



Minutes of Staff-Parent Forum 23rd January 2007

Present:

Mr N Flower	Mrs J Moss
Mrs S Smart	Mrs G Samson
Mrs S Radley	Mrs S Nevell
Mr N Humphrey	Mrs J Oliver

1. Feedback from Meeting of 7th November.

The following feedback was given on the points raised by parents at the previous meeting:

a) Publication of Exam details, dates and coursework requirements

Substantial changes are to be introduced for the next academic year in examination board requirements (ex. science coursework would in future be carried out in lesson time not outside). Because of these changes the information requested on exam details, dates etc would now be available from the new academic year onwards, so far as possible

b) Games Details

Increased information on matches, return times etc would be included in the calendar where possible. Travel details would always be included on the team sheets to be relayed to parents by pupils. A copy of the team sheets would also now be available in reception. Consideration had been given to supplying maps to the different away venues. However it was agreed this was not necessary given the wide access to maps and directions ex. from the internet.

c) Food

i) School Meals.

There had been a lot of discussion and consideration given to the various points raised about school meals. An analysis of numbers of pupils coming into eat at different times had been carried out. Obviously, numbers varied enormously from day to day depending on the pupils' activities. However, the kitchen team had now been given much more precise information as to the numbers that could be expected and when, to try to ensure that a varied choice existed throughout the time meals were served and in sufficient quantities. It was understood that from time to time particular, popular choices would run out but records were kept of what was served and it was expected that the problems faced in the past by pupils arriving late in terms of choice etc would be resolved. The taking of fruit out of the dining room was also discussed. It was felt that this did not cause any current problems with regard to litter and was appropriate for boarders after breakfast.

ii) Waste

One important issue was that of wasted food in the CFB. Obviously, it was always possible that some food would be left over after meal times, although strenuous efforts are made to provide the right quantities, as much depends on pupil choice. However, there was an enormous amount of avoidable wastage at breakfast times when pupils might take more than they wanted initially, rather than going back for a second helping. Efforts are being made to reduce this waste by both staff and prefects, both on economic grounds (which impact on

the budget) and on environmental grounds (especially now there was no opportunity to use the waste as animal feedstuff).

iii) With regard to Dave's Diner, comments had been invited from pupils as to what they would like to have provided. Suggestions were being considered, as were a number of possible options for running Dave's Diner (eg franchise). Consideration was also being given to the replacement of sweets with more healthy options (eg fruit, cereal bars etc). More fundamental was the question as to the purposes that Dave Diner served. It had various functions at present, eg a place for boarders, occasional hospitality for parents etc. The issue of 'whom Dave's was for' needed to be resolved before final decisions could be taken as to its focus and what it offered. One constraint was the need for training were hot food to be served.

iii) It was not thought appropriate to invite a parent representative onto the Food Committee. It was recognised that the catering manager did a very good job under difficult circumstances and it was not right to put undue pressure on him. He had to operate within budget constraints but, within those, was sympathetic to the pupil concerns and concerned to meet them where he could.

c) Uniform

The school shop was running out of girls' summer shirts and this provided the natural opportunity to reassess their style. The shop was going to provide samples of possible new shirts to replace the existing ones. These would be shown to the girls in houses and their preferences obtained. One option canvassed was a short-sleeved shirt. There were no other comments on uniform for boys or girls save that it was good value and serviceable.

2. New Matters

a) Parents Meetings/Social Occasions

The 4th Form Parents meeting was a success and well received. There was further discussion about the desirability of providing another social evening in the first term and probably in houses, for the parents of 3rd Formers. This would particularly cater for parents of new pupils who had not had their children in the Prep School and so would know fewer other parents. Sports day would provide a further social opportunity in the summer. Generally, it was agreed to defer discussion of any specific social gatherings/fund raising events to a later date. There was some debate as to whether social events which had the collateral purpose of fundraising were appropriate but it was recognized that, whether or not funds were raised for a specific project at a social evening, such events provided the opportunity for parents to get together.

b) Bullying

It was agreed this topic would be suitable for Forum meetings but specific incidents should be reported to staff directly for appropriate and sensitive handling. Reference was made to the anti-bullying policy at the school, its regular updating and to its dissemination to pupils.

c) Development Plans and Feedback to Parents

There was discussion as to the extent to which development plans should be made available to parents. Currently, the IB was being considered with a view to possible introduction and there were ongoing plans to refurbish the houses on a rolling programme. Other development plans had not yet reached maturity (ex. expanding the Library space and facilities) or were just ideas at present (ex. a Sixth Form block). Some concern was expressed that when fees increased there should be more explanation as to the reasons for that increase. One possible option might be to show by means of graph what percentage of fee income goes on what items ex. salary, buildings maintenance etc. It might also be helpful to explain the causes of some of the rises in costs ex. the increase in heating bill.

d) NAGTY / NAGC

It would be helpful if some more information on these bodies, how and when pupils join them and the opportunities offered by them, could be disseminated. Similarly, information on the European Computers' Drivers License would be helpful as that provides another useful and widely recognised qualification.

e) Role of the Forum

There was general agreement that the Forum should consider heavier weight questions as well as lighter ones (such as social and fund raising events).

Date of next meeting (to be held early in the summer term) would be notified by NCF.

Judy Oliver
(Parent)