

Abbey College, Ramsey - Parent Forum
Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 26th January 2021, 4.30pm

1. Welcome

All were welcomed and introduced themselves. The following were present:

Andy Christoforou (ACH) – Headteacher
Sarah Noble (SN) – Assistant Headteacher
Kate Wibberley (KW) – Assistant Headteacher
Cheryl Greyson (CG) – Chair
Katie Dodsley (KD) – Clerk
Amanda Bakewell (AB)
Catherine Lilley (CL)
Zara Matthews (ZM)
Sarah Whalley (SW)

The parent forum survey outcomes were circulated prior to the meeting and themes were discussed under the items on the agenda.

2. Uniform Supply

The issues are:

- When there was a shop in Ramsey, the previous owners had a lot of stock and good relationship with suppliers. The current supplier does not seem to manage stock or orders.
- The change in uniform, as well as change in ownership of the shop, resulted in longer delays and it being harder to obtain items.
- There are issues with customer service in the shop in St Ives and there were a lot of Facebook comments over the summer about lack of communication and appalling customer service. A parent noted that they had never been spoken to badly and there were Covid related issues this years.
- The shop insists on orders being placed by a certain time in the summer but this isn't always appropriate for families to budget and children growing.
- The negativity felt towards the uniform supplier could impact the school.
- It is not easy to access uniform, especially as the shop is now in St Ives.
- Some of the new uniform items are embroidered and can't be bought at other places.

Suggestions for improvement were:

- Multiple suppliers, such as an online supplier. The school is investigating and it is likely that there will be another, online, provider offered. It is hoped that there will be a second supplier in place for the summer and there will be an opportunity for them to come to school for a transition activity.
- Pop up shops at school or market stalls in town to provide local opportunities for trying uniform on. It is unlikely that a shop will open in Ramsey but there might be opportunities for suppliers to come to school for open events. It was useful to have the supplier at the open evening so that items could be tried on and ordered. An online supplier would need a good returns policy, allowing for items to be tried and returned.
- Generic unbranded items (rather than embroidered) that can be purchased from any shop and are more affordable.
- Recycling – the school uniform shop does offer second hand uniform and families are asked to donate items to the school when students leave year 11 which are used for disadvantaged students through the Welfare team, as needed. It was discussed that parents could be asked to donate items more regularly but this would increase supply and demand. A financial contribution could be asked for, if affordable, raising funds for the disadvantaged group.

There is currently one member of staff who deals with the second hand uniform, including washing it, and storage space is minimal so consideration would have to be given to increasing uniform donations in school. It was suggested that a Facebook page is set up for swapping/donating/ buying second hand items.

Action: KW/ACH to explore Facebook page for recycling uniform.

- A supplier that allows for budgeting and buying through the summer holidays. This will be discussed with the supplier.

3. Student Welfare

The following issues were raised and discussed:

Bullying clarification – There will be a peer mediation system introduced to enable students to help each other. There is a lot of time spent on friendship issues and this will help individuals resolve issues and move forward. Communication will be sent to parents about this. The Social Studies programme is comprehensive and a half termly newsletter may be created to show students and parents what is being done. Some issues are pandemic related and there was a lot of work carried out with the students after the first lockdown to help them reintegrate. **Action:** ACH to add items, such as tips for parents to support their children with issues, to newsletters.

Rewards for online work – staff have been asked to give out Spirit points, there are the Headteacher commendations, Community Spirit awards and postcards sent home to recognise students efforts. Live teaching has helped with contact with teachers.

Lunchtime - it has been suggested that lunchtime is moved earlier to fit family life during lock down. This is feasible and parents could be asked to vote on their preferred time.

Parental engagement with surveys has been good this term.

Action: ACH to run a parent survey about lunchtimes and ensure surveys can be responded to more than once.

Action: CG to create a 'you said...we did...' item for the weekly newsletter to show what the Parent Forum is doing.

2 hour detentions and mental health – these were introduced as a next step to the one hour detentions. They have had a significant impact on behaviour and they work as a deterrent. The school is aware of students with mental health or welfare concerns and alternative locations are used as necessary depending on individual's needs. It is important that parents know the positive impact of the 2 hour detentions which are benefitting students.

Bus behaviour – Generally, behaviour is good on busses. When children are in school and an issue is raised it is investigated. R Askoolum is looking at introducing bus buddies and sixth former monitors. The bus companies are LA appointed, and where there are regular drivers, positive relationships are developed. The LA has a system in place using warning letters and there are cameras on the buses.

Masks on buses – this is impossible for the school to monitor, but the school ensures the students are wearing masks when they leave and students know the expectations.

Parents noted thanks to the school for dealing with welfare issues with a caring approach and for putting the effort into live lessons as they keep students engaged and focussed.

4. Fundraising

SW has offered to support with fundraising. Ideas to fundraise for are:

- 200 Easter eggs for the disadvantaged students.
- IT support for new Y7s and/or disadvantaged students who would be disadvantaged by Covid. It was asked if there are any local companies who could support the school by cleaning up unused donated laptops to be reused. People may be able to donate old laptops

rather than cash. The school's IT department have refurbished some in the past and could potentially do more.

Action: SW to consider fundraising ideas.

5. Items for the next Agenda

- Getting children back into school and reintegrating them into school life.
- Support for Year 6's into Y7.

Action: Clerk to ask L Mann to attend the next meeting to talk about transition and D Neal to talk about reintegration into school life.

6. AOB

Thanks were noted to all for sharing and contributing.

7. Date of the next meeting: Thursday 25th February 2021, 4.30pm