

Feedback information for parents

Main Discussion – Reporting on Academic Progress	School response:
<p>Mr Stabler (Deputy Headteacher) introduced himself to the group and outlined the purpose of the meeting to seek the views of parents on the current reporting system.</p> <p>The school reports students' progress in 3 ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents Evenings • Reports (3 times a year) • Feedback in class, leading to Learning Logs in the planner <p>Parents Evenings:</p> <p>These have been discussed / addressed at Parent Forum meetings before, but one parent said that she had been to two recently (one on the upper site and one on the lower site) and both were “well run”.</p> <p>Lower site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents agreed that the very first Parents Evenings can be overwhelming and daunting. • General feedback however suggests that the Lower site Parents Evenings seem to be the best they can be, given the environment. • Some parents said they quite liked the fact that smaller rooms were used as an off-shoot to the main hall. • It was also reported that during recent Parents Evenings, some teachers called out pupil's names, which helped with the system. • Parents agreed that Maths and English consultations always seem the most problematic, because of the number of students involved. <p>Upper site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was acknowledged that by Year 12 Parents Evenings get simpler, as there are not so many teachers to see. <p>The possibility of parents booking appointments online in the future (rather than pupils making the appointments) was discussed, although it was generally agreed that similar problems would be encountered. It was asked if there'd be scope for additional time with teachers, if parents felt this was required.</p>	<p>The suggestion that teachers call out the names of the next appointment at Parents' Evenings will be passed on to staff.</p> <p>Allocating extra time for specific consultations really depends on the volume of appointments made by each teacher. In addition some parents may be seen by the Learning Leader or a Senior staff member about specific issues.</p>

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Reports:

Reports are issued 3 times a year, in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. Current Year 9, 10 and 11 receive their reports in paper form. Year 7, 8 and 6th Form via MCAS. A form tutor comment is included in the summer term only.

- Initially parents said that they would like more personal written information about their child, but then appreciated the fact that if a teacher has 600 reports to write, this is almost impossible to do!
- One parent said that there was not enough narrative; just numbers (which are useful, but seem to lack detail) and the reports seem to have become subjective rather than factual. One parent said that just being told your child is “making progress” on their flight path doesn't really give parents the information they need. She said that in the past reports were number based but also factual.
- The same parent said that her son seemed de- motivated with the report – saying that he just wasn't good at one of the subjects where his grade was lower than the others.

Note: The A-E grades are being replaced with grades 9-1 over the next year or so. This will happen in English & Maths this year (2017) and all other subjects next year (2018). Please see the school website for further details.*

Feedback in Class:

On a really positive note one parent said that because the school have consulted her son about what he feels he can achieve, he seems more empowered. Almost like the consultation has resulted in his 'ownership'.

Other discussion points (raised by parents):

Open evenings:

These are held for prospective Year 7, Year 10, and 6th Form students.

- It was acknowledged that students were always polite, and well-turned out at open evenings. One parent said that having these “free floating” students around on the night worked really well, especially with helping the younger pupils feel comfortable.

The lack of levels for reporting is beyond the school's control as they have been withdrawn from Key Stages 2 and 3. Teachers are no longer focused on the GCSE C/D grade, but instead on the importance of every child's progress, based upon the new “Progress 8” system.

Teachers use their professional judgment to determine the progress of each child against their individual flight path, based on assessments and the work produced. There is the need for a balance between written comments and numbers, so that the summer report has scope for comments by the form tutor to provide context.

Regarding de-motivation, All Saints is now placing more emphasis on equipping students with 'resilience'.

It is agreed that All Saints pupils are very clear about what their Target grades and Projected grades are.

The same “free floating” approach will be taken at future 6th form open evenings so that Sixth formers who act as guides will be instructed to take parents to where they request and then leave them before going onto pick up other families.

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- Feedback about the 6th form open evening included a difficulty moving around the site and that student guides were not always available.
- One parent said that there was “too much information and not enough time”. It was suggested that when choosing ‘A’ levels, 2 hours was just not enough time, even though there had been an introduction beforehand.
- Feedback forms were provided on the night (with a box to deposit them in)

Signage around both sites is under review and new signs will be displayed on an ongoing basis. The sites do require some getting use to by parents and pupils new to the school!

The school received around 30 completed feedback sheets, which were generally positive indicating an informative evening with a good atmosphere and praise for our stewards. One raised the issue of people were waiting outside in the cold as one of the talks was overrunning.

The issue of how parents contact school, including the use of emails, is under review at this time. A definitive response will be given after consideration of the amount of time available for staff to respond to emails.

A new exams officer has been in place since November and is looking at all aspects of our examination system. Currently entry levels are determined by subject teachers and entered to the exam boards by February half-term, which is communicated to students, followed by an examination timetable in March. How parents can get this information more efficiently, along with further guidance about examinations, is to be looked at.

Communicating with school:

One of the main points raised by parents at this meeting was about how parents can get an effective dialogue going with the school, especially if there is a problem. Parents agreed that communications are not as effective as they could be, and that it sometimes takes too long for the school to get back to parents when there is an issue.

Parents agreed that it is difficult to get in touch with relevant people at school, and that it would be very useful to have a Learning Leader / Head of Year email contact or extension number, rather than having to go through reception. It seems that generally parents are not happy with a generic email, and would much prefer specific contact details. This is something that has also been brought up at Parent Forum meetings in the past. They would ideally also like to be able to communicate with specific teachers, if appropriate.

GCSE's – Foundation or Higher level?

One parent (via email) wanted clarification on how parents are informed which level of GCSE their children will take (i.e. Foundation or Higher level)

Parents agreed that an explanation was needed about this, with regard to:

When it is decided?

How it is decided?

Who decides?

What flexibility there is on this?

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Agenda for next meeting:

- MCAS
- Additional items to be determined later by suggestion.

If you do have any comments / suggestions on any of the above, or on any other aspect of school life, then please do email us your thoughts on our dedicated email address:

parentforum@allsaints.york.sch.uk

Thank you,

The Parent Forum Team