

Our second Parents' Forum was held on 8th November 2018 with approximately 60 parents from across the school years attending. Parents had the opportunity to ask individual questions of SLT as well as the Chair of the Board and Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

The evening was overwhelmingly positive and constructive and parents/carers recognised the difficulties of working in school but really appreciated everything we were doing for their children.

Prior to the evening we had asked parents/carers for items that they wished to discuss and the most asked questions were about the following areas (Year 7 parent/carers had the most representation) and so we tried to answer all of the more popular queries as a whole group.

- How classes are set - DT went through the pathways model in KS3, what the colours meant and how this was linked to setting in core subjects. We advised that setting is initially based on KS2 data but that students can move up and down.
- Year 7 homework (too much) During this conversation one parent said it had really fallen off in Year 8 however another parents immediately contradicted them and said that it hadn't for their child which illustrated the subjective nature of homework
- Uniform - quality of the new grey items and plans for the roll out to other year groups. The potential roll out is still under discussion and we are in the process of meeting with suppliers to make them aware of the issues around seams splitting
- Behaviour on the bridge There were increased reports of poor behaviour on the bridge from Year 7s a few weeks ago which is why I and others from SLT have been out on the bridge on a regular basis. In addition SL and NH have also kindly done a survey of Year 7 students to see how widespread the issue might be along with a series of other questions that they are currently analysing. We will then roll this survey out to other year groups to get their views. At the moment the Year 7 team are reporting that incidents are still coming through from time to time but the frequency has gone down.
- Teaching and learning - we spoke to parents/carers about the key T and L priorities staff have been working hard on and so we spoke about PAR/TP and the importance of literacy - we reminded them that the predominant way that children learn new vocabulary after the age of 8 is by reading and that even now their child is in secondary reading is really important and their support invaluable. We also spoke about active learning - eg no hands up, mini whiteboards, brain, book, buddy, boss and other strategies we are encouraging staff to use to try and mix up the learning and encourage deeper learning perhaps through debates and students taking a bit more ownership and being a bit more independent and resilient rather than always relying on the teacher.
- GA also updated parents/carers on Class Charts and dealt with a couple of queries about why parents/carers can't see the poor behaviour marks (we pointed out some parents might be in touch the moment they see a poor behaviour point issued live and want to know why and we don't have the capacity to deal with that but also said that students need a bit of space if they make a mistake to put it right) We did reassure them that staff were being explicit about when they are being given behaviour points since otherwise how would they or the child now - we assured them that the process is to try and diffuse, encourage, warn and support a child if they are becoming off task but if they don't settle to tell them they have now been issued with a point. We did advise that we are trying to make the invisible

visible by making sure those quiet students who work hard everyday are recognised and rewarded - we are still above 80% positive overall.

- We also had some time discussing parents/carers views on what the key values and vision for the school should be - in much the same way as we did with staff at last week's School Improvement Group and will shortly undertake with support staff. We have also done a similar exercise with Governors and will then do this with students with the aim of then trying to amalgamate all these views into a new vision and curriculum statement for the College from September 2019.

The evening ended with SLT and Governors answering any individual questions that parents or carers wished to raise with us.

Overwhelmingly though parents and carers were very supportive and appreciative of the work we are doing while providing really constructive feedback for us.