

# Parental Focus Group Minutes



**Date of Meeting:** Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> October (am) and Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> October (pm)

## **Present Morning session:**

Tracy Sutton (daughter in Yr9 & son in Yr7), Maria Tarimo (daughter in Yr7), John Gomes (son Yr 7), Jenny Baldwin (sons in Yr10 & Yr8), Claire Allen (daughter in Yr7), Helen Weakley (son in Yr10 & daughter in Yr8), Odette Moore (daughter in Yr10). Isobell Button (son in Yr9), Zoe Magni (daughter in Yr10 & son in Yr8), Mrs Thompsett (son in Yr8), Sonia McGinees (daughters in Yr8 & Yr10).

## **Present Evening session:**

Sophie Carnell (son in Yr 10), Jewel Cole (daughters in Yr7 & Yr8), Christiano Desideri (son in Yr8), Mary Ekpenyong (daughter in Yr7), Karolina Frostick (son in Yr8), Jincy Francis (daughter in Yr7), Caroline Griffin (son in Yr8), Lisa Guest (daughter in Yr9), Nataliya Manfredi (son in Yr8), Philippa Read (son in Yr11 & daughter in Yr8), Agnes Stoecker-Radu (son in Yr7), Natalie Evans (daughter in Yr11 & son in Yr9).

**Apologies:** Caroline Pepper, Tracy Hindmarsh, Sherlyn Barrow

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- Miss Cronin introduced herself to the group and asked each parent/carer to introduce themselves and confirm which year group/s their child/ren are in.
- Miss Cronin explained that the purpose of PFG meetings was to discuss things going on in school life. Throughout the year, various staff members will come in to PFG meetings to introduce topics/trends in their subjects i.e. Maths, English, Music. Mrs Bligh (Assistant Head & Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Ms Vanvuchelen (PSHEe Co-ordinator) will come and talk about PSHEe, Pastoral Care needs and wellbeing. PFG is also used as a platform to gauge parent opinion for new ideas i.e. if the school is looking at introducing a new report/reporting system - PFG will be asked for their opinions and feedback. PFG will also be asked to voice WWW (What we do well) and EBI (Even better if) - What is going well / what changes and improvements we can make to improve school life for the better.

## **2. Teaching & Learning Tour for morning group parents/carers**

- DC conducted a tour of the school/classrooms for the morning PFG group. This was well received and enjoyed.
- One parent raised the stuffiness of some of the classrooms as the windows were shut and that few water bottles were visible.

### 3. College Improvement Plan: Priorities for Year 2 – 2022-2023

- Miss Cronin explained that the College Improvement Plan is a 25-page document, detailing tasks and strategies for all areas of school life. The Priority Tasks highlight key tasks/areas for staff to focus on (from the main College Improvement Plan) during the course of the academic year, and is split into 4 main categories:
- Strategy A - To uphold the highest expectations and success culture within the school to support and inspire all pupils to achieve and optimise their life chances, cultural capital and post-16 opportunities.
- Strategy B - To ensure that every learner develops leadership potential and all participants are empowered to support driving the school forward.
- Strategy C - To enhance the principles and practices of our Christian community.
- Strategy D - To enhance the quality of teaching and life-long learning.
- Link [here](#) to the Priority tasks from the Three Year College Improvement Plan (2021-2024) - Year 2 2022-2023.
- Link [here](#) to the College Improvement Plan – Year 2.
- DC took the evening group through the range of priorities providing examples.

### 4. GCSE Outcomes

- Not covered at the AM meeting.
- Evening Group – DC shared the strong GCSE results which were the best in County with all groups making strong progress. Attached [here](#) is a sheet from the Fact Files giving the breakdown of results in general and the results of different subjects.

### 5. Feedback on Curriculum Evenings / Open Evening / First 5 weeks of term

- Please send in any feedback on events you have recently attended via email to [pa@strichardscc.com](mailto:pa@strichardscc.com).

#### Evening Group –

- Positive about the Curriculum Evenings and the sharing of resources.
- One parent/carer felt that the revision strategies evening should only be run once for each year group. DC explained that this is normally the case but, due to Covid, the event was not well attended last year – hence the invitation to Year 11 parents/carers this year. Some said they found it beneficial to hear it again as you don't take everything in first time.
- A request was made for staff to share revision strategies lower down the school. Year 7 do not know how to revise – could they start using some of the techniques in Year 7 so that they are a habit by Upper School? DC will share this point with staff.
- A parent also suggested that parents share their strategies for getting pupils to revise. Mrs Jacqueline Young was praised for her tips for supporting her daughter. DC said she would ask her to repeat this.
- Open Evening – pupils enjoyed helping out. Lots of colleagues of parents/cares commented on how impressed they were with the evening and the pupils/staff.

## 6. WWW / EBI

- Not covered at the AM meeting.

### Evening Group – WWW

- Always get helpful prompt responses to queries.
- Personalised approach to pupils.
- Mrs Knight and Ms Whelan were praised for swiftness of responses to email enquiries.
- All the teachers work so hard.
- Reception have been very helpful.
- Great engagement at Open Evening.
- Great to see so many pupils showing off their school.
- Amazing teachers.
- Pupils at the Year 7 Parents Evening in June were so helpful.

### Evening Group – EBI

- Bus for Hailsham often late – can school complain and ensure pupils are not penalised with late marks.
- Encourage pupils on Mufti Day to cover up to keep themselves safe and warm.
- Rome trip is too expensive – tell parents/carers about trips first, as pupils just assume that they can go.
- Remind staff that House Points provide feedback which parents/carers need to understand if their child is working or not.
- If more children could be persuaded to go to Church on Sunday.
- Teach Year 7 Cornell Note Taking and how to do a Mind Map the St. Richard's way!
- Can the curriculum cover more life skills – A national survey suggested that 60% of parents do not think that schools prepare pupils enough on things like opening a bank account etc. DC explained what St. Richard's does in PSHEe and numeracy. She also highlighted that the curriculum is packed and it is difficult to do much more.
- Keep classrooms well-ventilated.
- Encourage pupils to bring water bottles.

## 7. What are the current pressures faced by parents/carers

- Not covered at the AM or PM meeting.

## 8. Teaching & Learning discussion for Wednesday evening parents/carers

- Not covered at the AM meeting.
- Evening Group – DC emailed out book covers for each subject. The majority of parents/carers confirmed that they had not had the chance to look at them prior to the evening meeting.
- Mrs Carnell confirmed that she had reviewed the book covers and, in her opinion, the RE book wrapper was very clear and straightway you can see what topics are being covered (very useful to know for pupils and parents) and what skills hopefully they will develop – 'it's brilliant!'
- DC requested parents/carers looked at them to see how useful they were for parents and pupils. This will be added to the agenda for the next PFG meeting in November.

## **9. Any other business**

- Rome trip £750 - too expensive. Can this be sourced cheaper? Miss Cronin explained that School Trip companies are expensive. Parents asked if this could be done another way, to reduce costs. Miss Cronin to speak to / provide feedback to Miss Doyle. Outcome – DC confirmed it cannot be changed for 2023 due to commitment already made to the travel company. However, we will be sensitive to this for the future.
- Mufti Day - Great fundraiser for charities however, dressing down day will be encouraged going forward to avoid issues with inappropriate clothing choices and to avoid pupils worrying about not having 'trendy' or logo'd clothes etc.
- Year 7 Induction Mass - Pupils will need to be in full uniform.

## **10. Requests for future agenda items**

- Please send in suggestions for future agenda items in via email to [pa@strichardscc.com](mailto:pa@strichardscc.com).

### **Dates for next meetings:**

9.15am Wednesday, 23rd November 2022 (in person)

6.00pm Thursday, 24th November 2022 (online)