

## **Parent Voice Minutes**

### **Meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**Present:** Angie Philips, Christina Mathioudakis, Darren Lord, Filiz Zaman, Geraldine Morley, Hayley Gelkoff, Hayley Sylvester, Janet Allen, Jill Bowyer, Johannah McCarthy, Kully Patel, Julie Pearce, Karen Schaverien, Kulvarn Atwal, Linda Cook, Marcella Lord, Nancy Baker, Neena Freeman, Ros Howe, Sera Hussein, Valentina Nicolaou, and Wai Wong.

#### **Present from the School:**

Mr Leonard

#### **Apologies**

Alison Overton  
Angela Rock  
Corinne and Karl Haywood  
Cynthia Wood  
Gerry Hanley  
Helen Dawes  
Jacqueline Bonfield  
Justine Davey  
Karen Bristow  
Katie King  
Sarah Allen  
Matt Clarke  
Michelle Garvey  
Michelle Richards  
Mikala Rutherford  
Nicky Winter  
Steven Boyle  
Tracy Hughes

- **Trips going live on Parentpay**

Mr Leonard requested that the finance office provide a time on the letters when the trips will go live to support the parents in planning their day.

- **Clubs being cancelled at short notice - Shooting Stars, Drama and Dance**

Mr Leonard will be raising this point with Heads of Department at our next meeting after half term to organise a better system for letting parents know. Unfortunately sometimes this is unavoidable but ICT is open each evening except Friday and the library is generally available if pupils need to remain in School.

- **Staff who will tutor**

The following staff have said they are available to tutor students:

- Mrs Potter (English) [admin@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@westhatch.essex.sch.uk) (FAO H Potter)
- Ms Gambino (Spanish) [egambino@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:egambino@westhatch.essex.sch.uk)
- Mrs Butt (Maths) [sbutt@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:sbutt@westhatch.essex.sch.uk)
- Ms Lowry (Geography) [nlowry@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:nlowry@westhatch.essex.sch.uk)
- Mr Nicholls (History) [pnicholls@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:pnicholls@westhatch.essex.sch.uk)
- Mr Bell (Drama) [nbell@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:nbell@westhatch.essex.sch.uk)
- Miss Khanom (Computing) [fkhanom@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:fkhanom@westhatch.essex.sch.uk)

- **P.E Department**

Mr Leonard will ensure that the PE department send the timetable for activities prior to the Term ending so that parents can be prepared for the first day back after the half terms.

- **Information regarding timings for concert and shows etc.**

This will be published on all HT newsletters from now on and updated on the website.

- **Website**

Mr Langton asked for parents who would be willing to join a working party to support the School in improving the website. Thank you to those parents who volunteered. Mr Langton will be in touch.

- **Homework**

Mr Sinfield gave a presentation regarding the recent parent survey on homework. Thank you to those parents who completed the survey it was extremely valuable and Mr Sinfield has compiled a document which picked out the relevant issues raised from it. (document attached). We explained that we are now using this information to plan how to improve homework processes from September.

**Action:** Mr Leonard to put homework on a later Parent Voice agenda to feedback on progress towards a new school system for homework.

- **Purchasing books**

Mr Leonard provided parents with a letter from the Association of Headteachers in Essex which outlined the financial constraints that all schools were facing currently. It was explained that some schools are also charging for extracurricular activities but that is not a route the school plans to follow. It was asked whether parents could donate books back to the school and a process for this will be considered. Pupils will always be provided books during lessons and they would only need to purchase books if they wish to take them home and annotate them.

**Action:** Mr Leonard to consider a process for recycling books when pupils finish.

- **Parent APP feedback**

Feedback was very positive regarding the app and the school will now expand its use across all year groups. Thank you to the parents who tested the app for the School. It was noted that the app can be downloaded on an iPad as well as a phone.

**Action:** Mr Leonard to advertise the app within the next Headteachers newsletter.

- **Expansion update/ lunch time trial**

Mr Leonard explained that we are currently running a trial for pupils to use classrooms during lunch so that they can be warm and dry during inclement weather. Mr Leonard asked parents to talk to their children and ask them to ensure they treat the classrooms respectfully and leave them as they were found as we will have to close them again if they cannot be taught in during P5.

- **School Fund**

Discussions were had regarding the school fund and how we can engage parents to contribute. Marcella Lord asked whether parents would be willing to set up a group to find ways to fund raise. It was suggested letting parents and pupils know what we were raising money for would support the school in receiving more donations.

**Action:** Parents to email [parentvoice@westhatch.essex.sch.uk](mailto:parentvoice@westhatch.essex.sch.uk) if they are interested in being part of the fund raising group.

Mr Leonard to get more detail regarding payment amounts historically and at other schools.

- **Sixth Form Curriculum**

Mr Leonard provided parents with a breakdown of the School Curriculum and information regarding BTEC and vocational qualifications and their use in getting into University. Most Universities accept the BTEC qualifications Extended, Diploma and Extended Certificate (Single Award) – Business, ICT, Sport and Dance. The school has had a number of pupils go to University with these qualifications. For the vast majority of courses, BTECs are part of the entry criteria and Universities do accept them. There are only a very few Russell Groups that do not accept BTEC for subjects like Medicine, Dentistry, Vet Science. The UCAS website gives all the details of the courses and gives all the entry requirements.

- **English letter regarding grades.**

We discussed the letter sent to Year 11 parents regarding the grades provided to pupils following their PPE's. Mr Leonard acknowledged that the change in grades could be upsetting for pupils and apologised for this, however the school would prefer to be open and honest with parents and pupils and the predicted grades for pupils had not changed. There was an incorrect formula used on one of the spreadsheets which inflated the marks for one exam. This has now been addressed for future PPE's.

- **RS Lesson topics**

It was raised that some topics being taught in Religious Studies were causing distress to some pupils, particularly the content of certain videos. It was also noted however by parents that the topics discussed were part of real life and important for pupils to consider and discuss. Mr Leonard explained that the school follows the national curriculum as set out by the Government for Religious Education.

**Action:** Mr Leonard to follow up with the RS department and propose a way in which parents can be better informed of the curriculum.

- **Supply Teachers**

A query was raised regarding the use of supply teachers. Mr Leonard explained that the school employs 3 cover supervisors who take the majority of lessons when teachers are absent but that teaching staff are legally not allowed to participate in cover and therefore when events are taking place or teachers are absent, we sometimes have to employ supply teachers from agencies. The school is working hard to minimise the amount of disruption to school and therefore reduce cover and this is the reason why the Gilwell Trip had to be stopped for Year 7's last year for example.

- **Appointment system for Yr. 8 Parents' Evening on 22 Feb**

This will be run as usual. It is the Year 7 Parents Evening that will be the trial for the 'no appointments' system.

Thank you once again for your contribution and support this evening. The next parents Voice meeting will take place on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018.