

Felsted Parents Group
Monday 28th January 2019

1. **Apologies:** a number of apologies were given prior to the meeting, but the following people were in attendance: CW, AG, LI, NC, GK, CG, SA, JJ, BS, SS, AHL, SHL, GR, OS, JH, KB, RD, AH, HW, AB, DS, KP, JD, CC, BR, HG, JM, Staff: CJT, NIJL, GWSM, RJP

2. **Felsted Diploma** - Ms Purdy (RJP) gave an update on the diploma, and talked about increase in uptake, and broader range of options to enter on the diploma. Uptake is increasing, but only gradually at this stage. All Year 11 are now used to the programme (and those below) and this is having an impact. Awards have gone up in Year 11 and Year 13, increasing year on year. The criteria are quite strict for some of the awarding, although there are different levels for the award. RJP has started adding in a weekly diploma of the week entry in the Newsletter, which is designed to give some flavour of what the Diploma can be about.
Questions - what is the objective? Awards or engagement rate?
RJP answered: two key goals are to see engagement with the Diploma increasing and awards increasing up to 25%. Process is more important than the award at the end. Also silver and bronze awards given out that recognise the effort, without quite covering all the categories.
Who does the marking?
RJP oversees all of the Diplomas, so can pick up when pupils (or Tutors) are not properly engaging with the system. Tutors are spoken to about this regularly (termly) and pupils are given some time to get started on the Diploma through Tutor time, when appropriate.
A document was also handed out showing the new categories that have been brought into the Diploma in the last 12 months (attached).

3. **Minutes from previous meeting** - actions
 - a) The Diploma (see above).
 - b) Annual trip list - now available online and in the calendar.
 - c) Open Day Visits procedure - this has been simplified, but still needs the individual to communicate in good time to their HM, in order to get the process started.
 - d) Wellbeing Action Plan - following this work, the school has had its assessment for the award, and the award should be confirmed in the next few days. Thank you to those who contributed.
 - e) Alcohol policy - this is still being finalised, although some changes have been put in place.
 - f) Traffic in the village - after a lot of further discussions, the Prep School is considering a trial of staggered finish times to make the evening pick up less difficult.

- g) Provision of activities - we are working towards a combination of choice, and assigned activities, to ensure that pupils are 'in' activities from the start of the year, but also have a range of choice during each year.
- h) Development Project - the school is about to go for planning permission for the teaching and learning block. More information will follow shortly.
- i) Postcodes for away matches - these are now shared via Twitter (in case of changes) and are available on the website. A suggestion was made that these should be included in the emails confirming fixtures.

4. Items from houses

- a) A concern was raised over pupils being left at the end of trips (arriving back late) to go back to house, unaccompanied. **This will be addressed.**
- b) The heating in Gepp's (and Deacon's) was raised. **This is currently being addressed.**
- c) It was asked whether there was a schedule available for mock exams. **This will be shared.**
- d) Charges for books on bills (lower school). **This will be looked into.**
- e) Year 9 options confirmation - a request was made for the deadline to be pushed back from the Monday to give parents time to ask questions of teachers, if necessary. **The deadline has been moved back to Thursday.**

5. Mobile phone agreement

A proposed document for parents/families to use for mobile phone use was shared with the group. The suggestion was that some parents might be willing to trial this, and provide feedback. There was a healthy discussion over the approach and format, and there was no general agreement as to how best to proceed in the longer term. **ACTION: Volunteers to trial and feedback to CJT**

6. Digital strategy

CJT updated the group on the imminent advertisement for a Director of Digital Strategy, who will be tasked with increasing uptake in Computer subjects, supporting staff delivery, and helping to drive forward the school's approach in this area.

7. Printed Calendar

A discussion took place as to whether an online app or website could be used to replace the printed calendar (which is expensive). Parents (generally) found the paper calendar useful, although children are not that bothered. Develop an app that will take the dates straight into your calendar, and that could then enable the printed calendar to be replaced, but this would not be popular immediately!

8. Confirmation service

NIJL asked for views on whether there is an interest in Confirmation Service and Lent Address service. It was unclear how aware some parents and pupils were about this service although the school would like the service to run on an annual basis if at all possible.

9. Life skills for students

Parents were tasked with coming up with some key skills that they would like their sons or daughters to learn through 'life skills education' while at Felsted. Each table came up with some suggestions, which are summarised as follows:

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| First aid x3 | Self defence | Finance: Budgeting/banking, financial planning advice (e.g. mortgages, credit cards and pensions) x5 |
| Domestic science (cooking, ironing, washing, cleaning shoes, fixing buttons) x5 for cooking | CV preparation at an earlier age | Dancing/ballroom |
| Interview techniques | Good manners/etiquette x3 | Fitting a plug |
| Civility and kindness | Community awareness/service | How to find your way in a transportation context x2 |
| Digital skills e.g. touch typing | Car maintenance (windscreen, changing tyres, air pressure etc) | Cover letters and formal emails |
| How to deal with confrontation and difficult conversations | How to apply natural looking makeup | Home emergency skills (how to put different types of fires out) |

The school will look into how best to deliver some or all of these skills.

10. 29th March

CJT updated parents with the school's approach and plans for Brexit. In short, European families (current and prospective) will be contacted to be reassured that we have plans in place, and to offer support and guidance about getting right to remain documentation in place. The school is watching updates closely, in order to determine next steps, but there will be a communication before half term.

11. Website

A question was asked about what information was available for sports reports, results, etc. on the Felsted website. Although there is information, it is not always easy to find, and we are currently part of the 'SOCS' school sports website, but not making good use of this resource. More work will be done to follow up on this, and ensure that we provide good and clear information to parents (and pupils) via the website.

12. Communication around charities

A concern was raised that it was not always clear when and what money was being raised for which charity. In helping the pupils to learn about the value of giving, it is important that they understand what is being asked, why, and what impact it has. Completing this cycle is essential to good fund-raising. This will be a focus for the future. It was also reported that the houses and school forum are now having much more say in the charities with which the school engages at various different levels

Parents were told about the visits to the Night Shelter (Felsted Mission) on 4th February and 25th February, and invited to let NIJL know (nijl@felsted.org) if they would like to go along to see the Night Shelter in action.

13. Parent/pupil feedback

A question was asked as to whether the school could get regular feedback (on an annual basis) from pupils, perhaps through an outside agent. There were reasons why this would be difficult (survey overload, cost, time to analyse and use of the information), but none of these reasons was strong enough to suggest that this would not be useful information, and over time would build up some interesting patterns. With the ease of online surveys, doing this in house, rather than through an external provider, seems a better approach. **We will select a good stage of the year to put this in place.**

It was also suggested that it would be helpful to get views from those leaving the school. Ideally this would be a face to face interview, but this would be so difficult with the time demands that it would make more sense to use an online survey for this, with some fairly generic questions, but the chance for open feedback to be given. Feedback here could focus more on negative points, but those are useful for improvements. **We will try to get this in place for this year.**

A question was asked about getting instant feedback information from parents, perhaps through a quick survey each week on the newsletter. If the technology allows, we will try to get that in place as soon as possible.

14. Door entry cards for houses

GWSM updated on progress with this and confirmed that the remaining houses will be getting the ID entry cards in the coming weeks and months.

15. AOB

Any points of AOB raised are included under point 4 above

16. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 13th May 2019, CRDR (7pm)

Protocol for use of phones

Parents are asked to sign up to this protocol. The school will not attempt to monitor this, but encourages all parents to share good practice in this important area.

- No phones at the dinner table
- Phone stays downstairs (or away from bedroom) overnight
- Device free days will be used occasionally to break habits
- School days - not to be picked up until you are up
- School days - to be put down 30 minutes before bed time
- Use responsibly and not let it dominate your day
- The family signs up for this, not just the child
- Social media is only to be used positively

Please sign below

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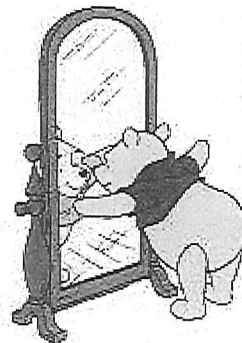
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Felsted Diploma – New categories from Sept 2018



Self REFLECTION

The Felsted Diploma will still operate in the same fashion as previously; Tutors will work with their tutees to encourage and support them in completing entries throughout the year.

The categories have been updated this year to ensure a broad coverage of key areas across the school:

- **Academic Study & Independent Learning**
 - Covers any aspect of academic life at school - can be general commentary on progress or a reflection on a specific event such as mock exams.
- **Art, Music, Drama & Culture**
 - Covers academic and co-curricular aspects; students may reflect on their time preparing and/or rehearsing for events; any student who is not part of an Arts & Cultures dept or event should aim to view and write about at least one event per term.
- **Careers (Years 9, 10 & 11)**
 - More Careers events/talks/lessons are being worked into the lower school programme; students should reflect on their experiences of these and any other steps they have taken to prepare themselves for further study and life beyond.
- **Careers, Work Experience & Volunteering (Years 12 & 13)**
 - As above but with additional focus on first hand career experience.
- **Challenge & Skill**
 - Any activity that students feel challenge them or offer an opportunity to develop a skill. DofE, CCF, and the Mon/Fri activities are more likely to feature here.
- **Internationalism**
 - As in previous years, students should commit themselves to some aspect of the International life of the school. This could be through an event like MUN or the Round Square.
- **Reading Challenge**
 - Please see NSH for more detail on the specifics of the Reading challenge; as in previous years, students can aim for Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum reading awards.
- **Leadership, Service & Environmentalism (Years 10, 11, 12 & 13)**
 - Any activity that demonstrates the school ethos towards leadership and service; environmentalism has been added to reflect the Round Square principles. Any charity work/support may also feature here.
- **Sport**
 - Students have the opportunity to reflect on their sporting development throughout the year.