

Notes from Bishop Ramsey Parents' Link Group meeting

Tuesday 21st June 2016 at 7.00pm

Attended by: Karen Ball (chair: Governor) (CD), Mr A Lunnon (Staff: AHT) (AL), and 9 parents.

1. Welcome to Parents

KB welcomed parents to the meeting, her first as Chair and suggested that a note in the Recorder to urge fathers to attend may be useful (AL).

2. Matters Arising from 2nd February meeting

- **SCITT: School Centre for Initial Teacher Training** continues to progress well with 39 graduates enrolled for September across 9 primary and secondary schools in the borough, with the training centred at Bishop Ramsey.
- **Homework:** the Yr 9 parents present still felt that not enough homework was given and the continued lack of corrections by teachers of grammar/punctuation/handwriting made it very difficult for parents, particularly with it being reported that only one piece of homework needs to be marked in each subject each term, with others just checked, but the checking isn't happening enough. There just seems to be no homework plans and consequences to students if not done. Some Physics and Chemistry classes haven't had homework since the autumn term. Although there was concern that the homework needs to be relevant, in general there was a real concern that Yr 10 students were going to get a shock with the amount needed as the GCSE's came closer. **AL** to raise again. Study Skills sessions are held in Yr 10. Perhaps the 3 year GCSE courses will give teachers the opportunity to be more creative rather than time limited in having to teach purely to the exams.
- **BR Mark 3** now known as Bishop Arden, is being presented to the DofE next week, at the next stage. It was hoped that the site would be in the north of the borough as that is where the places are needed.
- **Girls PE Kit** jogging bottoms or leggings under shorts in the winter can be worn, but only in winter when cold.
- **The isolation room** will have a permanent manager from September.
- **The Student Support Centre Flyers:** **AL** still to check with Mrs Watson.

3. Sports Hall

Work on this starts on 29 June, until mid-November and the adjacent gate will be shut from then. The school has requested Council permission to open the Warrender Way gate during this time. The Sports Hall will be in use during most of the new build, hopefully until mid-September.

4. Mobile Phones

The use of mobile phones by students is to be forbidden at any time of the school day and a letter is to be issued shortly. This is because their use for music at break and lunch is being abused by some. They will be confiscated until the detention has been sat. Should students need to contact home, they can ask a teacher to allow them to do so.

5. Tablets

Still progressing, 6th formers have been piloting these.

6. Social Media

An e-safety evening for parents was to be held in the Autumn term as there was concern that issues on social media are brought into the school.

7. WW1 week

The exhibition and evening to be held next week go alongside curriculum activities based on WW1 as much as possible. Mrs Neale and Mr Jefferies are to be thanked for their work to make this happen.

8. Teacher cover

AL confirmed that should a teacher be on long term sick, other departmental teachers will take the classes affected on a rotating basis, so that classes do not always have supply teachers. Any planned teacher absences are well covered now by using the IT room so students work on prepared material on the pcs.

9. ICT

The dropping of ICT as a core GCSE subject had been poorly communicated to Yr 9 parents and the ICT teachers had been placed in a very difficult position. Whilst parents may be happy that it was dropped, they should have been clearly informed of the reasons why and not just have the subject left out of the pathways booklet.

10. Any Other Business

- It was wondered why Additional maths rather than Statistics was not taught in the extension GCSE maths groups as it may be a better subject for those going on to do A Level.
- Link Books: A 10Y parent asked if Link books were still to be signed as their child's hadn't been checked all year by the form tutor. Other parents agreed that the link books were often not signed by the tutors.
- The Yr 12 parents evening, after Easter was felt to be far too late for any needed intervention. **AL** to check that it was earlier on the calendar for next year.
- 696 bus seems to brake down on the way home regularly, doesn't always stop at all stops and the driving sometimes is reckless. **AL** agreed to put a note in the Recorder urging parents to contact TFL (with details of how to do so) with any complaints.
- Parents praised the success of the Yr 11 Prom and the arrival 'carpet' is done very well. The difficulties of its timing and length were discussed but **AL** stated that the Senior Management Team felt that the current format was best.
- The school seems to have fallen in the league tables but the difficulty of comparing like with like was discussed. A 'bucket of subjects'; the 'best 8' may be the way the tables will be compiled in the future which will allow for a more seamless comparison.

Date of future meetings: TBC.

June 2016