

Parent Forum Minutes

Thursday, May 23rd, 7pm, North Wing Hall

Welcome and introductions

Jo Davey, Co-Headteacher

Zoe Judge, Co-Headteacher

Kirsten Sullivan, Deputy Head

Wendy Sloane, Vice Chair of Governors

Pat Dugdale, Governor

Headteachers:

1. Changes to the pastoral system

- There will now be 5 Heads of Year in years 7 – 11, 5 Deputy Heads of College who are also Deputy Heads of Year and heads of the new colleges
- The colleges will have new names, as the result of a student vote.
- This has come about as the result of pastoral revision, led by Ms Fineberg, which took in a wide range of views, including the Parent Forum.
- This horizontal system will make it easier for parents to resolve concerns, as the H of Y will have “ownership” of the year. School-parent communication will benefit. The sharper focus will allow staff at the right level to focus on just one year group, thus dealing with a situation quicker.
- Students will meet their tutor at transition day in Yr 6 and will be with them all the way through Yr 11, allowing for more continuity.
- The community aspect of colleges will be retained.

2. Parental partnerships re. Behaviour

- Staff would like parents to take responsibility over their children's organisation, ensuring their sons and daughters have everything they need when they leave the house.
- This will allow them to be ready to learn, and also avoid giving students sanctions over purely organisational deficits.
- Parents can help with ensuring their children have school equipment, reading books and lanyards, and that they adhere to the dress code.

3. Plans for Sport and Music at Fortismere from September 2019

- Fortismere will soon have two new roles: Director of Sport and Director of Music.
- The Director of Sport will focus on competition, collaboration, well-being, leadership, healthy lifestyles, participation and opportunity for all, nurturing talent, celebration and community.
- The Director of Music will focus, with Fortismere Music Centre (FMC), on extra-curricular activities, participation and opportunity for all, nurturing talent, developing creativity, well-being, performance and community.

Parents:

1. Sport for Yr7 and Yr8 girls – more than dance? No football club for girls? Tennis?

- We share the sentiments that both boys and girls should have the same access to the same sports. Things can change – we will find out what both want to do and when possible we will have more mixed sport activities.
- Whether a student has a serious interest in sport or not, we try to encourage everyone and hopefully that is reflected in after-school clubs.
- Sport and enrichment will go back on the table beginning in September for the Sixth Form on Wednesday afternoons, period 5.

2. Is Fortismere helping children develop their acting/ drama skills?

- We offer drama lessons, and there is also a drama production which every student is encouraged to be a part of. There is an after-school drama club which, like other after-school activities, teachers run on a voluntary basis.

3. Procedures when children miss their GCSE exams due to illness.

- There is not one answer to this question as it often depends on the exam board etc. Sometimes an average of the papers they previously took is used.
- If a student does not show up for the exam we follow this up. They need to submit evidence about why they missed it and we will do all we can to help.
- Ms Sullivan will look into putting something online to explain this but it's a bit tricky as there is not one blanket answer.

4. Support/talks needed to tackle ongoing knife crime.

- Operation Makepeace – the police specialist weapons unit – has talked to two year groups, and we are trying to book them in for the next three year groups.
- We have no control over what police do. We suggested they put more plainclothes police officers on the Broadway but they told us this has been cancelled due to cutbacks. Some parents have seen them, however, doing stop and searching.
- We will schedule a Parent Forum information evening about knife crime next term, and will invite Operation Makepeace to come.
- We have regular contact with the police and have a liaison officer on site.
- Police need as much feedback from parents as possible.

- There are safer shops on the Broadway where children can go if they feel threatened. School will suggest to police a password code for kids to avoid embarrassment.
5. Unhappy with feedback on tests, especially GCSE subjects.
How can you improve if you don't know what you did wrong?
- Teachers are only given two weeks to mark Yr 10 exams and others so it is difficult. Hope to discuss this more depth, with a focus on what needs to happen to have an impact on learners to improve.
 - School review of assessment next academic year which will also look at feedback

AOB: None.

Date of next meeting: TBC in new academic year – look out for an announcement in the Newsletter and on ParentMail.

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