



Parents' Forum Minutes

Minutes of Meeting

2018 -2019



Parents' Forum

1st November at 5:15pm – 6:30pm

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Actions

All present were welcomed to the meeting and introduced themselves. Terms of Reference were circulated.

2. Year 7 Transition

Mrs Somerville informed parents the Year 7 students had settled well into the Academy and advised this was a big year group with 325 students on roll. Parents were asked for feedback and comments included:

- Those children who are not resilient should have a buddy possibly someone they already know. The Academy should ask parents who they want their kids to be with.
- Children from smaller primary school have found it hard moving to a large school
- Year 7 area is always too full and some students are not able to access this. Mrs Somerville agreed to look into making this fairer. Mrs R Somerville
- Open days for Y5 were good.
- It was agreed for the VLE powerpoint to be shared with parents on how to access. Mrs R Somerville
- There have been mixed messages about homework as to whether this should be printed or emailed. Some parents were not able to print homework and had to copy this into another application
- Students being given homework on Hegarty Maths tasks to complete which were not then put on the VLE causing confusion.
- Parents were advised that if homework is not on the VLE then the child should not be reprimanded
- Parents requested for students to have an induction on how to use the VLE, This was completed at the start of term, however it was accepted that student had a lot of new information to take in. Mrs R Somerville
- Parents suggested for Parent and Child sessions to be offered on how to use the VLE. Mrs Somerville agreed to explore this.
- Parents asked for FAQ on how to use the VLE to be available for parents
- Parents asked for staff to be mindful of parents who are not able to access the VLE.

Mrs Somerville discussed that following feedback the homework for KS3 had been revised and tasks are more relevant and include good activities, students overwhelmed, by amount and volume. Now more refined this term.

Parents reminded that the Academy are moving away from sending paper letters and are instead using bitly links which are posted on facebook and sent via text messages, letters are also uploaded onto the VLE and website.

3. Welfare and Behaviour

Mr Ward introduced himself, and provided a presentation to parents which reviewed the information on the VLE and Classcharts. Parents were advised that attendance is a high priority for the Academy and a new approach is to be introduced. The expectation will be that any missed work will have to be completed. The attendance officer will send text messages to parents of students who have 100% attendance each week. Prizes will also be issued to students who have 100% attendance.

Parent were asked for their views on having access to the behaviour screen on Classcharts and the consensus was this would be beneficial however there was not enough information and parents asked for an email which included more detail on the behaviour.

Parents were informed that students in KS3 and 4 had been given a reflective diary to complete which maps targets for the upcoming Assessment windows.

4. Opportunities beyond the classroom

Parents were shown the schedule of enrichment activities and were advised that due to the Academy trialing a paperless system, these would be promoted via facebook, the website, and text messages. Parents were informed that activities are open to all students and that teachers keep registers of who has attended.

It was agreed that Tutors would be asked to remind students of the activities.

Mr Ward

5. AOB

Parents were informed student uniform had improved overall, however there were still some issues with length of girls skirts.

Parents were informed that students should wear wellies and coats during the winter season and lockers have been provided for these items to be stored.

Parents were informed that the Careers Fayre will be organized by a Company called Northern Rights, who will liaise with local companies. All students will receive some careers support during the course of the Academic Year.

Dates of future meetings will be circulated.



Parents' Forum

Minutes

7th March at 5:15pm – 6:30pm

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and suggested that Parents obtain a copy of the Terms of Reference.

2. Matters Arising and minutes of previous meeting

Item 2 Page 1 – Year 7 Area - Mrs Somerville confirmed the access and use of the Year 7 area was reviewed and students are now more confident moving around the Academy. There are not as many students accessing the area during break times.

VLE – Mrs Somerville confirmed the powerpoint has been added to the website. Parents were informed that Mr Crowder is available on Parents Evenings to support parents with any queries they have with accessing the VLE.

Item 3 Page 2 – Attendance – Mrs Somerville informed parents that there was a reward for students whose attendance was above 95%.

3. Reporting Home

Mrs Jackson discussed the methods used to report home to parents, these include; data reports (three times per year), written reports (once per year) and Parents Evenings.

Parents commented that the Data report is useful, but some found the assessment results confusing. The reports from last year were more easy to understand. Parents found the written reports to be more useful. Parents also like to have face to face discussions with teachers as this was an opportunity to ask questions.

Parents were informed that following assessments students were allowed to take these and workbooks home as this gives parents an opportunity to see the work that has been completed.

4. Class Charts

Mrs Somerville discussed Class charts now being available for all parents to access. Parents were informed that a letter and log-ins had been issued but there had been a problem with some so all were being re-issued.

A parent commented that she had experienced difficulties with contacting her child's Year Manager and stated that meetings were cancelled and not re-arranged and that phone calls were not returned. Mrs Somerville agreed to explore this further.

Action: Mrs Somerville

5. Social Media

Mrs Somerville discussed the range of social media that the Academy is using to share good news and to communicate with parents and the community. This includes facebook and twitter. Parents were issued with the twitter address for the Technology Department. There were mixed views with some parents preferring facebook to twitter. Some parents had problems with the bitly links not always working properly.

Parents raised concern about negative comments being made about staff and the Academy on Consett Chatterbox facebook page, and asked if the Academy ever respond to them. Mrs Somerville advised that the Academy are aware but it is not always appropriate to comment. A letter will be circulated to parents shortly reminding parents to contact the Academy if they have concerns.

Action: Mrs Somerville

6. Curriculum

Mrs Somerville discussed the curriculum model that the Academy uses. Student are now studying GCSEs over three years due to the complexity and challenge of the subjects. Due to the way the curriculum has been designed it is possible for students to trial subjects and change pathways if necessary.

Parents commented that the three year GCSE was a good idea however felt that some students were being pushed towards some subjects.

7. AOB

Parents were informed there is a vacancy for a Year 9 Parent member.

Mrs Somerville asked for feedback on the Academy uniform and circulated a number of PE tops for parents to comments. Parents expressed concern that there was too much choice. It was decide to phase out the Multi-sports top and PE sports socks. The jumper with the blue band is optional and Parents were advised a plain black jumper will also be acceptable.

Parents expressed concern at the uniform in particular the length of girl's skirts being too short and some wearing tight leggings. Mrs Somerville explained that students were spoken to regarding incorrect uniform, and detentions issued as well as parents being contacted.

A parent expressed concern that her child and other students were prevented from participating in certain lessons due to the poor behaviour of a small number of students. The example given was not being allowed to use ipads. The parent expressed concern that this seemed to be unfair and has a negative impact on the motivation of students who do behave well in lessons as it seems all students are being penalised. Mrs Somerville agreed to investigate this further.

Action: Mrs Somerville

Next meeting scheduled for **Thursday 13th June 2019 at 5.15pm.**

Meeting closed at 6.17pm.



Parents' Forum

Minutes

13th June at 5:15pm – 6:30pm

Attendance: Mrs Brownlee-Dixon, Mr Kitchener, Ms Stephenson, Ms Davison, Mrs Carlin, Mrs V Somerville (Chair)

Academy Staff: Mr Reynolds, Mrs R Somerville, Mrs Jackson, Ms Robinson

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Simpson, Mrs Emmott, and Mrs Davison

2. Welcome and Update

Mr Reynolds welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided an update on staffing changes at Senior Leadership level, explaining that he is the Executive Principal across both Academies but his main responsibilities are at Consett Academy and that there has been a new Principal appointed at North Durham Academy.

3. Minutes of last meeting

Page 1, Item 4: Mrs Somerville confirmed this matter had been resolved. Parents were informed that there were two Year Manager on long term sick but additional support had been put in place to support students and parents.

Page 3, Item 7 – Mrs Somerville confirmed the issue with behaviour in a particular lesson had been investigated and resolved.

4. Reporting Home

Mrs Jackson discussed the methods used to report home to parents, these include; data reports, written reports and Parents Evenings. It had been decided to increase the opportunities for parents to meet with staff. The written report has been amended slightly following feedback. There will be three progress reports issued during the Academy Year. Parents were advised that there would be more information on the VLE to advise parents of the contents of reports. Hard to reach parents would receive personalized letters inviting them to parents evenings.

Parents commented that it was good that the Y7 parents evening was extended to 3.30 – 6.30pm but the majority of parents came at 5.30pm which resulted in long queues. It was decided that it was still best to avoid an appointment system. The Academy are trialing having two parents evening for year groups from next year. Parents were informed that staff would be reminded to keep discussions focused to ensure appointments are swift.

Parents requested a prep sheet on the types of questions they should ask teachers, they also asked for a list of their child's teachers.

5. ASPIRE – The Journey

Mrs Somerville discussed changes being introduced to allow students to develop a wide range of skills that will support them and build resilience and independence. Parent viewed the ASPIRE sheet which detailed the range of opportunities that students would be able to access during each year to support them to develop a variety of skills.

Students would be issued with a passport to sign off when they had completed each activities and skills, to show their progress.

6. INSPIRE Days

Mrs Somerville discussed the range of activities that students will participate in for INSPIRE days which is part of the PSCHC Curriculum.

Parents were informed that staff have discussed areas that need to be improved and this has included literacy and improving confidence. .

7. Preparation for Next Year

Mrs Somerville informed parents that the Academy have had a recent recruitment drive and this is down to the need to employ more staff due to increase in student numbers. Parents were informed that two Senior Pastoral Leaders have been recruited who will oversee a Key Stage group and will support Year Managers with transition and behaviour.

8. AGT Opportunities

Parents queried if there were still opportunities for Year 9 students to participate in activities for able, gifted and talented students. Parents were informed that there are two programmes running; one for Key Stage 3 and one for Key Stage 4. Parents were informed that Mr Hall has lead the programme this year and had focused on higher level attainers. Some of the activities had included guest speakers for 'Curiosity Hours'. It was agreed that Mr Hall would be invited to the next meeting to share the programme for next year.

Action: Mr Hall to attend the next meeting

9. AOB

One parent raised concerns regarding ensuring students starting in Year 7 in September have a least one friend in their class. Mrs Somerville explained that this should take place in form groups but it was more complex in lessons, but it would be looked at.

Dates for next year's meetings will be circulated.
Meeting closed at 6.30pm.