

## Parent Council Agenda – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2015

1. Lesson basics and literacy.
2. Sixth Form updates.
3. Involvement in Year 6 Open Evening.
4. Involvement with Student Voice.

AOB :-

The Brilliant Club.

Taxis and parental drop off at the school.

**Present:** H Norris, B Teague, S Donnachie, L Scott, F Seekins, L Buckfield, L Meikle, C Sibley, E Thorner.

### **1. Lesson basics and literacy**

Helen explained how we are hoping for a cultural shift so that students will eventually automatically act on feedback rather than being told. Assemblies have been given re lesson basics and the importance of literacy.

### **2. Sixth Form updates**

A Level reforms :-

- Assessment will be mainly by exam.
- AS and A Levels will be assessed at the end of the course.
- AS and A Levels will be decoupled – this means that AS results will no longer count towards an A Level, in the way they do now.
- AS Levels will be devalued, will have less challenge and will be equivalent to less than half an A Level.
- The content for the new A Levels has been reviewed and updated. Universities played a greater role in this for the new qualifications than they did previously.
- Each student will have an individual route due to subject choices.
- Subjects with new specifications from September 2015 and no AS exams - art and design, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, English language and literature, history, physics, psychology, sociology.
- Other A Levels will still have AS exams.
- The BTEC qualifications won't have any exams.

Subject ambassadors, enrichment – volunteering, trips, visits, IAG, links with local companies and Universities.

Sixth Form questions – Have we got the opportunity for all students to be involved? Elaine Thorner talked about older students helping younger students read. Sandra Donnachie says her daughter helps in the library after school for three afternoons per week.

- Is there additional support we can offer to those students who don't want to take the University route? Elaine Thorner explained the way the University grants are changing.
- Can form tutors be more involved in careers? Helen to pass this request to Terry Cooper and Angela Curtis.

### **3. Year 6 Open Evening**

Last year we created fliers to try to get more involved. We questioned if we want to do this again? (October 6<sup>th</sup>) – 6.00 p.m. We agreed that it may be better to do this at a later event such as the evening following the Year 6 induction day as this would be a time when parents would be committed to the school as their child would definitely be attending. Suggestion to do it at the induction evening in July.

### **4. Involvement with Student Voice.**

It was agreed to keep the student voice and the parent council separate so that students can discuss issues that are specific to them.

## **AOB**

1. Brilliant Club – opportunities for more able students. Helen explained that the problem is the cost – it's £160 per student. Consequently we didn't take it any further. We do look at alternatives to boost higher students and raise achievements, many of which are provided free – e.g. Honda School of Dreams, Cambridge University outreach programme, ARU's new outreach programme and so on, and are always looking at new options that come about.
2. Taxis and parents dropping off at school.  
  
What solutions have we got?  
Why don't taxis park on the gravel at the end of the parking? Can there be a taxi rank on the gravel?
3. Uniform is poor from Cromer – Fruit of the Loom – will look shabby in six months time. PMG are a better supplier and have online ordering. We agreed we would use the better quality. Cromer sweater has a hole in it already.
4. Letter out for new Year 7 about Parent Pay and how to use it would be useful before students start term.
  - Benefits are that we pay in advance. Security was questioned, but most parents are very happy with the system.
5. Email addresses for parent mail; can there be a centralised system?
  - Can the school investigate a method for communicating quickly?
  - Can we have a parent mail for each year?
  - Helen to investigate.

6. Some form tutors give out more messages than others about after school clubs, voting for form reps; consistency is needed. Heads of Year should make sure the continuity is the same across each form group.
7. The noticeboard communication is sluggish. It needs improving.
8. Website – where is it?
  - Information is currently filed in strange places.
  - How far are we with it?
  - Will parents get to look at it before it goes live?
  - Is it logical?
9. Careers

We discussed raising aspiration as a whole regardless of gender or whether interested in academic study post 16 or not. How do they get career opportunities? Don't always know what they want to do, so they don't know how hard they have to work. Don't know what they have to do.

Suggestion that we offer a broader range of opportunities and a spectrum which demonstrates the opportunities in each field.

Questions raised.

Do students know the grades needed for each area?

Independent students – can they look up?

Can we get more of our parents involved as professionals to be involved with careers?

Are we focussed on University routes too much?

Helen to ask the Careers department to feedback on careers provision at the next parent council.