

Parents' forum 7-6-18

Thank you to all the parents who attended our parents' forum. There were about fifty parents and carers present.

From the school Ms Gammon, Headteacher, Mr Macaskill, Deputy Headteacher and Crispin Truman, Chair of Governors led on the following:

Our agenda was:

- 1. School updates – appointment of new headteacher and ongoing arrangements; finances and partnerships**
- 2. Lunchtime arrangements for Year 10 and 11**
- 3. Q and A**

The powerpoint used for the meeting is attached.

1. New headteacher

Crispin Truman congratulated Ms Gammon on her appointment as Director of Education for Hackney. He said it was a credit to the school that their headteacher was moving forward to work across all Hackney education; however the school would be sad to see Ms Gammon go. Ms Gammon echoed her sadness at leaving and her commitment to Hackney education, and thanked all the parents for their support.

Crispin Truman outlined the appointment process for a new headteacher and interim arrangements:

Mr Truman, Ms Gammon and Mr Macaskill emphasised the strength, skills and experience of the current leadership team. Five of the senior leadership team have been at the school longer than Ms Gammon: there is a very strong commitment from the whole team to ensuring that the school runs very well for all the students in both an interim period and with a new substantive headteacher.

There are arrangements being put in place for the Autumn term 2018 involving the current senior leadership team: these will be publicised in the near future to parents and students.

There was some discussion about qualities wanted from the new headteacher. Crispin emphasised that governors would be looking for someone to take forward high achievement, inclusive, creative community comprehensive education. Parents commented that they would like to see the following given strong weight: the achievement of disadvantaged students, academic achievement for all, outstanding pastoral care, wellbeing and retention of staff, a firm commitment to inclusion and creativity, a commitment to keeping the excellence of the sixth form and further developing its extracurricular side. Ms Gammon and Crispin Truman affirmed that these were either already on the list of criteria or would be included. The interview dates are 27th to 29th June. Crispin affirmed that governors would only appoint someone they firmly felt was the right candidate, and would re-advertise if necessary.

We affirmed that groups of staff, parents and students will be involved in the appointment process. A request for parents to be involved on the morning of Friday 29th June was made. Further information about this will follow.

There was a brief update about finance and partnerships. The school has a balanced budget: however if the government increases teacher salaries without giving schools additional money then that will place pressure on next year's budget.

The school continues to work in partnership with other local schools on transition and professional development. The school sees itself as firmly part of Hackney and hopes the proposed Hackney Schools Group will provide a lively option for future partnership.

2. Lunchtime arrangements

Ms Gammon outlined, as in the powerpoint, some reasons why the current arrangement for lunchtimes for Year 10 and 11 were being reviewed. Currently year 10 and 11 students go out, as a privilege for good behaviour, at lunchtimes every day. The privilege can be revoked.

There are some concerns about this, including safety and cost. There is an intention for the current year 9 to go out less e.g one week on and one week off. The school accepts that if more students are to be on site at lunchtime then more provision will need to be in place in terms of catering, supervision and activities.

Parents discussed this in groups and a range of points emerged. Most parents felt that there should remain some privilege of going out but that it could be significantly reduced to e.g. one day a week or one week out of two. They felt that there were advantages to having the additional space, responsibility and choices for some of the time. They also thought there were advantages to students staying in school: these included being more sociable, better value balanced food, supervision and safety.

Parents would like to see the following reviewed and developed: the queueing system, the quality of food, lunchtime activities and supervision. These were not currently significant problems but would need to be improved if there are to be more students on site. They also asked that a staggered lunchtime be looked at as a possibility to give year 7 and 8 time without the older students present.

There was general approval for reviewing the system.

3. Q and A:

The following points were raised:

- Music – parents were pleased with the quality of music lessons this year and would like more information about extra curricular plans. Ms Gammon to take forward with the Head of Music, Mr Coltman.
- PTA – there is a meeting on 14th June at 7pm. There was much enthusiasm for being able to raise funds to support the school.
- Option choices in year 8 – there was some discussion about option choices in year 8 which some parents found early. Mr Macaskill talked through the rationale of providing option choices at that point, which with the increased content in GCSE courses, allows the school to continue to offer a broad set of choices, including maintaining the creative subjects.
- Headteacher recruitment – need to emphasize student wellbeing

- Targets for students – there was a comment about targets in Year 9 being very high; Ms Gammon confirmed that there was a review under way and acknowledged some year 9 targets were very ambitious. We want to be ambitious and realistic for all students.
- Lockers for Year 7 students – Ms Gammon said there were unlikely to be lockers provided but that the school would look into space for Year 7 students to leave their PE kit.
- Traffic calming outside school – there was interest in extending the no traffic zones at end of school times to SNS. Ms Gammon will follow this up: parents could support this by writing to councillors about this.