

# Parent Forum Minutes

## October 16, 7:00 pm North Wing Hall

Welcome and introductions:

Zoe Judge, Co-Headteacher

Jo Davey, Co-Headteacher

Wendy Sloane, Vice Chair of Governors

### **1. Collection of A-level results - should they be emailed early in the morning?**

Results are often with UCAS/avail to students long before school opens. School prefers to see students face-to-face. Many require guidance through clearing etc. School will look at this however.

### **2. Year 7 trips - why don't they take place every year (Pendarren, camping)?**

Only been running two years, dependent on goodwill of school staff to lead, however intent is to repeat every year. Pendarren no longer used in favour of Tolmers (closer).

### **3. French exchange - why couldn't everyone go?**

Some students have missed out entirely. School's policy (driven by the National Curriculum) is that students must be in school during term-time, so extra-curricular trips must be in holidays – always dependent on staff goodwill, cannot compel. Many trips are by subject and therefore dependent on subject choices. Curriculum trips (exchange, etc) in term-time but often dependent on maximum numbers – constrained by degree of staff absence, possible/practical, or capacity of visited venue (eg host school). Parents asked if/should students opting for language option should get priority.

### **4. School ski trip - who decides who goes, why was it cancelled?**

Skiing trip was curtailed after leading member of staff became unavailable. School acknowledged that invitation and comms were not optimally run.

**5. Can Parent-teacher meetings be scheduled after work hours? Clashes with work commitments. Can they be later?**

Times constrained by ability of school to direct staff to stay later. Often individual sessions are scheduled later but in the main we are constrained by 'directed time' hours available

Current review of Pastoral care will address this. Parents will be consulted.

**6. Could we have list of all timetabled lunchtime clubs?**

ASC and lunchtime club timetable should be on website – school to check.

**7. Why do we have plastic cutlery and polystyrene lunch containers - not eco-friendly?**

This has been superseded by wood/enviro friendly material – school to check.

**8. Confusion of Go4Schools, Vocab Express, Google Classroom - why so many sites? And can you explain the new grading system (using +/-) that has appeared on Go4 Schools?**

Plethora of computer systems can be confusing

Main systems are: Go4schools (tracking); Google classrooms (study instruction/coursework/homework). Many other systems are subject/topic-specific (eg vocab express, mymaths, etc). Go4S – grading rationale in KS3

School has chosen to use GCSE 1-9 from Y7 onward, for consistency reasons. Targets and working-at grading should be specific to year and student. A table of expected progress through the grades/years is on the website. School to check it's clear.

## **Other topics:**

### **FSA**

School is concerned that current leadership of FSA is retiring and there is no clear replacement plan. Stressed the importance of fundraising role, and the regular stream of community events. Appeal to parents to get involved.

Parents responded that this was not well known – school /FSA needs to communicate. One suggestion is that parents reps (by year group or tutor group?) be established to support FSA.

### **Communications**

Newsletter – about 400 people open it per week. Considered good. Discussion re effectiveness and content. Most highly valued both diary and new content – don't change! Should be more mobile friendly (headlines & links?)

Website – considered much better. Can calendar be more comprehensive? (with exam dates, trips, etc)

Parent Forum – Loyal core group but can we attract more? Ideas discussed – incorporate social gathering (tea/coffee/ wine); HT surgeries as an alternate format; Specific presentation/consultation as part of agenda; Parent Engagement evenings (on one specific topic, such as mental health or drugs. These are already in the works and also planned as part of LINC).

Other points: are both HTs necessary (workload)? Is (approx.) 10% of families a good number? Many considered yes.

**Date of next meeting: TBC**