

Minutes of the Parents' Forum Meeting 23rd September 2008

There was a good range of attendance by year group represented:

Yr 7	Yr 8	Yr 9	Yr 10	Yr 11	Yr 12
3	8	2	4	2	1

Mr Danks introduced himself as the new Chair and welcomed all parents and Mr Galbraith.

The minutes of the last meeting were looked at and Mr Danks updated parents on progress with reports and lunchtime arrangements.

Mr Gray presented the proposed new look school website, and asked for parental feedback. The design of the website and its look were given broad approval.

Particular suggestions related to being able to find/search policies, the calendar and forthcoming events being shown, access to department and year group information, the idea of a pupil inputted page for groups such as FAB, a suggestions/comment page or access to the existing blog and contact details of staff.

Mr Gray welcomed the breadth of suggestions and promised to look at the viability of each one in completing the design of the website. It is intended that the website will be 'live' by the next meeting, where parents can again give feedback.

The main item on the agenda was the transition of pupils between key stages. The discussion looked at several points in the transition process. These are show below:

Open week – The value of the tours during open week were questioned. A more active approach for pupils was encouraged.

Open evening – Parents with pupils in yr7 said that they enjoyed the interactive nature of events in some classrooms last year but that these tended to be in D&T and science. Mr Danks assured them that the aim for this year was for all subject areas to have activities. Other issues included parents knowing their way around, speakers introducing themselves and having a timetable of events with locations for the evening. Mr Danks will take these ideas back to the Senior Leadership Team.

School Visits – there was praise for the visits that took place last year using Yr9 students prior to the induction days. It was felt to be very important for the school to make curriculum based visits the primary schools as often as possible and for primary pupils to visit Hatton for workshops in particular subjects. Both of these, particularly the latter, were approved of. It was felt that these need to be happening throughout the year, and that collaborative working with primary schools resulting in open days in core subjects would be best at the end of yr 5.

Induction Days – Parents were very unhappy that parts of the induction days were used for CAT tests. It was felt that testing took away from the positive experience that pupils were hoping for and made the days overly traumatic for some. There were also issues of whether pupils were expecting

to be tested and whether parents had been informed. Mr Galbraith explained the reasoning behind the decision to undertake CAT tests during induction was to allow setting in core subjects from the beginning of Yr7. Some parents felt that either CAT tests could be done in September, as in the previous year, or that the primary schools could administer them.

It was also suggested that secondary and primary school could co-operate over project based work that would form a link between the two. Pupils could start projects in the primary schools and bring them to the secondary schools at the start of term. Given the number of primary and secondary schools involved it was felt that this idea might be better discussed at WEP.

A.O.B.

Parents asked that more communication of after-school clubs and classes be provided for them. Mrs Forbes said she hoped to be sending information out soon.

Questions were also asked about uniform and the ability to pre-order this earlier in the year once confirmation of a place at Hatton has been confirmed. Answers are being sort and will be communicated.

The date of the next meeting was set for 18th November at 7pm. The first agenda item will be an introduction to the House system. Other agenda items are welcome from parents and can be emailed to Mr Danks nearer the date.