

<p style="text-align: center;">Parent Voice Minutes Meeting held on Wednesday 22nd October 2017</p>
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Present:

Amanda Moffatt, Angela Rock, Christina Mathioudakis, Corinne Haywood, Cynthia Wood, Darren Lord, Filiz Zaman, Geraldine Morley, Hayley Gelkoff, Janet Allen, Jill Bowyer, Johannah McCarthy, Karen Bristow, Karen Schaverien, Karl Haywood, Kulvarn Atwal, Linda Cook, Marcella Lord, Matt Lopez-Dias, Nancy Baker, Neena Freeman, Nicky Winter, Wai Wong, Hayley Sylvester, Alison Overton, Theresa Harvey.

Present from the school:

Mr Leonard
Mrs Smith (Catering Manager)

Apologies

Angie Philips
Jacqueline Bonfield
Julie Pearce
Sarah Allen
Michelle Garvey
Ros Howe
Sera Hussein
Steven Boyle

Update on actions from last meeting:

All parents have now been refunded from the Italy trip last academic year. The schools finance team had to fight with BA but have been successful on behalf of the parents.

Mr Leonard has contacted the DFE to get information about a CCF, but is yet to hear back.

All Year 7 parents should have received an email from their child's Form Tutor before October half term. This will be completed annually from now on.

The school are developing a new contacts page on the website following parental comments.

Catering concerns:

Firstly I would like to thank Mrs Smith, the schools Catering Manager for joining the meeting and answering the questions and points raised by the parents.

In primary school it is easier to manage the process of pre-order as schools only provide pupils with one meal per day. At secondary school pupils are treated as young adults and have some choices in the food on offer. This however means that our Catering Team cooks blind every day. They do however note what food is left over and if at any time items of the menu run out so that they can adjust the amount where required.

We very rarely run out of food. Occasionally with Christmas dinner. Mr Leonard showed photographs of the previous two Tuesdays at 2pm, nearing the end of lunchtime, where the

dining room was almost empty and there was a reasonable amount of hot food left for each option available.

It was acknowledged that pupils might not get what they want but there is always hot food available, they may have to choose something different.

In terms of queuing, Year groups are rotated – there is always a member of SLT managing the queue.

A question regarding 15 minutes to eat lunch. It was noted that this is not unusual for a secondary school and unfortunately cannot be changed without extending the school day.

Recently the Catering Team have brought more halal food onto the menu.

Mrs Smith explained that she is part of the Essex cluster for catering and the schools go in and look at other schools. We won't do grab and go with pizza, panini etc. we want pupils to have a hot meal, for some it's the only meal they get. This is not necessarily the case in other schools she visits where they have cold food only.

Parents asked some questions on what happens if pupils don't eat much. It was explained that we cannot monitor every pupil as we have so many. Where we have vulnerable pupils or parents contact the school, we keep a closer eye on them; some parents explained this had happened and had been supportive. Mr Leonard explained that parents should always contact the school, in the first instance via the Form Tutor if they have any concerns.

Mrs Smith offered parents the opportunity to come and observe lunch. Should anyone wish to do so they should contact her to make an appointment.

A question was raised about a Pre pay system, Mrs Smith explained that she has investigated this but is very labour intensive and not value for money for the school.

It was noted that all catering staff are fully employed by the school.

Course Outlines

Mr Leonard explained that the course outlines on the website are up to date and meet our statutory obligations. It was also explained that that they could not be too detailed as teachers would not be able to adapt their lessons to meet the needs of their individual groups.

Mr Leonard explained that the Year 8 options booklet was not up to date as the new options were yet to be decided. There will be an assembly before Christmas for pupils and then another one with pupils and then parents after Christmas. Options evening is the 8th March 2018.

Homework

It was noted in the meeting that Year 7 homework has dropped off since the last meeting. There are still some issues but the school is aware and is taking action to address them.

Parents raised the point about project based homework and the amount it costs is a lot for parents for printing. Mr Leonard acknowledged this and said he would follow this up and ask for staff to accept work online more often.

Parents asked about pupil printing in school: Have students got an account – what is the limit for printing in school.

It was asked whether students work could be displayed on Parents Evening for that year group. Mr Leonard agreed to follow this up.

Year 11 parents explained that pupils are struggling to revise whilst still getting homework at the same time. Mr Leonard explained that he had already spoken to staff about this prior to the meeting.

Parents said that the duration for homework on SMH still only states 30 mins for the majority of subjects. Can teachers put the estimated time. Mr Leonard to follow this up with staff.

ACTION – Mr Leonard to find out how much pupils can print in school. Mr Leonard to talk to staff about receiving work online to reduce printing costs where possible. Mr Leonard to follow up regarding displaying pupils work at parent's evenings. Mr Leonard to follow up duration of homework on SMH. Mr Leonard to add buying books to the next Parents Voice agenda.

Pupil printing:

For photocopying we charge as follows –

B/W A4 5p, A3 10p

Colour A4 10p, A3 15p

The pupils get £1 per week for copying but this is for use in the Library.

Praise certificates and postcards

Mr Leonard explained that pupils wanted their parents to know how well they were doing more often which is why these postcards were brought in. Parents agreed it was a positive step forwards and liked receiving them.

Mixed ability sets

This was identified by a parent as a cause for concern as the parent felt that teachers couldn't meet everyone's needs when classes were mixed. Mr Leonard explained the following rationale:

We moved two years ago from streamed classes of ability because we felt it was having a negative impact on the progress of most of our pupils. Setting often means pupils are given a glass ceiling and cannot see what higher levels of work looks like. Educational research is very clear that streaming pupils does not support pupils progress except for the most able, and our own staff have seen greater gains in pupils learning since the new curriculum structure was put in place. Results this year show that our curriculum works and GCSE option subjects have always been mixed ability.

Question from parents – which staff are doing private tuition? Mr Leonard agreed to get a list together.

ACTION: Mr Leonard to get a list of staff who are willing to tutor students.

Aspiration Day feedback

Parent's feedback was that the meetings were very useful – HOH/SLT knew the children – gave trust, gave an opportunity to discuss how their child was doing in school.

However, although the interview bit was very good – the careers part was not as useful. Parents thought they would have more guidance and as a result the time wasn't well spent. Parents would appreciate a mini careers session or an online system to give pupils an idea of what types of jobs they might enjoy.

ACTION: the Senior Team to consider how we might adapt the process in the future.

School expansion

Mr Leonard explained where the school is in regards to the expansion. Planning permission consultation closes at the end of the month and the school will then know the final timelines for the build. Current plan is to start in April but all internal works will happen over the summer and it is only the sports hall and English block that will go on for longer, although other areas will be developed over the course of this year.

Mr Leonard explained that because of the work, the school would not be able to bid for funding to redevelop the front of school and would aim to do this the following year.

First Aid procedures when to call an ambulance

Mr Leonard explained that all first aiders in school are fully trained and have followed a two day emergency first aid qualification. The guidance given during this course and subsequently when the school has asked for clarification was: Ambulances should only be called for life threatening situations such as head injuries, major bleeds, loss of consciousness, fits that aren't stopping, severe allergic reactions etc. They went on to note that ambulances are called for too often when injuries or illnesses are not life threatening, which costs the NHS thousands and takes ambulances away from life threatening situations. A link was provided (below) should anyone wish to seek further clarification.

<https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Emergencyandurgentcareservices/Pages/responding-to-emergencies-FAQ.aspx>

Trial for Parent App

Mr Leonard asked whether parents would be interested in trialling a new app the school has purchased that we hope will improve communication between the school and home. The app is called MY Ed and can be downloaded from the app store or google play.

ACTION: Mr Leonard will put the app on the next agenda and ask for feedback.

Ms Lord – Parent Governor

Spoke to say that she had been to a Governors Meeting the previous evening and the Leadership Team had given presentations about various things. She noted that their passion was amazing in talking about the children and she felt fortunate that her son attended West Hatch.

I would once again like to thank everyone for their time and feedback, it is extremely useful to receive both positive and negative feedback and I hope parents can see how their input has an impact on the school in so many ways.

I would like to remind parents that when we send out for items for the agenda a deadline is put on the email. Any items that are sent in after this deadline won't be addressed at the meeting. The deadline enables the school to prepare and ensures agendas are not too long so that the meeting is a reasonable length.

The next Parent Voice meeting is calendared for: **Wednesday 24th January 2018**

I look forward to seeing you all there

Mr D Leonard

Headteacher