

2nd December 2020

Dear Parent

Parent Forum Meeting

Thank you for expressing an interest in joining our Parent Forum.

The Parent Forum is an additional space that will provide the academy's parents/carers with the opportunity to feedback on school provision, offer a parent/carer perspective on current policy and share ideas about future projects. We have also created a dedicated **Parent Forum** section (see this [link](#)) on our website, where we plan to publish agendas, minutes and news about the forum's work.

From the survey, the most popular date and time were: Thursday at 5pm – 6pm. We will of course review this to ensure attendance remains high.

Therefore, I am delighted to invite you to a pre-meeting on **Thursday 17th December at 4.30pm**, where we will informally discuss our Terms of Reference, how the meetings will operate and the first meeting's agenda.

According to the survey, the rank order of items to discuss are:

1. Student and staff welfare
2. Blended learning and the use of MS Teams
3. Student achievement, eg. how the school is supporting students to 'catch-up' or examination preparation
4. Curriculum updates
5. Communication and operational procedures, eg. Covid-19, fire drills, etc
6. View on academy policies: homework, rewards and behaviour, etc
7. After school clubs and enrichment activities
8. School trips and events
9. Parents Evenings and events

Please find attached an agenda for the upcoming pre-meeting. If you have any additional items, please email parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk. It would be great if you could join us to support this important work and meet other parents/carers, Cheryl Greyson (who will be representing the Board of Governors) and members of the senior leadership team.

As the meetings will be on Microsoft Teams, Ms Cobb or Ms Dodsley will be in touch prior at a convenient time to conduct a technical test to ensure you can access the meetings.

I have also attached a copy of the Parent Forum Terms of Reference, which you can also access on our website.

We look forward to seeing you on the 17th December at 4.30pm.

Yours sincerely



Andy Christoforou
Headteacher

Enc.
Agenda
Terms of Reference

Parent Forum Meeting Agenda

Thursday 17th December 2020
4.30pm – 5.30pm

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Parent Forum Terms of Reference
3. Appointment of Chair of Parent Forum
4. Appointment of Clerk
5. First date and meeting's agenda item(s)
6. AOB

Abbey College Parent Forum

Once a half term parents/carers of Abbey College get together with some of the senior staff and governors to discuss their concerns. This important forum gives parents a voice and answers to some challenging question.

The academy's Parent Forum aims to represent the views of all parents/carers and to be a voice to inform the academy of the needs of children and families. It will facilitate regular communication and consultation between parents/carers, staff and the Governing Body. The forum works to provide feedback on school provision, to offer a parent's perspective on current policy and practice and to allow input into decision making and planning for the future.

General Terms

- The group shall be known as the Parent Forum.
- Only parents/carers of students currently attending Abbey College can be members. All parents/carers are eligible and welcome and will be referred to in minutes and other documentation as parents/carers.
- The group is not a committee of the Academy Trust and, as such, the Academy Trust does not propose to delegate any of their powers to the Parent Forum. The group is a working group formed under 3.6.1 of the Scheme of Delegation and its role is to be a voice to inform the Academy Trust Board and the Local Advisory Body of the parental viewpoint.
- All parents/carers are welcome to attend any or all of the meetings during the year.

The objectives of the Parent Forum are:

- To promote partnership between the school, its pupils, and all its parents.
- To actively identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the College, and other matters affecting the education and welfare of its pupils.
- To work closely with the Governing Body and School Leadership Team to ensure an open and beneficial dialogue exists.
- To encourage closer links between home and school, helping Parents and Carers engage with their children's learning.
- To assist Governors, teachers and staff by commenting on new initiatives, drawing attention to areas of concern and contributing to solutions.
- To develop and disseminate ideas that improve the life at School.

Protocol for the Parents' Forum

- The forum is open to parents/carers of all children who attend the school. It is desirable that the Forum reflect the diversity of the community, for example parental representation from the Armed Forces, all Year Groups, different cultures and ethnicities, gifted and talented and SEN etc.
- Meetings will be led by school staff and governors, usually by the Head/Deputy Headteacher and the Parent Governor Representatives.

- The meeting will be chaired by the Head/Deputy Headteacher or a Governor.
- The forum will be an opportunity for open discussion according to a pre-published agenda which will be published on the school's website prior to the meeting.
- Dates of future meetings and the minutes of past meetings will be available on the school website.
- The Forum is an advisory body and has no financial or statutory powers.
- The Clerk will minute take at meetings and will support with other administration tasks such as circulating minutes, writing news articles and updating the website. Anyone interested in joining the Parent Forum should email parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk
- All issues, even if raised on behalf of other parents/carers, should be general issues, not related to a specific child, teacher or incident.
- Any specific concerns should be raised with the students form tutor in the first instance.
- All participants must remain courteous.
- The meeting must not be recorded.
- Comments can be sent to parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk prior to the meeting if preferred or participants are unable to join.

Scope

Specific feedback and suggestions for improvement of:

- communication and operational procedures, eg. Covid-19
- student and staff welfare
- new Initiatives
- curriculum updates
- student achievement
- rewards and sanctions
- parking and safe routes to school
- parents' events
- school trips and events
- catering
- after school clubs and enrichment activities
- views on academy policies when they are updated e.g. Behaviour/Homework

Out of Scope

Items relating to specific students, specific parents/carers or individual academy staff which should be discussed one to one with the relevant teacher, senior leader or Headteacher as appropriate.

Forum Officers

Chair and Clerk are to be agreed annually at the first meeting of the Autumn Term.

Quorum

There is no maximum or minimum number needed. Decision making/voting is not currently part of the Parent Forum remit.

Meetings

To be held half termly: Thursdays 4.30pm on MS Teams. Dates always be agreed at the last meeting and clearly communicated to all parents on meeting minutes and on the website.

Structure of meeting to be:

- A main theme of discussion per meeting decided upon at the meeting before.
- Also there will be room for Any Other Business. Any other business must be e-mailed to parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk by 1pm on the day of the meeting so the head teacher can prepare any paperwork that may be required.
- Meetings are expected to last no longer than one hour.
- Extraordinary meetings can be called if required at the request of the Head teacher or assigned Governors.

Agendas/Minutes

The agenda for each meeting is to be drawn up by the Chair, following consultation with members and the Head.

Agenda to be issued to everyone by email at least 1 week before the relevant meeting.

Minutes: Will convey content and outcomes of meeting but not identify individual views. Minutes are to be circulated, where possible, within 2 weeks of a meeting and will be sent to all parents in the school. A copy of the minutes will be published on the school website.

Evaluation of the Parent Forum

It is important to ensure that the Parent Forum is working for the benefit of parents/carers and the academy. In order to do this, from time to time the Parent Forum will evaluate to what extent it is meeting its objectives, what benefits and impacts it is having and what might need to be improved or made more effective. The academy may wish to review the structure or remit of the Parent Forum depending on the outcome of the evaluation.

Evaluation against the Parent Forum objectives will take place via Survey Monkey using the following methods:

- A post meeting email will be sent to request each attendee complete a brief meeting evaluation
- An annual evaluation of the Parent Forum against the objectives

Parent Forum Ground Rules

Below are a set of ground rules by which the Parent Forum will conduct its meetings:

Attendees will switch off their mobile phones whilst attending the meeting.

- We will stick to the agreed time frame for the meetings.
- One person will speak at a time.
- We will respect each other's opinions and agree to disagree at times.
- Contributions should be delivered in a positive and constructive manner, even when challenging or difficult issues are being discussed.

Communication

A dedicated forum email address will be made available to all parents to send any thoughts to. The email address is parentforum@abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk and will be checked regularly by the Clerk.

A Parent Forum page on the school website (<https://www.abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk/parents-carers/parent-forum>) is available for information and discussions, rather than using social media.

The Parent Forum will not be a place for parents to raise personal issues and concerns. Complaints involving pupils or families will not be discussed. If you have a personal concern please contact the school directly, as we can deal with the issues more quickly for you and your child.

Attendance by Forum members at school events, e.g. new parents' evenings and during parent consultations would be a good way to gain wider parental views and recruit new members.