



George Stephenson High School

George Stephenson High School Parents' Forum Meeting

Monday 13 May 2019

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Update on Key Issues and Events

Lynn Simpson shared photographs and information on various trips, visits and events that have been happening since the previous meeting: the Careers Zone for Year 9 (February 2019) in which professionals from a range of industries and backgrounds provided students with an introduction to different careers; *The Little Shop of Horrors* School Production (March 2019); Year 7 Health and Wellbeing Cookery Classes; Year 10 Illustrational and Graphics Trip; Year 10 Art/Textiles trip to London, including a visit to the Dior Exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum; The Race for Sheila in memory of English and Drama teacher Sheila Hall which raised over £1000 for St Oswald's Hospice (April 2019); "Medical Mavericks", workshops for Year 9 students which introduced them to techniques used by the medical profession; "Walking Talking Mocks" in English and Maths for Year 11 in which teachers talked students through GCSE exam papers in the hall to help them understand how to best approach each type of question; Year 7 iLearn exhibition at the The White Swan; The Girls Network, a programme which involves 24 of our Year 9 and 10 girls and aims to help raise aspirations and give them opportunities which will help them to get started in their chosen careers; the introduction of the new outdoor canopy and more activities at break and lunchtime for students on the yard; speed reading tests for Year 10 designed to identify students who will need some intervention to help them get up to the required reading speed to access the GCSE exams; NE12 Sixth Form Open Evening; GCSE Set for Success Evening (March 2019) which aimed to give parents advice on how to support their child through the GCSE exams; Year 11 revision sessions delivered by sixth formers; Yr 8 mental health Assemblies; Year 10 Trip to Cambridge University; Hot Choc Friday and Golden Ticket rewards; Year 9 Futrureme events at Northumbria and Newcastle Universities; and the next round of professional photographs that we have planned to keep publications and the website up to date.

3. School Improvement Update

Ian Wilkinson shared our school aims and values:

At George Stephenson High School we value the individual differences of our students, encourage them to succeed in everything they do and help them to become caring, confident and responsible young people.

He also highlighted three key areas for improvement:

- Outcomes
- Attendance
- Governance

Outcomes

Ian shared the data just released from School Performance Tables for KS4 results 2018, which we are delighted with: our Average Attainment 8 Score is 48.3, an increase on the previous year and third highest in the authority; our average grade at GCSE was just below Grade 5, classed as a strong pass and equivalent almost to a grade B. (Grade 4 is classed as a standard pass and is roughly equivalent to a Grade C.) When prior attainment is factored in, we are even more proud of these results. Our Progress 8 Score was 0.04, which means that our students across the board are making expected progress and making us the second highest performing school in North Tyneside on this measure.

Attendance

Ian reported that we are delighted that overall attendance has improved from 94.3% to 95.3% for the same period last year. Attendance for disadvantaged students has also improved from 92.4% to 92.6%. Persistent absence has reduced from 14% to 10.2% and persistent absence for disadvantaged students has also reduced from 23.6% to 21.8%.

Attendance at Parents' Evenings.

Ian also shared our delight at how attendance at parents' evenings has also risen significantly over the last 7 years:

71.1% 2012-2013

72.0% 2013-2014

76.1% 2014-2015

77.3% 2015-2016

80/3% 2016-2017

76.9% 2017-2018

80.2% 2018-2019

The attendance of parents from disadvantaged families has also improved:

53.7% 2012-2013

57.3% 2013-2014

59.7% 2014-2015

62% 2015-2016

63.6% 2016-2017

56.3% 2017-2018

60.09 % 2018-2019

Governance

Ian reported that the school had undergone a governance review following our last Ofsted Inspection and that our Governors are a particularly strong group at the moment.

We have also recently elected a new chair of Governors, Andrew Elliott, who has been a governor for some time. Our parents Governors are Kimberly Flynn, Angela Henderson, who is the new vice chair, Joanne Sharp, Helen Tovey and Ruth Valentine.

4. Parental Issues

Parents raised the following questions/issues

What can parents do to help students to learn and achieve? Would it be possible to have more information about what

Action

A Guide for Parents to help support with GCSEs is currently being prepared and will be issued to Year 10 and 11 parents in the Autumn term. A Parent Guide to Learning for Year 7 parents is already issued every year and is currently under review in preparation for next year; A Parent Guide to Learning Year 8 and 9 to follow asap.

We are also currently exploring the possibility of introducing more parent information evenings - ideally one for each year group - designed to help parents support their child with his/her learning.

Would it be possible to have a suggested reading list on the website?

Action

Reading lists for KS3 and KS4 are ready and about to go “live” on the website; a KS5 reading list currently being prepared and due to go “live” very soon.

When will year 9 students know if they have got their option choices?

Response

All students will have their first choices unless they have been told otherwise.

Would it be possible for “middle of the road” students who do everything right to get more recognition/rewards?

Action

Lynn to raise this concern with Kath Williams, Deputy Head, as we evaluate and hopefully improve our new behaviour and rewards system; it is something that we are already very aware of.

What is happening with year 12 Media classes during the Curriculum Leader’s absence?

Response

The timetable has been reorganised to allow the very experienced Media teacher, who is currently covering a maternity leave with us, to take on almost all of the year 12 lesson; the one period that cant be covered by him is being supervised but the Sixth Form Guidance Team and the students are being set independent learning tasks by the Media teacher to complete during this time.

Would it be possible to have more affordable residential trips for students as well as the ski trip.

Action

Lynn to mention this with the rest of the Leadership Team.

5. Discussion Item: How can we best support student wellbeing, especially during exam times?

Action

Lynn to share the results with Steve Tyson, Assistant Headteacher responsible for Exams and Data, and to use them to help plan for 2019-20.

6. Dates of next meetings:

Tuesday 8 October 6.00 - 7.15pm

Wed 29 January 6.00 - 7.15pm

Thursday 14 May 6.00 - 7.15pm

Lynn reminded parents to please email her directly at lsimpson@gshs.org.uk if anyone needs to contact her about anything in the meantime.

Meeting closed at 7.15pm.