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Minutes of Parent Forum, 27 February, 2017 at 7.30pm

Governors present: Jo Davey (Deputy Headteacher), James Skuse, Wendy Sloane, (Link Governor for Communications)

1. **Welcome and introductions by Wendy Sloane**
2. **Agree final Terms of Reference and working arrangements of Parent Forum**

In response to the first Parent Forum the new arrangements for regular school communication was outlined by Wendy Sloane:

- **School Briefings:** It was suggested to add the following to the Terms of Reference: if passed, will be taken to the GB meeting for approval:

The Senior Leadership team will have a three-pronged approach in their response to the Forum. It will:

- Have regular briefings on cyclical items, such as Year 7 Welcome, eSafety, etc.
- Have timely briefings on news-related items, such as Fair Funding, new GCSE provision.
- Invite parents three times a year (or as needed) for briefings on topics brought up at Forum.

This was passed.

- It was agreed that the **Parent Forum** will meet three times a year
 - it is hoped these will be held just prior to formal Governors meetings to facilitate timely responses from the school
 - two parents/carers are needed to co-chair for a year, who are not governors
- **Parent Forum Working Group:** will also meet three times a year just prior to Parent Forums. Chairs will be given access to the parentforum@fortismere.org.uk email to learn what parents are interested in; this will be passed on in timely fashion to Link Governor for Communications and topics/date of meeting will be advertised in advance in **School Newsletter** (via ParentMail), and website
- **Governors Surgeries:** occur prior to each forum, on same evening, for any parent/carer to raise a school/study issue directly to a Governor

3. **Agree membership of the Core Group**

- It is preferred that the Parent Forum always has at least one parent/carer representative from each year attending each forum, but not mandatory. Change wording in Membership to reflect "Ideally, one member..."

4. **Elect Co-Chairs (then they lead the meeting**

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Two people volunteered to co-chair this year:

- Sharon Mitchell Spierling
- Donna French

Follow up from last meeting- items for discussion – see last Minutes.

- **Communications Flowchart – who to contact first:** *(sent separately as attachments)*. Put together by Marie Haines in response to a suggestion from the previous forum in December

5. Email protocol for parents for Parent Forum feedback

- Feedback was requested on a new emailing protocol which the school will communicate to parents/carers. It is based on a similar one teachers are required to use, by Haringey, and on good practice. Will be posted on website
- It was requested that the guidance for school staff is also added for reference to the school website>parent section, when the guidance for parents/carers is added

6. Parental suggestions for discussion, from emails sent to the Communications Governor and those arising at meeting. Answered by Jo Davey:

Q: Are triple science numbers going down?

- No, but always monitored.

Q: Parents evenings for Y9 – combining X and Y groups for parent talks an issue

- Particular challenge for Year 9 as they are a combined group and because it is a large school, but the logistics are very carefully worked out. For queries not cleared up in parent/carer evenings, there is always another point of contact (see communications grid now) and queries should be followed up quickly by the teacher.

Q: Deep Learning Conversations – how useful are they?

- They are currently being evaluated and will ask parent/carer opinions

Q: New locked toilets policy

- Introduced due to a recent incident (cannot be shared due to confidentiality)
- North Wing toilets are locked during lessons as they not easily supervised/not overlooked and would have required a rota of teachers to monitor, taking away time from other tasks
- All students can use South Wing loos between lessons as these are not locked – as these are easily visible and monitored by teachers
- Students can go the Office to ask for it to be opened if required during lessons
- Any students with pre-existing conditions requiring access at all times can have a medical pass

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- The policy has improved punctuality to classes, preventing meetings in loos between lessons making them late (and even occasionally during lessons).

Q: Behaviour for Learning – description of C1, 2, 3 etc.

- C1 = warning > C2 further warning > C3 = detention
- Some automatic C3s exists eg for forgetting lanyard (important safety policy); lateness; missing homework (if don't make it up in allotted time)
- See Behaviour for Learning on website for full policy. This policy is currently being reviewed by staff.

Q: Why isn't there a School council for students anymore?

- A review of the School Council revealed it did not do anything strategic, it discussed a myriad of things but not easy to act on them and not tied to strategic goals. So School Leadership Team created.
- From this, the Y11 leaders are required to canvas from all years below to decide priorities.
- Examples have been a current review of the Behaviour for Learning eg to differentiate more between types of C3s like between forgetting lanyard and more serious negative behaviour.
- They have been asked to ensure they do represent well the views of lower years and not just their own.
- A student newsletter is being created to give everyone news on their activities which will posted on Go4Schools

Q: Request that teachers not post homework during holidays or end of day on Friday when can't get queries answered

There are occasions when teachers will give homework verbally to students in lessons and then post the same a few days later on Go4Schools - so that homework will have been discussed. However they will keep an eye on whether the former is happening.

Q: Wellbeing

- Guidance for students on important topics, for example, screentime, use of alcohol, esafety etc are addressed in school briefings for parents and pupils. They will be repeated for new cohorts.
The school will be hosting a conference for students at the end of April run by 'Place to Be' exploring mental health.

Q: Quality of food and time for lunch

- Any 'fizzy drinks' in the canteens are within national guidelines

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- Students are grouped by years and there is a changing rota. All students should have been served by 1pm and usually are.
- There is always a hot meal available even for the last students but it may not be their first choice
- Parents can use ParentMail to designate 'yes' or 'no' to certain types of food, preventing it being bought! They can also set daily limits on amount can spend. Ask Ms Greenwood for assistance if needed.

Q: School Development Plan and policy monitoring

- There are five strategic priorities governors monitor. Governors keep tabs on senior leadership to check the school is doing what is required and act as a 'critical friend'. Will approach school if feel there is a concern.
- Governors do scrutinize the school leadership and do ask challenging questions. An example of how they work together would be that the Governors will attend the Curriculum Committee re SEN, on the impact and outcomes for students.
- Governors also ask about particular groups of students and ask for data and case studies.
- There is discussion of policies, processes, what works and doesn't work.
- **Re policies** - there is a standing item on governor sub-committee to assess these and test whether they are fit for purpose. If something comes up it may suggest a tweak and take it to the full governing body.

7. Date of next meeting and items for discussion

Monday, 22 May.

It was suggested the format could be to end the Parent Forum with SLT briefing, so people not interested can leave.

Parents/carers: please suggest topics via email (parentforum@fortismere.org.uk) for future short briefings at the next forum meetings.

Next meeting was on KS3 assessment and use of Go4Schools.

8. AOB No further business.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.