

Abbey College, Ramsey - Parent Forum
Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 12th October 2021, 4.30pm

1. Welcome

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

Andy Christoforou (ACH) – Headteacher

Cheryl Greyson (CG) – Chair

Sarah Noble AHT

Caitriona Powell DHT

Katie Dodsley (KD) – Clerk

Anna Conway (AC)

Karen Hewlett (KH)

Zara Matthews (ZM)

Ian Sullivan (IS)

Sarah Whalley (SW)

All were welcomed to the first meeting of the year and introductions were made.

2. Minutes from the meeting on 1st July 2021

The minutes from the meeting on 1st July were agreed.

Matters arising

There was an action for Heads of Department to review classes to see if students are in the right band. ACH noted that there was an audit of bands at the start of the year and there will be amendments throughout the year after assessments. **Q** – was this a useful process? Yes, it is good to do to make sure students are in the right classes.

3. C Powell – School Vision/Teaching and Learning

CP gave an overview of the new teaching and learning vision for students to be more involved, engaged and challenged.

Q - what can parents expect to see by the end of the year? Students will be more engaged in their learning, accessing work clearly and being able to transfer skills and make links across subjects. This should be articulated at home. Students should see the difference in how they are learning to learn.

Q – have students been told about this teaching and learning vision? The information will be delivered with the support of the Student Voice who will be teaching and learning ambassadors. All teachers have one area they are working on displayed in their classes.

4. School Uniform Policy – Sarah Noble

The current uniform was designed by students and they wanted a smarter look. The school has high standards for uniform as they feel that high standards manifest into high levels of good behaviour and focussed learning. There is a need to amend the guidelines on trousers to make them simpler. SN talked through the slightly amended policy, which will be circulated for suggestions.

- **Q** – there can be issues getting trousers to fit thin children, do the suppliers have the correct compliant trousers? **Action:** SN to check with the uniform shop.
- Consideration needs to be given to children with needs, some of whom will only wear particular items.
- It was agreed that not allowing 'tapered' trousers would be removed as it is a word that is used a lot to describe smart trousers and this could be very restrictive.
- Parents want their children to have clothes that fit nicely and are comfortable but also compliant. Availability should also be considered.
- **Q** - what is issue with skirts? They don't go small enough for petite girls.

- Wearing tights in the summer was discussed. All agreed that tights look smarter but are not necessarily comfortable in the summer. **Q** – could smart shorts be worn in the summer? SN noted that there is so little summer that it would be too much to introduce another item of uniform. Girls can wear trousers if they find them more comfortable.
- The school does not want to inconvenience parents financially or practically so would allow existing items to be kept until a replacement is needed.

5. **Parent Guarantee**

ACH noted that the Parent's Forum was successful last year and had some good outcomes. Developing a Parent's Forum pledge or guarantee for the school would give the group strength. A draft pledge was circulated prior to the meeting and the following points were discussed:

- **Q** – the guarantees look good. Parents would appreciate them and would be comforted by the schools commitment, but is it achievable? ACH noted that it is reasonable and can be delivered. It may be that a member of SLT has to do a return call if he is out.
- **Q** – it is good to have access to the Headteacher, but it is a lot of commitment and would it be circumventing the form tutors? ACH noted that it would still be the case that the form tutor is the first port of call, but if a situation calls for the Headteacher to be available, then he would be. When the guarantee is published it will go with a reminder of the contact procedures. There would probably be an influx of calls requested at the beginning but these would decrease over time.
- Some parents noted that they already find it easy to contact the school and responses are received in a timely manner.
- There was a response in the parent survey that said communications can be drawn out.
- It was suggested that the guarantees are simplified, maybe using a flowchart.
- **Q** - What is the purpose and what does the school want to achieve? It will allow parents to have the right to speak to the Headteacher and reduce any barriers. It will also enable the Parent's Forum to carry more weight and have a say in how school shaped going forward.
- **Action:** CG to consider and design the format of the guarantees and circulate for comments.

6. **Fundraising/Pre loved Uniform Review**

The Parent's Forum had a cake sale at the summer school and raised £189.50. As well as raising money it was an opportunity to speak to new parents. Some pre loved uniform has also been sold and this together means that the first target of £300 for equipment for lunch time has been achieved.

The next project is for mindfulness areas for the students and ACH will share some designs at the next meeting.

Q – how was the pre loved uniform advertised? It is on the parent's Forum Facebook page and something will be put in a newsletter. The selling of pre loved uniform is still being set up.

7. **Items for the next Agenda**

Children without an official diagnosis – Debbie Neal (SENCO)

The school dinner provision - Chris Berry (Catering Manager)

Bullying on busses – Sarah Noble

Q – was there anything useful from the parent survey? There were some linked to support and will be covered by D Neal next time.

8. **AOB**

Y11 purple ties – There have been a lot of Y11s off with Covid, does this impact them achieving their purple ties? No one will be penalised if they are off with Covid. Last year, any students off with Covid had an X Code which meant attendance wasn't impacted. This year it has been changed and they have an I code for being ill. ACH will ask Mrs Glen to confirm with the students that being off with Covid will not impact the achievement of purple ties.

Homework – **Q** - students don't appear to have much homework, is this normal for this time of year? KS3 students should be doing approximately 5 hours homework a week but parents do not think this is happening. ACH will investigate and ask G Craig to update at the next meeting.

Lockers – **Q** – are there any plans for student lockers to reduce the amount students have to carry during the day? The demand for lockers varies and they have been removed due to students not wanting them, but it could be discussed again. This will be put in a parent survey.

9. Date of the Next Meeting: Thursday 9th December at 4.30pm

The meeting closed at 17.30