports being received. Year 10 have returned a lot more mature as a result of this experience.

GO4SCHOOLS

Parents/Carers will be given access/log-in details in the Autumn Term. To start with parents/carers will be able to see the Behaviour & Progress Modules. We will gradually release further modules.

Safeguarding

As a school we have been actively raising awareness of Knife Crime. We arranged for a Knife Arch but unfortunately the Police were late on 2 occasions. Police Officers are taking to students in Years 7, 8 and 9 about this issue.

Terms Dates 2019/2020

Term Dates for 2019/2020 have now been published as requested. We will also ensure that Term Dates for 2020/2021 are published early at the start of the next academic year to assist parents/carers with planning their holiday dates.

Parent Event Turnout

The Year 11 GCSE Session was advertised via a more user friendly flyer in collaboration with Parents' Committee and we also took on board comments of Parents' Committee and invited an ex-parent and student to come in to deliver a talk. Unfortunately, there was very limited interest so the evening was cancelled. We are however going to look at cutting down what we do and try and time and pitch these sorts of events better using this new format. If there is anything else you think we can do please let Karen Otton know.

Coffee Mornings

SDN has had several successful Coffee Mornings with parents which have been very useful. These coffee mornings are to help build relationships, break down any barriers and taken on board parents' ideas and suggestions.

Lockers

SDN has looked at space for lockers. There are small spaces available but SDN was concerned it would be novelty to start off with and then they would not be used. Possibility of being for Year 11. SDN to continue to consider what the best options would be.

KS3 Exam Timetable

We are looking at changing the exam timetable.

Homework

We are monitoring homework quite carefully to see if it matches and is of the right quality. Mrs Gwinnett will be invited to the next meeting to discuss this issue.

Staffing

Mrs Poleykett, Textiles Teacher will be back in September.

Two new Science Teachers have just started; Mrs Vyse and Mr Chowdhury - both have made a good start.

Miss Cope has also been appointed as KS4 Co-ordinator to replace Mrs Windmill who is retiring. We also appointed Miss Stevens as an English Teacher. We had 18 applications for the English vacancy. As a result of the two appointments we have been able to bring class sizes down further.

We are currently looking for extra Maths & Science to bring group sizes down.

Head Teacher Update

New Behaviour System

Letters will be sent home shortly to all parents/carers informing them that we are altering our behaviour management system. 15 years ago we introduced the Red/Amber/Green Referral System. We have recently told students that no student has the right to steal another students learning which forms the basis on the new system. 96% of students never actually get a referral.

Under the new system, if a student is not following the classroom codes they will be given 1 warning. If after this they continue not to follow instruction they will be sent to the Refocus Room where they will stay for a full day. The Refocus Room will run till 4.00pm. If they go to the Refocus Room on more than 2 occasions they will start a Behaviour Management Programme.

Students will be told that this will start running after half term in order to deal with any teething problems before coming back in September. We anticipate that the Refocus Room will be busy to start with but this should improve rapidly. A lot of research has gone into this. Parents will be contacted when their child has been put into refocus. If they can't stay over that day, then they will stay the next.

Rewards

We are also improving our Reward Systems. Our Quick Notes are now running right across the school. We will also shortly be launching our new Reward Stripes which are based on our Core Values.

Building Plans

There are building plans to improve the Science corridors, girls' toilets and general classroom refurbishments.

Curriculum

We have asked all Curriculum areas to focus on something that is a weakness. Mrs Moseley has been appointed as our new Lead Teacher and has observed every member of staff. We also have a new school tag line of 'Knowledge is Strength'.

Charity Days

We currently have 4 House Charities and 4 charity days a year. It has become more about fashion statements and fancy dress so we want to refocus the students' minds on what it is really about. We are planning on having just 1 whole school charity. School Councils will discuss this in forms. We will have a totalizer that we will try and hit by the end of the year.

PTA

We are really grateful to our Parents' Committee for their feedback and support. We now also want to launch at PTA to help form a sense of community and help with fund raising for the school.

Parent Items

Discipline in the Classroom & Teacher Support, Performance, Mentoring & Monitoring

Some classes are disruptive. Even though this teacher was spoken to I am concerned it is slipping back again. The news about the Refocus Room and new behaviour system is however good to hear.

SDN informed that we are supporting staff with behaviour management and any classes where there is a problem Leadership Team are dropping in and we are aware that a consistent approach by all staff is very important. Students had become used to Red/Amber/Green Referrals. We are instigating Meet & Greet to create the right climate from the offset as students enter the classroom. There are no grudges held if a student has been sent to Refocus.

It was noted that children's behaviour is generally getting more challenging. EGN stated that results shot up at her school with military precision type behaviour expectations.

Year 10 Area for Wet Lunchtime

The Dining Hall is the allocated place for Year 10 during wet breaks but it is full of pupils already. SDN stated that it is very difficult and he understood the problem but the school was built in 1931 for less students. Each year group does have allocated areas.

Knowledge Organisers

Could we consider adopting Knowledge Organisers? They provide topic summaries and are issued at the start of each topic from Year 7 onwards. All information is very concise. These were issued at another school similar to Dormston and they saw a +0.4 increase. They were also used as the only homework given in Years 7 & 8.

SDN thought that this was a really good idea and SLT will discuss this.

GCSE Results in Envelopes

Would it be possible for GCSE Results to be in sealed envelopes to give students more privacy when collecting their results?

SDN stated he would look into this.

Parents Evening Feedback when there has been a change of Teacher

Even if a teacher has only recently arrived can we still have some feedback?

SDN stated that GO4SCHOOLS will hold data which the new teacher will be able to speak about. We will also ask HoD to make sure they make available some information that can be shared in these circumstances.

Any Other Business

Dance Showcase

Rehearsals for this are very intense and dates and times are incorrect in the letter and we are concerned that it clashes with exam week.

SDN will speak to Mrs Elliott & Miss Knight to scale this down and clarify any dates/times.

Bringing Drinks into School

Can there be some clarification on what drinks can be brought into school.

We don't allow any fizzy drinks. Staff will be emailed to clarify this.

Letters going out to parents

When we received a letter the deadline was the same day but the letter was published on the website before we received it.

Letters are uploaded to the website as soon as they are sent to print. We are trying to ensure that letters are passed on as quickly as possible. As we move towards electronic communication this should alleviate this greatly.

Reward Evening

The film choice for Rewards Evening was not very good.

SDN stated it is difficult to get something that is appealing for everybody as it is Years 7 – 9.

University Visits

Some students are feeling excluded from these depending on what population they are in. Would Year 9 not be a better time to offer these sorts of visits?

SDN informed that we select pupils for a range of reasons for trips and unfortunately we can't take all students on all trips as it is just not possible. We do offer a Year 8 Careers Day and there are lots of career related opportunities throughout the year for all students.

Unwell Students getting change for PE

PE staff ask students to get changed even if they are not well enough- why is this?

We do this so at least they can join in if they start to feel better or they can assist the teacher in other ways.

RE

We will be writing to all Year 9 parents to inform them that their child will be taking their RE GCSE in Year 10 instead of Year 11. We want all students to do RE as it is a great subject for broadening their minds and this will also free up for more time for English in Year 11

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Monday 23 September 2019 at 6.00pm.