

Notes from WHHS Parents' Forum: Tuesday 9th October 2018 @ 18:00

Attendees: K.Murphy (Chair, Community Governor), K.Chaplin (Parent Governor), A.Roll (Principal), A.Boot (Deputy), J.Williams, R.Adkins, E.Adkins, D.Gabriel, E.Peacock, P.Matsika, C.Swalwell, L.Chambers, J.Darley, N.Strolin, J.Millward.

Items Discussed

1. Head Boy & Girl Update

The Head Boy and Head Girl were not present, due to other commitments.

2. Previous Actions Update

Actions from 19 th June 2018	Responsible	Status
MS Block refurbishment plans to be shared with pupils	SLT	Completed
Outcome: The plans were shared with the pupils, the MS Block has been fully reopened.		
Parents to be sent confirmation about option outcomes for their child	SLT	Completed
Outcome: Parents, of both year 8 & 9 pupils, were sent a letter of confirmation.		
To clarify with parent further details regarding social media ILC and for Principal to investigate.	Governors & SLT	Completed
Outcome: The ILC have been reviewed and this particular ILC removed.		
Advertisement and notice of forum dates via platforms such as social media local community groups	SLT	Completed
Outcome: Parent Forum was advertised on school website, WHHS Facebook page and local community group pages. A letter was sent to all parents, these were also handed out at year 7 parents' evening.		

Discussion:

- Although there were more parents at the forum, it was felt that there was still work to do, to increase parental engagement at meetings.
- The information relating to the forum isn't up-to-date on the website – notes, letters and agendas had been supplied for updating but this had not yet happened. As the school is in the process of moving to a new website, it was felt that the Parents' information should be developed on this rather than focusing on the current website, which would soon be obsolete. **ACTION: KM to liaise with school regarding development of Parent Forum website page.**
- ***Is the calendar on the school website updated?*** It was identified that although this was believe to reflect the school calendar, it is not currently working – parents just see a blank calendar. **ACTION: To ensure that the school calendar is working and includes all school events.**
- It was noted that the record of school letters on the website is not kept up-to-date, making it difficult for parents to access information when required – this results in phone calls to reception having to be made rather than direct access on the website. **ACTION: To ensure that letters to parents are available and kept up-to-date on the website.**
- ***Queried whether the resources for GCSE are available on the school website as they were difficult to find.*** It was confirmed that these were on the website within the curriculum area, an email had been sent out with links to pertinent information including revision books. The ISBN numbers were also available within the curriculum area. Could there be a link to electronic purchase, so it makes sure parents purchase the correct books – this could

be through a provider that contributes a % of purchase revenue to school (affiliate account).
ACTION: explore whether link to purchase is viable for revision books utilising an affiliate account.

- The new website will have search functionality, which should make it easier for users to find particular content.

3. Behaviour Management – Rewards and Sanctions (Topic Presentation)

Mr Roll and Mr Boot presented information on the school behaviour system.

- The school system is based around positivity and rewards.
- Both positive and negative points are recorded on the school management information system (SIMS). Parents can currently access their child's information through the SIMS Gateway and MyEd app. There is also access to attendance and punctuality.
- If a child is on report, the parents can monitor this through SIMS Gateway.
- Positive points can be earned by pupils to redress any negative points – overall number of points (positive minus negative) is used to determine school reward events/trips.
- **Do pupils know when they receive a reward point (R1)?** Yes the teacher will inform them – as pupils get older they do not always want praise in the same way, this is then carried out less publically.
- Data was presented on year to-date behaviour system points.
- The school uses a system of V-W-5-30. This is a verbal warning (not recorded on SIMS), written warning, 5 minute sanction at break or lunch time, 30 minute detention after school. If a pupil fails to turn up for their detention, they will receive a 1 hour detention after school on a Friday with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- A verbal warning may be issued more than once, to give the pupil an opportunity to modify their poor behaviour.
- **Will parents know if their child has an afterschool detention?** Yes parents are notified and the pupil is given a 'Detention Card'. The detention will be visible on SIMS.
- There is also a graduated approach to rewards (R1 to R5).
- **How do pupils earn a R1?** Pupils can earn R1s for positive behaviour such as showing initiative or good effort. The behaviour criteria for which reward point are issued is available on the website.
- **How does the school ensure that the approach is consistent and fair?** The staff are regularly reminded, so that points are fairly issued and they are rewarding the same behaviours. There is a rolling program covering this which includes reminding pupils regularly about expectations of behaviour in the classroom.
- Usually there is a ratio of one negative point to every eight positive points – to ensure that the system is recognising good rather than focusing on negatives.
- If a pupil's behaviour is exceptionally poor that it requires immediate attention, they can jump stages in the process.
- **What do pupils do in the 30 or 60 minute detentions?** They complete work set by the subject department, from which they received the detention – this is effectively the work they would have missed due to poor behaviour. The work is collected at the end of the detention and returned to the department for marking.
- The system used in school is quite powerful as it provides immediate communication of negative events to key members of staff. This means that staff can address this in a timely manner and also have conversations with the pupils when they see them in the corridor.
- **Why is there such a significant discrepancy in the points between form groups within a year group?** This fluctuates during the year, but generally levels out towards the end of an academic year. The heads of year check any discrepancies to ensure that the system is being

used consistently. The dynamics in tutor group can sometimes account for point discrepancies.

- There are weekly tutor rewards, these are awarded to all pupils in a form group who attended the full week and had the correct equipment and uniform. This provides all pupils the opportunity to routinely be rewarded.
- **Do children know each time they are awarded?** Yes, staff tell them and it is recorded in their exercise book.
- **Are parents informed ahead of time if their child has a detention?** Yes, parents are given 24 hours notice for a 30 minute detention and notified on a Tuesday for a Friday 1 hour detention. Parents are not given notice of the 5 minute sanction.
- The school analyse the information weekly and drill down into tutor sets and individual pupils, to identify concerns which need further intervention or patterns. This is used to inform pastoral team meetings.
- The system is robust and Mr Boot has been through the system in detail with a Governor, to provide an additional layer of questioning and scrutiny. Governor had felt that the system was strong.
- Parents felt that the reward system was good.

4. Information Provided to Parents: MyEd & Pupil Dashboard (Discussion Item)

The information provided to parents and the current mechanisms to access it were discussed.

- Parents indicated that the MyEd app was good as it allowed them to check instantly and was easy.
- It was useful to identify patterns of engagement -which subjects their child was enjoying and those that they might require prompting or support with.
- The school is currently looking to move from MyEd app to SIMS Parent App. This app would link directly with SIMS Gateway and therefore you could just access the app, rather than having two separate locations of data. This will be introduced over the course of this academic year.
- **Could there be a student dashboard which allows access to everything in one place e.g. MyHomework, SIMS etc.?** This is not currently an option. The MyHomework system has been successful.
- **Could there be a school payment system for the pupils?** This type of system is very expensive (circa. £35K). The school will be asking, as part of any new catering contract, that the provider has this payment functionality as part of their service.
- Schools using biometric systems have started to remove them due to GDPR implications.

5. Action Following Ofsted Visit

Mr Roll provided an update.

- Mr Roll had been disappointed with the Requires Improvement (RI) judgement.
- On the first day, inspectors had been positive but this was not the case on the second day.
- Ofsted had commented positively on how well behaved the pupils were.
- Although the inspectors had seen some good teaching and learning, this was not consistent across subjects and within departments.
- An action plan has been put together, this focuses on quality assurance (QA) – there will be more lesson observations, more robust assessment criteria and clear feedback.
- There will also be QA of pupil books and homework – the SLT have taken a sample of pupil books to check on quality of marking, work and feedback – the checks have been tightened up.

- The action plan would be integral to the Academy Development Plan going forward.
- Ofsted will be performing a monitoring visit in a year's time.
- Inspectors had indicated that they could already see improvements in the Key Stage 3 (KS3) cohort.
- There needs to be more challenge in lessons and higher expectations over the quality of work.
- The curriculum pathways need to be reviewed, there needs to be a balance with vocational lessons rather than just academic – this is intended to make the pupils happier in their learning. The pupils would be able to access what is relevant to them and their future career aspirations.
- Although sixth form results had improved overall, the academic value added by the school was too low. Work experience available is currently at the national minimum expectation.
- Careers is currently being reviewed in school and work experience is being reintroduced to year 10s. There will be the opportunity for pupils to go on a work placement and attend a careers interview.
- **Will this happen for the current year 10s?** Yes, that is the intention – summer term this academic year. Interviews will be from external providers.
- **What is the reaction from the children following the Ofsted judgement?** The pupils have not had a reaction. School did not sit pupils down and discuss. Pupils are positive about school and understand they could work harder.
- Parent commented that although their child enjoyed school and felt the teachers were good, they as a parent had been disappointed with the Ofsted judgement. This would have potentially influenced their choice of school.
- There was a query over the data available on line e.g. workforce data. Parent had been shocked at results such as pupils achieving grades 5 to 9 in English – the % was low. Mr Roll indicated that the old grade C equivalent was currently a 4, this is a pass – it is thought that this will change so that a grade 5 is equivalent to a pass.
- The school is currently above national average in Maths and English.
- There is a particular issue at the school with children who do not engage due to lack of motivation. There are also children with high prior attainment, specifically boys, who do not do as well despite attempts to motivate them.
- **When you look at the data, do only top sets achieve?** No, this varies across the groups, the school believes in equity of approach so all children achieve. Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils achieve better at Waseley than would be suggested by their prior attainment. All children have access to GCSEs and pass them.
- The school has an imbalance of boys to girls (56:44) and boys' achievement has been lower.
- Parent felt it is important that children get 5 good results.
- **Does the national data account for gender?** No.
- Pupils with high prior attainment need to be motivated as soon as they start Waseley and different subjects need to be considered at GCSE to influence this motivation.
- The new GCSEs have a larger content (15-20%) and require embedment and application of knowledge.
- The curriculum in years 7 and 8 has been changed, to minimise lost time repeating things from junior school. There needs to be maximisation of following up on the good work done in year 6.
- Year 6 tends to focus on English and Maths, which pushes up attainment when entering secondary school. Secondary schools have found that on testing pupils on entry, they are

not achieving the levels that were recorded on leaving junior school. The results are not useful, the school could consider cognitive ability testing to create base levels, allowing them to allocate pupils to groups more accurately. Unfortunately, this system is very expensive and Ofsted do not take this data into account.

- **How does the school currently test new pupils?** The school test the spelling, reading and maths ability.
- Every school has the same issue and there is only 2 years worth of progress data, which isn't enough to establish a pattern.
- Some schools do disproportionately well due to pupils having low prior attainment e.g. pupils with English as an additional language. These children make over expected progress as their English language improves – however, nothing has changed in terms of the pupils' ability.
- Parents indicated that boys need to make a movement to see that they are worth more. Something different needs to be done to get a different outcome for boys. There needs to be a partnership between school and parents, to empower boys to achieve more. This may be linked to trust in the pupil. **ACTION: Topic for next Parent Forum to be 'how can parents and school work together to empower their child'.**
- Parents would like there to be more meetings in school advising them on how to be involved with their child's learning. The year 11 meetings are good, but they need to be in earlier year groups as well. **ACTION: School to provide opportunities for parents to attend sessions in all year groups, to support their child's learning.**
- **Why was the Ofsted Inspector positive on day 1 and not on day 2?** Do not know why.
- **Can we support career aspirations early on in school, so that pupils have a focus and reason to work harder?** Yes, school is currently considering its careers plan.

6. Agenda Items from Parents

Uniform

- **There are rumours that WHHS is looking to introduce a school skirt, is this true?** The school student council has discussed this. School opted for a generic navy skirt, as this is cheaper for parents. They had investigated a school skirt but this would be a minimum of £17.50, which is a significant increase in expense for parents.
- **Can girls wear trousers?** Yes, girls can wear trousers.
- Options around skirts were considered as the length of skirts creeps up over the year groups.
- **Does the length of a girl's skirt have any impact on education?** Not directly, no. Perhaps the school is focusing on the wrong things that are unrelated to educational outcomes.
- **Would the school consider introduction of a blazer?** Blazers have been part of the school uniform previously but the pupils do not like them and they are an added expense that is unnecessary.
- **The school jumper is vile/horrible, are there plans to change this?** Local school uniform suppliers have been invited to have conversations with the school as part of a review of provider, this includes Marks and Spencers. The current suppliers have been dissatisfactory recently.
- **Do pupils have to keep their jumpers on at all times in the school day? This can be uncomfortable for children who are too hot.** Pupils are allowed to take their jumper off in class, there are also sleeveless school jumpers available if the pupil would prefer.

Afterschool Activities

- ***The Aim Higher afterschool Maths and English clubs are good, can they be available to year 10 not just year 11?*** Potentially. **ACTION:** School to investigate if Maths and English clubs can be available to year 10 pupils.

Curriculum & Assessment

- ***When will the current year 8s make their option choices?*** Choices will be made in February.
- ***What can parents do to support the Accelerated Reader Program (ARP)?*** Parents should contact Mr Arnold if they would like information.
- ***Parents reported receiving an email about ARP, but this was not clear and didn't really understand what it was telling them. It also did not state how to support your child.*** The email was about your child's proximate reading age.
- ***Some parents were concerned that their child's reading age appeared to have gone down by a number of years.*** Pupils are tested for reading age before they leave junior school, it is not clear if WHHS are using the same assessment as feeder junior schools. **ACTION:** Mr Arnold to speak to Holywell to identify what assessment system they are using.
- ***There was a History meeting for parents, this was really useful, are there plans for other meetings across subjects?*** Yes, there are likely to be others this term.

Environment/Health & Safety

- ***The sanitary bins are missing from the newly refurbished girls' toilets and there is no soap available, is this being addressed?*** It is unclear where the bins have gone, the bin providers are being chased so that this is rectified ASAP. There is now soap available in the toilets.
- ***What are the arrangements until the bins arrive?*** There are other girls' toilets available and these have sanitary bins, so they should use these in the interim.

7. AOB

Governors

- There is a vacancy for a parent governor; a letter will be going out to parents in the near future asking for nominations.
- If there is more than one interested parent, there will be a vote to elect the parent governor.

Wish List

- The school is looking to introduce a wish list. This will list items that the school needs to support the pupils with education. Items will be from a few pounds to much larger items – anybody would be able to make a donation in the context of why the item is required.
- ***Could a school fund be introduced?*** This was previously trialled, there was a very poor uptake so it was not worth it.
- School funding is making it difficult for all schools to provide the resources that the pupils require. The funding position is due to get much worse over the next few years, for example employer contributions to teachers' pensions are increasing from 16% to 23% next year.

Swop Shop

- The school is attempting to introduce a school uniform swop shop. This would be targeted at WHHS and local junior school parents. It would support those who do not have the financial resources and/or those looking to reduce waste.

- To get this started, any parents with old school uniforms they no longer want could donate these. If you have old uniform please contact Kristina Murphy, who will arrange for it to be collected.

Meeting concluded.

Recommendations for action

Actions	Responsible
Chair to liaise with school regarding development of Parent Forum website page.	Governors
Ensure that the school calendar is working and includes all school events.	SLT
Ensure that letters to parents are available and kept up-to-date on the website.	SLT
Explore whether link to purchase is viable for revision books utilising an affiliate account.	SLT
Topic for next Parent Forum to be 'how can parents and school work together to empower their child'	Governors
Provide opportunities for parents to attend sessions in all year groups, to support their child's learning.	SLT
Investigate if Maths and English clubs can be available to year 10 pupils.	SLT
Mr Arnold to speak to Holywell to identify what assessment system they are using.	SLT

*Agenda items can be communicated to the Parents' Forum Chair (Kristina Murphy kmurphy@waseleyhills.worcs.sch.uk)