

**Notes from the Parents Voice Meeting
held on Thursday 28th January 2016
at 7pm in the Main School Library**

Parents Present:

Janet Allen
Jill Bowyer
Steve Boyle
Linda Cook
Diane Fundell
Theresa Harvey
Sera Hussein
Matt Lopez-Dias
Christina Mathioudaki
Amanda Moffatt
Ambika Pindoria
Vanessa Poynter
Sally Skipper
Angie Stephens

Apologies

Sarah Allen
Helen Dawes
Colette Fitch
Jenny Fortag
Neena Freeman
Kim Pelaria
Cynthia Wood

WH Staff Present:

Frances Howarth

Minutes from previous meeting on 23rd November 2015.

1. Update regarding the fence at Luxborough Lane - TRANSCO the Gas Company with the installation at this location have agreed to repair it.

2. Parents Evening Timings - Year 7

Parents felt the present arrangement meant it was too long before they had the opportunity to talk to staff.

They have requested the following which FH will pursue further.

During the first term the Form Tutor emails home/calls and gives the following information on the four Year 7s they have in their class - general overview regarding how they are settling in, general comments regarding ease of friendships, happiness and enjoyment of school - any comments that are needed following Progress Check 1.

They have requested that the Parents Evening falls within the Spring term if possible before half term. **Action:** FH to pursue.

3. Revision Timetables

A request has been made to customise these so they aligned more closely to the West Hatch day timings. Mr Sinfield agreed to do this. We need however, to use up the supply already run off for Year 11, 12 and 13 students.

4. Emails Sent Directly to Admin Email Address

This has been checked for reliability and is working well.

5. Live Careers Library

Action: FH to discuss further with Mr Towsey (Careers Co-ordinator) and SLT regarding the concept and information collection proposal of explaining to parents we are keen to have short accounts of how parents 'got into' their current careers, professions, jobs/trades.

Parents would be asked to generate a short summary regarding:

- What I do for a living
- How did I get into it
- What I particularly enjoy/what are the benefits and pitfalls of working in this sector.
- Are you willing to be available if a student wants to get in touch to ask further questions?

In addition, we will explore the possibility of doing the same with alumni. **Action:** FH.

6. Epping Forest Careers Festival

Good feedback given - we will ensure good notice is given in the future.

Updates re e-Safety

Assembly and sessions in school recently on updates regarding e-Safety have focused on:

1. How information posted on the internet can affect their future opportunities.
2. Students were made aware that everything they or anyone else posts about them online becomes part of a public online "presence" known as a digital footprint.
3. This can impact on admission to university/future jobs and employment.

Two equally good candidates some companies go to digital footprints to assist with the selection process.

4. Told about strategies for shaping a positive online presence.
5. Their digital footprint - information becomes public and can be viewed by a large invisible audience as information can be copied and passed on.
6. Discussions followed regarding how they can be responsible digital citizens by being mindful regarding what they post about others too.
7. They were also spoken to about over sharing online and the potential risks in sharing inappropriate information.

1. Texting private information that then gets passed on.
2. An example was given in a school where a boy used an assumed name/username not his, writing about his life in a blog, someone realised who he was, a friend told his parents who confronted/told the boy's real parents. The boy felt they had been reading his blog and got very upset.
3. Posting revealing photos of themselves without considering the consequences.
4. Understanding that privacy settings are not infallible, understanding the consequences of posting provocative photos online.

Others can see and comment.

Hard to take photos down once up.

Pictures can go viral and can be very embarrassing.

Advice to Parents

1. Parents need to be very vigilant and aware of their children's use of photo sharing, social media apps like Instagram and apps like Snapchat - also photo sharing apps which can be used for bullying.

2. Need also to be very careful with who they are sharing images of themselves with and careful about the content of those images.

Healthy Schools Award & Health Champions

We are going for re validation - our moderation day is on Friday 5th February. The award looks for good practice across a whole number of areas notably:

- The priority we give to promoting Health and Wellbeing
- E-Safety training
- How we help students to keep safe, physically and emotionally in relationships, drugs, alcohol etc
- How we provide opportunities for physical activity and extra curricular activity
- Good PSEC programme with drop down and themed days: personal safety, sexual health, drugs awareness, crime
- Involvement of outside agencies
- Making good choices understanding risky and unsafe situations
- How we offer a range of support to help: counselling, peer mentors, mentors
- Careers guidance
- Staff wellbeing
- Food and nutrition education in Food Technology
- Body Image
- Mental Health
- Food provision - accommodating special diets
- Halal food - eating environment
- Student Voice activities

As Part as House Responsibilities

We have Youth Health Champions. Pupils had to apply. They have received 2 days training and will be promoting health related issues

leading on campaigns. Three projects: Body Image, Mental Health and Fitness (boot camp, inter house event)

Blazers for Year 11 in 2017

Good discussion covered the benefits of going back to blazers for Year 11. These included:

- Makes sense as Year 7-10 and Sixth Form are all expected to have one.
- Gives students somewhere to store their belongings.
- Parents felt it was smarter,
- The issue of cost was discussed - many felt a new one is bought in Year 10 anyway which could see them through Year 11.

A suggestion was made - should students be consulted? **Action:** FH to explore with the Student Council initially. A solution could be that they still are allowed to wear the Year 11 black jumper to denote they are the senior students in the main school but wear their blazer as well.

Careers Provision Update

Mrs Howarth outlined the programme to date as attached.

In addition, the following are being planned for next year.

- Further links with employers in addition to the Rotary and Work Experience contact are being explored.
- Increased links with our Job Centre.
- New activities to promote women in 'STEM'. Careers and guidance - Science, Technology (IT), English and Maths related careers.

- Increased numbers of visiting speakers with some focusing on entrepreneurial skills and how to start a business.
- Drawing together of all the school's careers advice and guidance work and present for the Careers Quality Mark 'ROQUA'.

Big Bang - Careers Event

Some students had attended this - the feedback had been mixed. Some aspects had not been that inspiring. **Action:** FH to discuss with Mr Towsey.

House Competitions

Parents were asked for any ideas they had that could contribute to the competition calendar. The following suggestions were made:

Science/Engineering - building a go-kart and testing it. One entry per House.

House Challenges - students being given a set amount of materials and they have to produce something i.e. the Rollercoaster Challenge made out of newspaper that had to have a ball travelling down it (occurred at Gilwell)

Highest tower using marshmallows and spaghetti.

Refreshment Rota

| Date | Event | Time | Parent Voice Members |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Thursday 4 th February | Year 8 Parents Evening | 4pm- 7pm | Cynthia Wood, Helen Osborn |
| Thursday 25 th February | Year 9 Parents Evening | 4pm- 7pm | Helen Osborn |
| Thursday 10 th March | Year 9 Options | 7pm- 9pm | Helen Osborn |

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|------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Evening | | |
| Thursday 14 th April | Year 7 Parents Evening | 4pm- 7pm | Helen Osborn |

Thanks to all those parents who have helped out. The above dates need covering. Please can you let me now if you are able to help out to fhowarth@westhatch.essex.sch.uk

Work Experience

Parents asked if a proforma could be issued once the placement had finished asking if they would take West Hatch student in the future. **Action:** FH to see Mrs Muscatt.

Questions for Parents

They are aware there are a number of trips and visits on occasions are organised for small numbers of students. They would like to know on what basis students are selected.

Action: FH to pursue.

Year 12 University Preparation

A request was made for more advance information regarding this - also that this be made available to parents of Year 11 students too. **Action:** FH to contact Mr Green who co-ordinates this and to disseminate to Parents Voice.

Parents Focus Evenings

Parents were interested in a drugs information evening to increase their knowledge and awareness regarding signs, symptoms and behaviours to be aware of. **Action:** FH to explore and organise.

Next Meeting

Wednesday 9th March 2016 at 7pm.