

Abbey College, Ramsey - Parent Forum
Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 13th December 2022, 4.30pm

1. Welcome

All were welcomed. The following were present:

A Christoforou (ACH) – Headteacher
C Greyson (CG) – Chair
S Noble (SN) – Assistant Headteacher
K Wibberley (KW) - Assistant Headteacher
C Berry (CB) Catering Manager
G Gerrard-Cook (GGC) - Wellbeing
L Gregory – Governor
K Dodsley (KD) – Clerk
S Crago
K Kamau
R Kilbey
Z Matthews
K Richardson - Apologies

All were welcomed.

2. Minutes from the meeting on 10th November 2022

The minutes from the meeting on 10th November 2022 were agreed.

Matters arising

Homework tracking – C Powell received the analysis today so will collate this and feedback at the next meeting.

Tassomi – has a date been set to explain the reasoning of its use to students? This will be carried out early next term.

Edulink log in support – there has been support in weekly bulletins. There needs to be a face to face event that parents can also bring their devices to and IT can provide physical support. This will be offered at the next face to face event.

Meet the Team webpage – initials have been added to the page as adding the full name could be a GDPR issue. Email addresses do not follow the same format, so having full names is not always helpful.

Sports fixtures – B Pugh had a fixture today and therefore couldn't attend. He is aware of the issue of notifying parents of fixtures and is looking at putting a process in place. There is not always a lot of notice given for some fixtures. B Pugh will report back once a process has been set up.

3. Toilet Concern – S Noble

Q - Could you clarify the rules for using toilets in the school day? Toilets are open at form time, break, lunch and at the end of the day. They can also be used quickly during lesson changeover leaving only an hour at a time when students are asked not to use toilets. It is disruptive to lessons if students leave and there have been behavioural issues, so for safeguarding reasons, students are asked not to use the toilets during lesson time. Any students with medical needs have a toilet pass and can go anytime.

Q – what are the conditions of the toilets as broken doors, broken locks, no doors, no sanitary bins have been reported? SN noted that she carried out a tour of the toilets on site with students and the site team. They checked all doors and locks and they were fine. SN will action another tour as it is good to have good functioning facilities.

Q – why do years have allocated toilet blocks and why can't others be used, especially between lessons when time is an issue? There are designated toilets for each year for comfort. In between lessons students can use the closest toilet. **Action:** SN will send another message to staff and students about using the closest toilet between lessons but will be clear that there cannot be groups loitering. A parent noted that a child did get a sanction last week for using the wrong toilet between lesson. SN noted that sanctions will be issued in break and lunch times but there shouldn't be sanctions between lessons. A parent noted that this isn't the message coming from students. Students are not being told they can use any toilet during lesson change over and the one way system doesn't allow them to walk past a toilet. The toilets are not up to standard and don't lock for Y8s. It is understandable that toilets are difficult to police but girls don't want to change sanitary products if boys can hear. Students are reporting being scared to go to the toilet and that's not fair. Students find it hard to stand up to students to argue against a sanction and that needs to be considered.

SN noted that she will ensure all doors are functioning and described the layout of the toilets. The cubicles are private and not visible from the corridor. There is a large open plan area of basins between the cubicles and corridor. There is no door between the basin area and the corridor for safeguarding reasons and the students need to feel safe. If there is confusion for the time between lessons, the message will be reconfirmed with students and staff next term so that it is clear to all.

Q - if a student is desperate and their allocated toilet is on the other site, is there any flexibility in sanctions. SN responded that there is only an hour of lessons so there shouldn't be situation where a student can't get to a toilet. There are single accessible toilets which can be used.

Action: SN to arrange a site walk and R Kilbey to attend. Younger students will be involved as they might not be as strong as Y11s and have more difficulty with locks. It was discussed that students with mild disabilities should be used for the walk around.

The issue with students not feeling like they can question a sanction needs addressing and SN noted that this is being worked on. Videos are being made for expectations and students will be asked to make videos of themselves talking to teachers to show others how to have constructive conversations. This is a long term project which will help students whilst at school and when they leave. All were asked to let SN know if they have an idea for videos. Q - Can videos be shared with parents? Eventually.

Q – could there be upper and lower toilets to make more toilets available? This will be looked at. ACH noted that parental input is valued and a small investment could be made to upgrade toilets but budgets are tight and the Parent's Forum may have to be asked for a contribution.

Q - Could SN and some students review if toilets are period friendly? SN noted that in the summer some older students went through this with SN and one thing they did was write lessons for Y7 and Y8 on how to manage this. SN will go back to these students to see what else could be done to make it more manageable.

4. **Lining up for Lessons** – carried forward to the next meeting.

5. **Canteen and Lunchtime arrangements – C Berry**

CB reported that numbers have increased by about 20%, the canteen is running well and positive feedback has been received. There are still the main balanced meals available and the canteen is trying to be sustainable by doing things such as using compostable cutlery.

Q - How is trying different foods working? Some of the theme days, such as Mexican Monday, did not work and these have been amended to more popular food. Q - Is there enough food for all students? Yes. There is a certain amount of waste which is recorded and can be tracked. The canteen has never run out of food but occasionally the last 10 students may not get the most popular item as a choice, although they probably get 7 options to choose from.

Q - Is it value for money? Tariffs have been increased by about 5p and the cost to the canteen has gone up by 25-40% across the range. The cost of the main meals and meal deals have not changed. Prices will have to be reviewed and there may be another 5p increase on some items in January.

Q – what are the portions like as some students have said they are small? An example of chicken nuggets and chips was given as 12oz chips and 3 nuggets based on weight, chicken bites are smaller and there would be 7 with the 12 oz chips. 12oz is the government recommended amount of chips because they are fried. CB works at three other schools and they are the same.

Q – can the order that years go through the canteen be explained? There are two sittings:

- Y11s and Y7s - Y11s go through first as they are quicker and there are fewer of them. It is also easier to delay Y7 lessons if lunch is delayed.
- Y8, 9, 10 – the order was determined by the least number of tells the previous work. Students have liked the competition, but following feedback it has been reversed and is now more positive and based on most spirit points. Parents preferred this idea.

Q - Is there enough time for students to eat? Yes, the only time there is an issue is at the beginning of the year with the new Y7s. There are always staff on the canteen line so if they are aware of a delay, lunch is extended so students can eat. Years 8, 9 and 10 tend to be quicker and there is always 15 minutes between the last student going through the canteen and the next lesson. Staff monitor the situation and students are always allowed to eat.

Q – do Y11s not have an outdoor space to eat? Every year has a seated space and an outside space. Sometimes there has to be some flexibility, such as at exam time when rooms are in use.

Q – a parent reported that their Y7 child has had experience of not having time to eat and reporting this to staff who have not done anything, they take pack lunch now to make sure they eat. Do staff make sure students eat? SN was sorry to hear this report and noted that it may have been an issue early on in the year and the student didn't know that break could be extended. **Action:** SN to ensure new Y7s next year know this is a possibility.

CB noted that there is about 15 minutes to eat from when the last students go through the canteen and the canteen remains open for the whole lunch period in case a student decides they want something. Y7s who have missed lunch have been accommodated and the system generally works.

Q - Where can students go when the weather is bad? They can stay inside and the gym and hall are open up to all students. It can be tight and some students prefer to be outside in the fresh air so the outside areas remain useable. It was noted that some students do not bring a coat but the school still ensures they can get outside for their break if they wish.

Q – can every year group fit in the South Hall? Breaks are split so it is not all years at once. There have just been exams and the Y11 area was closed for breaks so the Y7s and Y11s shared the South Hall. This worked well so will be continued. For the Y8, 9 and 10 breaks, Y9 and Y10 have the South Hall and Y8 have the outside undercover area. During the freezing weather all three years have been in the South Hall.

6. **Wellbeing Space for Students in the quad – G Gerrard-Cook**

GGC gave a presentation about the wellbeing space for students. The outside space will be to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all. It is next to English Quad near Welfare and will be cleared to make a large open space. Students will be invited to join an OOP to get involved and raise more funds so that the project will be owned by students. The desire is for the area to be sustainable and recycled items used. GGC will meet with the groundsman after Christmas and see what can be carried out to save money and will report back to the Parent's Forum when some progress has been made.

Parents suggested recycled beds, bird feeders, water features and sensory chimes and it was suggested that the Ramsey Man shed, Ramsey Rural Museum or the Great Fen Project might be able to support.

Q – will the space be accessible for students with physical needs? Yes, it is hoped that there will be a door via welfare which will lead straight out to it, there will be path across the grass to it and flooring will be considered.

7. Attendance Policy – K Wibberley

KW noted that the policy needs to be updated for September 2023 and she would like parental feedback about what's clear or not. KW will circulate the current policy for review and will then draft a new policy.

8. Fundraising and Finance Update

9. Items for the next agenda

Lining up for lessons

Homework tracking

Sports Fixture update if ready

10. AOB

Thanks were noted to all for their attendance and input and all were wished a very merry Christmas.

11. Date of the Next Meeting

Tuesday 31st January 2023 4.30

The meeting closed at 5.35pm