

Parents Forum 27.02.2020

7.15 – 8.15pm

Staff in attendance: Andrew Fell, Andy Dwight, Sarah Morgan, Jack Eaves (Chair of Governors).

Agenda:

1. Follow up on parents' survey conducted in Autumn 2019. The list below is the top 10 concerns raised in the parents' survey completed in Autumn 2019.

Teaching quality: Teacher recruitment and retention; school and Trust work on securing and improving the quality of teaching. We continue to be fully staffed, but we have had some staff with long term absences. We continue to make high quality appointments including recently an NQT maternity cover for Food Technology and an outstanding appointment to replace Christie Greenacre as Extended Leader with responsibility for English.

Exam Results: Raising achievement plan with Year 11 lead by Sarah Morgan – moving features earlier in to year 10 to set expectations earlier in the course. Practice is still perhaps more inconsistent than we would like across the school. The student voice captured by Mr Dwight suggested that students felt that the work being set is set frequently but it needs to be acknowledged – marked/ built in to lessons.

Feedback: It is felt that homework could be used more effectively lower down the school to reinforce expectations. It is important that we strike the right balance between work being purposeful and it being set just for the sake of it.

School facilities, school resources, computer access, site security: IT Room 19 fully resourced, security gates installed, continued improvements around site – veranda area. There are plans to install a new astro-turf area in the summer term.

Developing Potential/ Choice of subjects: The options process has been reshaped and conversations and the process has been transparent with parents and students. The government have made it clear that there is an expectation that 60-70% of students will study MFL at the moment, moving to 90% within 3 years. This is being enforced by Ofsted inspections as they see EBACC as being at the heart of the Key Stage 4 Curriculum. We need to make sure that what we teach is taught in a way which makes it engaging and interesting to encourage students to enjoy these subjects. It has been proven that studying a language is good for cultural and intellectual development beyond just an academic achievement in the language. One of principles of our curriculum is to allow for as much personalisation within the rules in place on us as a school. We have achieved this by not blocking the subjects prior to the completion of the Options form.

Feedback: For some students, it seems unfortunate for students who are not skilled in MFL subjects that they might feel that they are missing out on an opportunity to study another subject and might not do so well in the Language subject.

School Discipline/ Control of Bullying:

Student feedback is positive that we have made changes moving in the right direction. Our new pastoral structure has supported students and parental contact has increased via the Progress and Pastoral Leaders.

We have an active anti-bullying student group who have been trained on the Diana Award.

The student voice survey on bullying was completed by every student in Y7-10 on all aspects of the school day (and travel to and from school).

We are moving towards a system which supports some of our most vulnerable students in terms of building resilience and supporting mental health issues in our students.

2. Home-school communication:

Social Media: We will be re-issuing home-school agreements following some of the recent comments on social media regarding the Coronavirus and malicious and unpleasant comments being made about individual students and the school. A large number of parents were phoned yesterday and spoken to personally by Mr Fell. Parents were in agreement that it is important that this message is sent out to all parents, and that this re-establishes the relationship and makes our expectations about comments that it is not okay to publicise. There are ways to raise legitimate concerns in a way which means that they are addressed.

J. Eaves asked whether parents felt that the Leadership team are approachable – the general consensus was that this was the easy option for parents rather than because the school is not approachable.

Parents Evenings and Reports: This will be picked up at the next Parents' Forum as we wanted to allow enough time to allow for the discussion to be had fully.

3. Any Other Business:

Setting Changes: The mid-year set changes which have happened have unsettled the students – clear communication about these would be good. Feedback from students is that they are not now being stretched by the activities within the lesson – this will be passed back to the subject leader and classroom teacher to ensure that lessons are being appropriately planned to meet the needs for all learners. We prioritise intelligent grouping in terms of population design to ensure that the dynamics of the groups meet the needs of the learners.

A. Fell: We will take this feedback back to middle leaders as we have been having in-depth conversations regarding setting, and we agree that this message should be made clear to parents and students.