

Felsted Parents' Group Minutes

Monday 21st May 2018

1. Apologies – a number of apologies were given prior to the meeting, but the following people were in attendance: JW, MS, LK, AB, MT, NR, TH, VM, SA, SK, AH, LC, BR, CG, SS, BS, CS, KP, JM, CW Staff: CJT, GWSM, AGC

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

a. Stebbing Road crossing – unfortunately things have not moved forward as hoped with this. The school has made funds available to do this, but the local authority have now decided that they will have to consult more widely before this is done. **Action: the school will continue to press (Bursar)**

b. Felsted Diploma – a further update will be given at next term's meeting on further changes and developments to the diploma. **Action: update at next term's meeting (CJT)**

c. Performing Arts questionnaire is still to be done. **Action: this will take place in the second half of this term (with pupils), and will help to inform developments for next year (GWSM)**

d. Exam timetables were confirmed as having been sent out to parents.

e. EPQ appeal – parents were updated on the ongoing appeal, which will see an official hearing on 12th June. **Action: parents to be kept updated on progress (CJT)**

f. Pupil behaviour – a new procedure for pupil intervention (both academic and behavioural) was outlined to parents. This is currently being shared with staff, with a view to introducing formally in September. **Action: parents to feedback next term on first impressions of this approach**

3. Change to charitable objects

The Bursar explained why the school had written out to some parents about a change in the charitable objects. A question was asked as to whether it was a good thing to retain the line favouring children born to Essex parents or resident in the county of Essex. The reasons were given for needing to change this (to reflect practice and admissions policy).

4. Parent Dinner and Meeting Timings

The Group was asked to consider the best times for evening events when parents are asked to come into school. General consensus favoured 7.30pm for dinner events, although some shorter information evenings would be better earlier. **Action: Calendar Committee to continue to consider appropriate times for parents.**

5. Proposed changes to reporting system (GWSM)

Mr Masters outlined the proposal to change reporting for next year, to shorten reports, and focus on progress, rather than effort. A question was raised as to how houses would use this, when the 'effort' tables were used well to reward pupils, and these rewards were popular. The same question had been raised at the Housemasters and Housemistresses meeting, but it was felt that the progress score could be used in the same way, and that the new reporting would help to focus on progress and getting pupils to work towards targets.

Action: further consultation on reports internally, and then communication to pupils and parents. Parents to feedback on first impressions at one of next year's meetings.

6. Tattoos

A question was asked as to what the school policy was on tattoos. Currently, there is nothing in the rules specifically about tattoos, and this could open the door for pupils to get tattoos that would be visible. **Action: Mr Masters to adjust rules, along the lines that tattoos are not permitted for pupils while at school, but if anyone does have a tattoo, they must cover them up at all times at school.**

7. Annual Trip List

Some frustration was expressed that a lot of information about trips is coming out quite late, and making it hard for parents to plan ahead. Mr Masters reported that work is currently being done on this, and a 12 month rolling list will be published on the website from July this year. **Action: List to be published on website (GWSM)**

8. Major Incident Policy

In relation to a recent incident in the village, a question was asked as to whether the school has a major incident policy. It was confirmed that there is one in place, and that senior staff will be undergoing training in the second half of term in managing a major incident.

9. Opportunities for parents to come into school

The general feeling was that there are the right number of opportunities for parents to come into school currently. Some improvements for parents unable to get to parents' meetings, and an early chance to meet Tutors would be appreciated. **Action: school to look again at parents' meetings and communications to parents not able to be present. Also, to look at an early opportunity for parents to meet with Tutors.**

10. Cost of Exams

Several parents commented that the cost of exams had been an unwelcome addition to this term's bills. This was particularly the case, with the timing (with the letter about fee increase followed by this bill). **Action: CJT to investigate further on current costs, previous costs, and what normal practice is at other schools**

11. House Feasts

A question was asked as to whether Mont's and Manor could have separate Feasts in 2018-19. This was generally felt to be a good idea, given the numbers likely to be in the Day Houses next year. **Action: separate dates to be calendared for the two houses to have Feasts.**

12. Half Term Letter

CJT outlined the plan to write to parents about parties, drugs and alcohol before half term. A couple of parents agreed to read over the letter and feedback before it went out.

13. Space available for Day Houses

A question was asked about whether the day houses had sufficient space for the number of pupils likely to be in them in September. CJT reassured parents that plans were being finalised to make sure that this was the case.

14. AOB

Parents who had at one point had children in FPS would get the opportunity to contribute towards a leaving gift for TJS (in support of the Parents' Association in the Prep School) Those parents who will be leaving the group at the end of this term (and for whom this was therefore their last meeting) were thanked for their contribution and support to the school.

15. Date of Next meeting

Monday 8th October, 7pm (CRDR)

CJT, 2nd June 2018

