

Abbey College, Ramsey - Parent Forum
Minutes of the meeting held Thursday 27th May 2021, 4.30pm

1. Welcome

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

Andy Christoforou (ACH) – Headteacher

Sarah Noble (SN) - AHT

Ben Pugh (BP) – Head of PE

Cheryl Greyson (CG) – Chair

Katie Dodsley (KD) – Clerk

Claire Eeley (CE)

Zara Matthews (ZM)

Amanda Bakewell (AB) - apologies

Catherine Lilley (CL) - apologies

2. Minutes from the meeting on 29th April 2021

The minutes from the meeting on 29th April were agreed.

Matters arising

- a) **Action:** Jessica Davey to contact ZM about Arts Mark with Ramsey Rural Museum.
- b) SN noted that CPD for equality will take place at the beginning of September.
- c) Gender biased sports - BP noted that a student voice survey was carried out with KS3 to see what activities they would like to do next term. The survey is still open and results will be reviewed at the next departmental meeting. Y7 girls have said that they would like to start a girls football team.
- d) School uniform – CG has chased the Indoor Market for a contract and they are finding space for a uniform stall. Sports equipment such as football boots and clothing will be included.
- e) CG noted that she has been speaking to the new vicar who is experienced in mindfulness in children and he is keen to build links with the community and may therefore like to come into school to help with some mindfulness work.

3. PE – Ben Pugh

a) When PE resumes in full, what plans do you have for extra-curricular clubs? BP reported that some clubs have started over the last few weeks. Monday is tennis and rounders, Tuesday is table tennis and hockey and Wednesday is netball. These were chosen because of weather, time and what has been restarted in lessons and the students enjoyed. There were 73 girls and boys at the first netball session and 30 at table tennis. Fixtures started this week with work with J Warne to ensure safety. The school has decided not to join district fixtures which involves several schools, but the school is participating in some individual fixtures. **Q** – will there be a dance club? It would be by Jessica Davey as the PE department doesn't have experience in dance. **Q** – is there a single page listing all clubs? There is one on the Instagram page and BP will circulate this.

b) Will there be an equitable offer for girls, eg. Rugby, football? Yes and boys and girls went to the netball club. **Q** – how is an equitable offer managed for girls in curriculum time? Students feel comfier with other students of a similar level and they are grouped by experience and the curriculum pathways are then planned. These groups are moved around as required. Some sports have non-contact requirements and cannot be mixed after Y8. Covid restrictions have meant that some contact sports have not been taught to either gender.

Clubs can be constrained because of the small department and after school events such as CPD or fixtures. 73 students attending netball means that more staff are needed at that one club. **Q** – can the school work with other schools to put more clubs on? The District is inclusive and there is a girls tournament at Hinchinbrook and CMAT hold inter schools tournaments. Clubs are put on depending on demand but there may be more interest from girls if clubs such as girls football, cricket and rugby

are put on. The PE department are aware and want to put on more clubs for girls. Two of the female PE teachers are undertaking rugby training to be able to teach it. **Q** - it is positive that the school is encouraging different sports, will there be other opportunities within the curriculum? From Y9 there is a less broad curriculum as they have less lessons, 3 over two weeks compared to 5 for Y7 and Y8. After half term, students chose their summer choices, but there are timetable constraints. **Q** – are sports such as table tennis and badminton taught? Table tennis is pushed as an individual sport if sport is taken for GCSE. Badminton is taught in Y8 and focus moves to tennis, which is harder. Extra-curricular activities are restricted by fixtures on offer in the district. Space can also be a restriction as badminton can only be taught when the courts are available at the leisure centre.

Q – will students be able to continue to wear PE kit to school on PE days? There are advantages and disadvantages with students wearing PE kit all day. It saves time and there are less issues with managing behaviour in changing rooms but hygienically, it is not good. If it is damp when outside for sport, the students have to stay wet all day or lessons have to be changed to be inside. Students appear to like being in PE kit as it is less for them to remember but non-PE staff don't know the kit well enough to ensure it is correct and there are a lot of students who wear incorrect PE kit. There is a need for uniform to learn skills for life, good hygiene needs promoting and the school needs to be able to implement clear processes and systems.

Q – how does the new sports facility fit with the school? The MUGA will be completed in July and will be available to the school to use in the school day from September. It is a better quality than AstroTurf and can be used in all weathers. BP will speak to One Leisure about afterschool use of the pitch. **Q** – can there be a parent and child promotional or fundraising event once open? BP noted that the PE department have spoken about fundraising as it was positive during lockdown, and since, with £3.8K being raised for Race for Life. Students want to be involved so this will be considered. ACH contacted One Leisure about an opening event and they have a couple of options.

Q – Could the school offer cheer leading and trampoline lessons? The students always ask for trampolining and the department is keen to have it on the curriculum. It is £15K for the trampoline kits and there are some restrictions because of room heights which need consideration.

4. Staggered Breaks and Split lessons

There has been a staff survey and student voice to look at how to return to a standard timetable with restrictions starting to ease. Students have liked the separate areas and times for breaks and there may be a need to maintain some controls next year. Some departments and students don't like the split lessons as they are disruptive and the plan is to remove split lessons. **Q** – what are parents views? They don't like split lessons either. The canteen does not have enough food for the older students and there are queues and access issues for toilets. ACH explained that there is enough food in the canteen for the older, later students but it is not always what they want. Staggering of break times will mean the canteen will have to cook twice and will allow students time between lessons for toilet breaks. The younger students will have an earlier lunch time which would be positive as that is what they are used to from primary school. ACH will write to parents after half term.

Q - A question was raised by a parent about sanctions, such as for missing equipment, as they can make students anxious and strict sanctions can have an impact on mental health. More concern was raised for the Y7s who have missed school time because of lockdown.

SN explained the process for sanctions and noted that minor errors do not usually result in a detention. The school is trying to prepare young people for life and they need the skills and strategies to have to remember things such as equipment. If a student forgets their book, work will be missing and they will not have it to revise from, impacting learning. If there were no sanctions the consequence will be bigger mental health issues as students are not being prepared for exams. In a work place, staff are expected to be equipped to do their job and the school is preparing students for this. It is also disruptive to others if students are missing equipment. Three Tells are required for a detention and this is reasonable. Remembering the right PE kit is hard, and there may be a need to

have a grace period for Y7s. BP noted that the PE department are more lenient in the first few weeks of the year. The department is conscious of issues and the head of Y7 is a PE teacher which is positive.

Q – will the cancelled Duke of Edinburgh weekend be rescheduled? **Action:** BP to ask A Beel to write to parents.

Q – is the summer school in person? Yes. There will be literacy and numeracy teaching and the week will be fun and engaging. There will be an organisation coming in for an oracy day which teaches students how to present in teams. It will be an exciting week, culminating with a prize giving event that parents can come to.

5. Fundraising

J Davey is working on a flyer and questions for the quiz night and there is an archery lesson as a prize.

Action: KD to ask J Davey about the flyer.

CE has a Johnson's voucher as a prize for cake bake.

CG is setting up a Facebook page to promote the Parent Forum and its activities.

CG is looking into the legalities of a 50:50 bucket to fundraise.

6. Items for the next Agenda

Support for less able students – C Deighton

Raising aspirations/ Careers - J Warne. The school has a good careers department with a kite mark for raising aspirations.

7. **AOB** – none.

8. **Date of the Next Meeting:** Thursday 1st July 2021

The meeting closed at 17.40