

Parent Forum Meeting Minutes

Wednesday 5th February 2025, 5pm via Teams

1) Welcome

Present:

Charlotte Downing – Governor and Chair of Parent’s Forum	E Hobbs R Wood
Sarah Noble – Assistant Headteacher	R Hitchin
Gemma Craig – Assistant Headteacher	T Hill
Sam Moore – Associate Assistant Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form	
Kiera O’Connell – Lead Learner for English	
Jessica Davey – Assistant Headteacher and SENCO	
Katie Dodsley – Clerk	

2) Minutes of the meeting held on 17th December 2024 - approved.

a) Any matters arising not covered by the agenda – none.

b) Matters raised via the Parent’s Forum Questionnaire:

a. Parents to be updated regarding any SEN tests that are conducted on their child. J Davey reported that the process has been tightened. Parents complete a consent form and then the aim is to get feedback to parents within 2 weeks of testing. If the 2 week deadline is unlikely to be met, parents will be told. Results could take longer depending on testing and any external services. Numbers being tested have dramatically increased, with 87 students tested last term, taking a lot of time. It is costly to outsource, therefore a second member of the SEND team is being trained as an assessor, but this takes up to 2 years.

b. Communication between parents and form tutors, more effort should be made. S Noble noted that Form Tutors should make contact home in the first few weeks of the year and they will also be in contact with positive or negative news. Form tutors check in with students daily and should be the first point of contact with any concerns, but it needs to be remembered that teachers have a lot of students to look after. Any suggestions are welcome. A parent noted that their child changed form and the tutor didn’t make contact. S Noble will look into this. A parent asked if there was a communication sent out about the Teams chat facility being disabled as students don’t know how to contact teachers. S Noble noted that the chat facility has been disabled in line with other Meridian schools and it was causing behaviour and safeguarding issues. Students can contact teachers via email and in the class team. **Action:** S Noble will look into if a communication went to parents. A parent had an issue where homework was attached to Teams but a supply teacher couldn’t access it, so they had to deliver the homework. S Noble noted that she will follow up if the details are sent.

c. The way TELLS are given – S Noble described the Ask, Tell, Remove system and gave an example. There are occasions where a Tell will be given without an Ask such as with uniform or forgotten equipment. All details are included in the code of conduct. Staff have had a lot of training on the system and terminology.

d. Distribution of Spirit points, why some teachers give them and others don't. What is the policy/expectation for teachers? The expectation is that 5 Spirit points are given per lesson and at least one golden ticket a day. S Noble reviews the distribution and sends reminders out. Some teachers give more than others, and some year groups seem to have

more. Golden tickets recognise those who do the right thing. Policies can be found here:

<https://www.abbeycollege.cambs.sch.uk/about-us/statutory-information>.

- e. Uniform- could plain black v neck jumpers from any supplier be introduced instead of the more expensive blue trimmed ones from the school suppliers? There are no plans to change the uniform. The current jumpers are optional, and supermarket jumpers do not wear or wash well. Welfare can support, and the pre-loved shop has jumpers available.
- f. Can minutes of Parents Forum meetings be emailed out. Minutes of meetings will be sign posted to in bulletins and emailed to those on the distribution list.

3)SEND - J Davey

Engaging parents pilot – is a new initiative in response to feedback from parents as they want to feel included and involved in their child’s learning. There is a series of online workshops, with the first one by Miss Beel, Y11 RSL, on how to help your child revise. There will be feedback following the sessions.

Consideration was given to recording the sessions, but the preference is for live attendance to show engagement. Presenters have been asked to make around up of the headlines and these will be released. It was positive to see good numbers at tonight’s session.

SEND support group – There are 2 provisional dates which will be released and there will be one for transition support as it is a good opportunity to meet other families. Feedback is positive and the sessions are worth having.

4)Parent Learning Courses - G Craig

The school was awarded the LPPA (Leading Parent Partnership Award). A weak area was parents learning and J Davey is leading on the engaging parents initiative as in item 3. The second stage involves working with the careers department for support with careers, and the third stage involves collaborating with an external adult learning provider to offer support to parents. The school will continue to advertise local learning. It was asked if the school is aware of the DWP offer for getting people back to work. The Careers Department look at offers and advertise all that are appropriate.

5)Wider Reading Strategy - K O’Connell

The English department are trialling initiatives and would like feedback and suggestions on improving reading and the reading ethos in school. The current trend post Covid, is that students have a weaker reading age when arriving in Y7. Interventions are put in place, the library is open during breaks and lunch times, there is a Y7 reading challenge and a reading graduation in Y8, as well as related OOPS.

A parent noted that children were read to a lot as small children but it is harder to get them to read now they are older. A parent suggested starting a book club for parents to encourage reading at home and set a good example for children. This could also encourage conversations about reading at home. It would also be nice for parents to see the library.

It was asked if there is a workshop on this as a part of the engaging parents series of workshops and there is.

A parent noted that they were not aware of the reading challenge and reluctant readers won’t share information, it would be good to have a communication home.

It was asked if the school takes part in the Carnegie Shadowing scheme. The scheme was described and the school does not take part but it could be a part of an OOP if there is a demand for it. <https://carnegies.co.uk/take-part/>

Action: KO to feedback on progress in the summer term.

6) Fundraising and Finance Update

T Hill runs the preloved uniform shop and there is £1142 in funds (less £300 donation to Welfare). The process for spending was described, and the school will consider areas for future donations. Previous donations have supported maths, the library, and the wellbeing garden.

7) Items for the next Agenda

- Email K Dodsley or use the survey
- J Davey to feedback on parent courses.

8) AOB

Concerns were raised about double yellow lines on Abbey Road and parents parking there. S Noble will include a message in the parent newsletter, but there is no capacity to staff the area during arrival times. **Action:** Pass concerns to the road safety team.

Thanks to all have given time to support and for feedback.

9) **Date of the Next Meeting:** TBC