

Notes from the Parents Voice Meeting held on Wednesday 9th March 2016 at 7pm in the Main School Library

Parents Present:

Janet Allen
Jill Bowyer
Linda Cook
Justine Davey
Neena Freeman
Diane Fundell
Sera Hussein
Angie Phillips
Matt Lopez-Dias
Valentina Nicolaou
Vanessa Poynter
Sally Skipper
Cynthia Wood

Apologies

Ambika Pindoria

WH Staff Present:

Frances Howarth

Minutes of Previous Meeting

Live Careers Library - **Action:** Mr Towsey, our Careers Co-ordinator, to organise a letter whereby we can invite parents to share with us their career path to date which may be of interest to students. Where possible we will also ask if they would be happy to be on the end of the phone/email if students wanted to find out more.

Mr Towsey does this with alumni - ex pupils - some of whom have already been into school to talk to students, in particular in the Sixth Form.

Healthy Schools Re-designation

We have been successful in achieving re-designation of this National Award. This covers a whole range of areas of school life e.g. Pupil Voice, drugs and alcohol awareness, making the right choices, healthy lifestyles and food, safety and personal responsibility. The school will be receiving the Award mid-March.

Work Experience Placements Follow Up

Where new placements are found by current students - if the work experience is good these companies/settings will be asked if they would be happy to have West Hatch students the following year.

Action: Mrs Muscatt to arrange.

Selection of Students for Certain Events

Mrs Howarth explained a number are 'open' to all in a class/Year group - some target Gifted and Talented students, some of those who need a lift in terms of their motivation or engagement. Some are for excellent effort as in the group who went recently to the "We" day at Wembley Arena.

Year 12 University Preparation Information

A summary sheet regarding events, information and opportunities has been circulated. An evening for parents took place prior to the Parents Voice meeting.

Feedback was given by a parent who attended and found it informative and helpful.

Closing down the Account and use of Monies

The account will be closed. This does not preclude fundraising in the future.

£2,917 is left to date. Initially £800 will be spent on the drugs day and evening session for parents. The remainder will be allocated. Areas the school would welcome support in are a contribution towards the future drop down days for students on important areas relating to their personal safety, awareness and development and several sets of new football goals for the fields.

Action: This will be tabled at the next meeting.

Drugs Information Evening

This will now take place on 21st April, 5.30-7.30pm and will follow sessions during the day for all students in Year 10, 11 and 12.

Some parents asked if something appropriate could also be provided for those in Years 7, 8 and 9. FH explained that a considerable amount is done via the subjects across the school and Year groups but she is very happy to look into this following the above day.

Action: FH to pursue.

Review of the School Day, Timings Lunch and Form Period

FH explained, as promised, that we were conducting a whole school review of our current arrangements. Staff had been

consulted - students had fed their feedback to our Head Boy and Girl.

Parents were presented with 4 options:

Option 1: to remain as we are.

Option 2: whole school on lunch for 40 minutes. Form time/assembly 20 minutes following break time

Option 3: Retain split lunch time. 3 Houses first lunch for 40 minutes then 20 minutes form time/assembly

Option 4: 20 minutes form/assembly at the start of the day with a 45 minute lunch time.

Parents, after considerable debate, opted for the current arrangements.

Action: FH to feed this into the wider discussions.

Update regarding Pupil Projects/Successes

- 'First Give' Project - Year 8s are presenting to guests and a panel of judges on Thursday 17th March at 7.15pm. The finalists will be talking about the charity they have researched in the hope they are successful in winning one of 3 prizes (£1,500 in total) to use for a charity of their choice. This is national funding given to West Hatch for this purpose.
- Speak Out Jack Petchey - 30 Year 9 students received training for a day on the Art of Public Speaking. 6 finalists went before a panel of judges and two have been selected to represent the school at a regional final.

The standard was exceptional and students gained much from the event.

- Performing Art Students Performance of Cats - FH reported that this was an excellent performance with students excelling. .
- Year 7 Pupils are District Champions in Football
- Dance Show - FH advertised the dates: Tuesday 22nd, Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th March and encouraged parents to book tickets and attend.

Concern regarding Parental Awareness of Some Pupil Behaviour outside School

FH expressed her concern that some pupils may not be keeping the best of company outside school. Along with other schools we are fully aware of the pressures facing young people today in connection with alcohol and drugs.

FH asked parents to be wary of sleepovers, not leaving pupils alone in the house if they are having a party, she highlighted that it's good to check their children when they return for any visible signs that may indicate their involvement in the above. The evenings Drugs Information session will be useful in raising parents awareness.

School Photos

Parents were keen for the school to trial a new photo company which offered the facility to pay online.

Action: FH to inform Mrs Muscatt.

Other Issues

Request for more information regarding the Year 8 "First Give" project as parents had

not realised it was a comprehensive piece of work over a number of weeks.

Action: FH to discuss with Mrs Bowman.

Intervention

Parents would welcome being informed when intervention classes are on across all subjects so they can encourage and check up that their sons/daughters are attending where needed.

Year 11s

Some concern was expressed about how some students are feeling in the final run up to exams.

FH explained we have a programme of support for those who are suffering anxiety. FH will talk to all staff to be aware and to reduce the amount of stress we may be creating. FH to speak at full staff Briefing.

Promoting Parents Voice

A request was made that we look to extend the Parents Voice group, advertising more widely when the meetings are taking place.

Action: FH to follow through on this.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

We have 58 students preparing for the Bronze Award and have plans to link up with Chigwell Independent School for the Gold Award in the future.

Action: FH to pass on to parents the details of external centres that offer the Gold where students can register and take the award for this year.

Borneo

Parents were interested to know how much of the amount students have to raise goes directly to the company themselves.

Action: FH to investigate.

Gilwell and Activities Week

Some parents enquired as to why this had not taken place. FH explained we were looking into a day at an outdoor centre, Lambourne End, in the summer. Likewise, a parent enquired as to whether Activities Week was running this year. FH explained we did not have plans for this year but would reconsider in some format for next year.

She explained there will be a number of trips going out in the last week but it won't be everyone off timetable.

FH thanked everyone for their attendance.

Next Meeting

Wednesday 11th May at 7pm. Please note this has been changed from Wednesday 4th May as originally set at the beginning of the year as FH is unfortunately not now available.