

Parent Forum: Monday, May 14th, 7 – 8:30 pm, North Wing Hall

Welcome and introductions:

Zoe Judge, Co-Headteacher

Jo Davey, Co-Headteacher

Mark Chapman, Chair of Governors

Wendy Sloane, Vice Chair of Governors

TOPICS

1) Mobile phone policy discussion/update.

Parents appear to be generally supportive of current policy. At the end of school they can use their phones outside the gate only – clear usage guideline applies. The Archer school's policy is bricks only – something to think about as it can reduce the number of muggings in the area (see below). Cameras on phones and social media postings are still the greatest concern for the school, as phones contribute greatly to bullying.

2) High number of cover lessons

There has been more maternity cover this year, long-term staff illness and greater staff turnover – this comes in cycles. In addition, pastoral heads often involved in Social Services meetings, which are scheduled outside the school by outside parties. Staff leaving is announced only with staff consent, which is why parents are not always aware when a member of staff is planning to leave.

3) Feedback on tests

School policy means marking set by department. Feedback is dependent on subject but there is an expectation that homework is marked and given back within a fortnight. There is some inconsistency, which will be addressed.

4) Run-up to GCSEs: clashes of mocks with practicals

These are practice assessments, not mocks – but the timing could have been better. Problems are acknowledged. The DoE clash should not have happened.

5) School ski trip: what year(s) is this offered?

Not an annual trip – depends on members of the PE department who are keen. Spare places this year could have been allocated better – this will happen next time.

6) Could teaching revision strategies early - Yr 8 - cut down on later stress?

Revision skills already taught beginning in Year 7. It's the quality of the revision that makes a difference, but hard to get balance right as don't want students to get too stressed – this could backfire.

7) Foreign language provision at Fortismere

School realises that more time spent on languages is always better for language teaching, as constant drip-feeding best for progress. School also looking at impact of being in/out of EBACC.

8) How is the Science Department doing now after the sad loss of Mr Sharma? Has there been an impact on teaching?

School won't comment on staff pastoral care as this is confidential. But the department is now fully staffed and under new leadership next year. Acknowledged that this has been a very challenging year for a number of reasons.

9) How does the school teach Black History Month?

We want it embedded into the regular curriculum, not just box ticking for one month. We teach non-white authors, artists and diversities overall, also look at inequalities in general, such as the recent Diversities event. BME curriculum content and impact is monitored as part of Haringey initiative.

10) Will Fortismere consider setting for PE again in future?

We have no plans for this – students can be proficient at one sport and not another, and less able students can look up to others as aspirational, which benefits everyone. Looking now at whether PE should be taught in mixed-gender classes.

11) Girls' makeup, synthetic eyelashes and piercings

School considering consultancy on piercing. Emphasis on too much make-up can be detrimental, as students can spend too much time prepping for school, and worrying about how they look. A conversation with students needed.

12) Muggings in the area and what the school is doing about it

School acknowledges that current situation is horrific and is very sympathetic to those who have been victims of crime. It is working very closely with Police in general and our liaison officer, and there have been student assemblies about keeping yourself safe. A victim support group will be set up so students can speak to someone with expertise to help them. Parents invited to join ward meetings and lobby for more police patrols and other security measures in the area as school is limited in what it can do outside its premises.

12) AOB

None

13) Date of next meeting

TBC

The next Parent Forum Information Meeting will be Tuesday, July 3rd.

Topic: tbc