

## Old Buckenham High School | Parent Forum 16.09.2019 | Meeting Minutes

Discussion Item:	Minutes
<p><b>Year 11 GCSE Results 2019</b></p>	<p>Mr Fell introduced the discussion by explaining that the results were not as good as the year before which was disappointing for us as a school. It is clear that we are not in a declining position by looking at the three previous years' results which include the highest progress results the school has seen in 2018. When looking at the English and Maths performance separately, the percentage of students gaining a pass (4) in the subject dropped by 8%. The biggest drop in results was seen in the number of students achieving both English and Maths at a pass and good pass.</p> <p>Although disappointed, it must not be overlooked that there are lots of examples of our young people achieving well. Having said this, as a school and Trust, we take the results seriously and are looking closely at the reasons and our actions.</p> <p>Working with external advisors, inspectors, the Trust and the teachers to identify the reasons behind the results. We are looking from a subject-specific and student/ student-group perspective.</p> <p>On reflection, we have identified that a number of students in our Year 11 (19) did not feel as connected to the school as they should have, and we need to look at how to engage our students fully in the year groups which follow.</p> <p>Mr Fell then went on to give tangible examples of the concrete actions that the school has already taken. These are listed below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We improved the quality of the KS4 curriculum and the options process to ensure that students are on the right courses for them. Student feedback from Y10 students to the Trust review has been that they were pleased with their Options and the process (as guided by an external expert) and are enjoying their courses.</li> <li>2. We have reviewed the KS3 curriculum to ensure that there is proper progression at KS3 in preparation for KS4.</li> <li>3. Having worked with our external curriculum expert, we have reviewed the way our students are grouped. This means that in the majority of subjects at KS3 our students are stranded: taught in mixed, broad groups. The evidence supports that this is the best way to ensure progress in all abilities of learners. We have blocked English, Maths and Science to ensure that movement between groups is possible.</li> <li>4. A forensic look at key under-performing departments and the actions which need to be taken in terms of immediate classroom actions and then further intervention which needs to take place – and what this will look like.</li> <li>5. A newly restructured Pastoral and Progress Team to support children in terms of their pastoral support and also their progress.</li> <li>6. We will continue to work with the Trust to ensure that under-performing subjects are supported by expertise within the Trust.</li> <li>7. We have invested in the school environment in response to student feedback – these improvements are set to continue over the coming years as budgets allow.</li> </ol> <p>A discussion followed where parents asked about whether the low performance of students was picked up prior to the final exams. Mr Fell explained that despite a more extensive programme of intervention taking place between mock exams and the final GCSE exams, we did not see the improvement in performance between students' mocks and their GCSEs. Historically, data shows that students tend to improve on their mock performance by, on</p>

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	<p>average, 1 GCSE grade in each subject. This was not the case this year. A short discussion took place around the revision sessions which will or won't run this year, it was explained that form time targeted intervention will begin – as in previous years – in the next week or so, and that the programme of revision will be determined by taking parent and student feedback.</p>
<b>Homework</b>	<p>A discussion took place regarding homework. A number of parents in the room felt that individual teacher's adherence to the policy was inconsistent when it came to setting and marking homework. Parents felt that Go4Schools is a great tool for tracking homework and would like to see the full functions used. Some parents felt that homework was the key to building a closer relationship between staff and students and also instilling the correct learning habits in students from Year 7.</p> <p>Mr Fell explained that the school will be collecting parent feedback on a number of aspects of the school via a survey, and will make sure that homework is highlighted here. Once parental feedback is collected, the school will review homework and make changes necessary to respond to parent voice.</p>
<b>Behaviour</b>	<p>A discussion took place regarding behaviour within the school. A small number of parents have heard reports from their children on low-level disruption and behaviour which they feel is unacceptable in classrooms. Mr Fell and Mr Taylor explained that the behaviour within the school has been reviewed by a number of external and objective 'inspections'. The school welcomed an ex-HMI inspector who is working with the Trust to review the curriculum within a department. As part of the review, he conducted learning walks and took student voice. He reported a calm and positive culture and good behaviour for learning. In addition Ms Fisher (Trust – Head of Secondary Education) conducted a review of the pastoral system including behaviour today (16.09.19) and her findings agreed that behaviour is good within the school. Mr Fell acknowledged that it is very difficult to get it right in every classroom 100% of the time, and it is important that both parents and students feel that they can report these isolated incidents so that they are dealt with.</p> <p>Parents commented on how easy it is to contact the school via the 'contact us' option on the website, by emailing the Head or by calling the Main School Office.</p> <p>Both parents, the school and Trust agreed that positive relationships between staff and students is essential to ensure that behaviour within classrooms is good, and students feel invested in the school. Mr Fell explained that this has been set out as a priority for staff from the very first staff training days in September.</p> <p>A number of parents reported that their students had great relationships with a number of highly motivated and enthusiastic staff and that they recognise the good work that these members of staff do. The general feeling was that parents would like to see a more consistent approach to building these relationships taken by all staff. They would feel able to support the school more if all members of staff completed the comments box when incidents (positive and negative) are inputted on to Go4Schools.</p>
<b>Jonathan Taylor (Sapientia)</b>	<p>We brought in an ex-HMI inspector to work with us on one department, and listening to what has been said here tonight, it reinforces the fact that we need to raise the overall consistency between the classrooms as there is some very good teaching across the school. We need to be working with and listening to parents; we need to be working with external expertise to support our staff and invest in programmes of training to ensure that teacher's professional development is invested in. We need to ensure that we are ambitious in our expectations of students and we raise the bar. It is important that we get it right throughout a child's school journey and feedback from parents like that we have received tonight is an important ingredient in this.</p> <p>Zoe Fisher has been in the school today speaking to students and staff. Students praised a number of staff and said that they worked hardest where they felt that the teacher cared for</p>

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	<p>them. The feedback from students was very positive about their experiences and the opportunities they are offered.</p>
<b>Staffing</b>	<p>In terms of teacher recruitment – we have just appointed a new head of Technology, a great SENCo and the best English NQT we have ever seen. It is unusual that we are fully staffed without agency staff and supply teachers.</p> <p>We recognise that despite ensuring that our maternity cover in English last year was covered by experienced English teachers, some students struggled to build such a good bond with these teachers as they were new to the school. We are pleased to be fully staffed in all subject areas.</p>
<b>Stakeholder Parent Engagement</b>	<p>Mr Fell explained that we are keen to improve parent and stakeholder engagement and are working with Nicola Furneaux from Framingham Earl (an experienced Head) looking at parental and student engagement and how we improve things even further. We are keen to ensure that we capture parent voice in a survey which will be sent out to all parents this half term. It is clear that parents want clear communication and Year 11 parents will be hearing shortly from the SLT and Ed Taylor (HoY) to introduce key actions and events in place to support students.</p> <p>A small number of parents raised a concern regarding regular face-to-face contact with staff. Mr Fell spoke about the benefits of Go4Schools which allows frequent updates regarding students' behaviour and progress to be accessed by parents. He also explained that the number of parents' evenings the school puts on is in line with the majority of other secondary schools as all schools are restricted by an agreed limit set on Directed Time (the number of hours in a year a member of staff can be required to work). This year we have introduced an online booking system to ensure that parents are able to book appointments with the staff they want to see.</p> <p>We have restructured the pastoral team to employ Heads of Key Stage (Mr Cowan and Mr Taylor). Their responsibility is to look at the progress of all students. Mrs Wabe and Mrs Picksley will focus on the pastoral welfare of all students. We found that with the previous structure of HoY, the HoY spent a lot of time dealing with behaviour and pastoral issues.</p>
<b>Following the meeting</b>	<p>We would like to thank a number of parents who stayed behind to speak to members of SLT and thank the teachers and the school for the improvements they have seen and the hard work which they recognise.</p>
<p><b>Closing statement by JT:</b> Thanks to all of the parents who attended in our best-attended parents' forum. It is important that we continue to work together moving forwards to ensure that all of our students are happy and achieve their potential. We continue to strive to improve the facilities and look at the needs of the school to engage our learners further.</p>	
<p><b>Parents in attendance: 30</b></p>	