

## Parent Council News – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2019

### From last meeting:

- ADe apologised for the email data breach when she forgot to BCC members of the Parent Council.
- Communication with parents has been discussed at SLT and will be reviewed to ensure lines of communication are clearer.
- Orienteering has been raised with SLT; just a thank you needs to be done in September.
- Recording of food pricing in the canteen has been improved.

A guest at the meeting was ASm who spoke to the Council about literacy and communications planned for the school

To date she has undertaken a whole school student survey to understand perceptions of reading and writing in school, worked on making the library the heart of the school and organised world book day and events. The school is trialling a current events newspaper to engage less able/engaged readers. This is going very well so far.

She is looking at how to support students in communication – writing is a key focus.

Additionally the school has a new student planner for September which will be used as a reference point for literacy. For example common use of discourse markers across all subjects. These pages will also be common to the teacher planners.

There has been a discussion about what students bring from Year 6 in terms of vocabulary in order to narrow the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students.

One parent asked if there could there be a visual version on the website – this may be more appealing to students.

It was also suggested that policies need not be in the planner. These could be signposted to the school website.

Command words have been discussed at subject leaders' meetings and may need some subject specific refinement.

Information on how to be an independent learner will also be in the planners.

ASm will also be going into Primary Schools to find what gaps we have and make plans to fill these.

There was discussion about the “Frayer model” (a graphical organiser used for word analysis and vocabulary building) – this would need planning into subject schemes of work.

There was a discussion about getting the research to staff via CPD and using what Y6 know and do, then building on this.

Parents talked about reading ambassadors and reading buddies – an evaluation of this process is currently in progress. They also talked about ideas on how to encourage reading – book swapping, regular trips in form to the library, parent helpers to listen to readers, asking in the planner what students are reading that week.

During exam time the library is used – can boxes of books be in each room when this is closed? Each form room should have a set of books. The librarian will be contacted to ensure that this is true of all forms.

### **ADe - Assessments**

The question of end of year assessments was raised. Some parents felt that a formal end of year assessment would help students prepare for GCSE exams. This might help with remembering so much content for GCSE preparation. ADe explained that for those students who need readers and/or scribes there is a requirement that a reader and a scribe must be used for all internal assessments and this must be recorded and presented to exam boards as a student’s normal way of working. If this is not done they will be denied extra help in external exams. This puts immense pressure on SEN support staff and means they are not available to support children in the classroom at those times. Additionally if there were formal end of year exams for all subjects this would increase teacher workload at a time when teachers are focused on GCSE and A level preparation.

Parents were pleased with the school’s new timetable for revision during lesson times and felt that revision just before the exam was a good idea.

ADe and ASm thanked Megan Attwood for coming into school and working with them on plans for independent learning and teaching for understanding.

### **AOB**

There was a discussion about attracting more parents to attend Parent Council and concerns expressed that it is not fully representative of the Parent body. ADe will

Speak about the parent Council at the Year 6 into 7 Parent's Evening in July and reminders will be sent out by text to improve participation.

It was suggested that there should be an opportunity to comment in advance/make comments on the minutes perhaps anonymously/on the Parent Council section on the school website.