

# School Council Minutes – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019



## **Attendance**

Y7 Council Representatives – Matthew Penney

Y8 Council Representatives – Matthew Randall & Marissa Heron

Y 10 council Representatives – Theo Browning & Emma Woodford

Y12 Representatives- Dannan White & Maisy Hicks

Heads of School Council- Matthew Ward, Maddy Pietrzekiewicz

## **Absence**

Years 9 & 11 Council Representatives

## **Matters Arising**

### **Timetabling**

Some design and food-tech teachers have been insisting that students give up their free time at lunch or break to start cooking, which isn't viewed as fair. Students asked if the current policy regarding this could be made clear to students, as there seems to be a lack of consistency between teachers, with mixed messages being given with respect to 'start times', sometimes resulting in detentions for those who do not turn up at the required time during lunch.

*Mrs Lewis agrees that there needs to be consistency and will discuss ways forward with the Food Department. However, Mr Nicholson pointed out that there is a tremendous pressure on food teachers to complete a practical session in one hour and the change in timetable has caused problems, and he would like students to understand that there will be teething issues in the first year of timetable changes.*

### **Lockers (particularly humanities)**

Students are being told they cannot access lockers unless it is within two minutes of a bell – resulting in students unable to access bags and books at convenient times, and being late to lessons.

*Kiran Welford clarified that students are not allowed in the locker rooms until the first bell at the end of lunchtime. This is because of poor behaviour in the past and a lack of care for the environment.*

### **Bag Protection/Shelters**

There was a request for bag racks or science style cubby holes be installed either under these sheltered areas or somewhere near in creative arts as it was pointed out that rain blows under the overhanging roof around the Creative Arts building, and uneven ground means many bags end up in puddles. Alternatively, for art students, could bags be left in the large locker room upstairs (close to C10)?

*Mr Lavis has asked the site team to put coat hooks outside Art, under the overhanging roof like design. Hopefully this can be done over the Easter or summer holidays.*

### **New Bike Shelter**

Clarification was asked for regarding the use of the bike shelter. There was also the suggestion that if it is not being used regularly could it be put to use as a storage for bags and have hooks for bag and coat storage, as well as benches around the outside.

*Mr Lavis advised that this is a shelter for staff bikes, which we will promote as the weather warms. There are two new bike shelters in the main car park for students to use.*

## **Wet weather rooms**

As both canteens fill up quickly, concern was raised about the number of dry places for students to eat when it is raining if they aren't allowed to do so in wet weather rooms.

*Students can eat in their wet weather rooms but we do need cooperation with the tidying up afterwards for, as Mr Lavis pointed out, the rooms are often left in a terrible state when we've allowed eating during wet weather. Cleaners and teaching staff complain consistently about this. Mr De Souza also reiterated that Year 7 & 8 can take their packed lunch into the canteen.*

*Could council members from the various Year Groups help to monitor the situation in classrooms regarding litter?*

## **Sixth Form**

The sixth form reps asked for clarification regarding the use of 6SC for Year 11 and sixth form, as some sixth formers are not happy about new changes, with privileges such as quiet spaces being taken away. They are also concerned that the 6<sup>th</sup> form Canteen seems to be closing increasingly quickly at lunch and is sometimes only open for 20 minutes. They wished to know why this is happening, as many people miss an opportunity to buy food. There was also the question of why the televisions are being turned off?

*Mrs Cross and Mr Godfrey had a meeting with Senior Management to discuss a number of these issues and will be reporting back directly to the 6<sup>th</sup> Form committee.*

## **Environment:**

Plans were discussed for World Green Day (charity committee) and to promote sustainability throughout the school. Ideas included a Sixth form clothes swap, book swaps and a plastic/paper free day, as well as naming and shaming litterers, litter picking detentions, the creation of an Eco Committee, polystyrene to no longer be used in the canteen and recyclable cutlery. Ideas were also discussed for JustADrop – raising awareness and fundraising ideas (more to follow).

*The canteen staff pointed out that wooden cutlery is now available and they are offering students the chance to use a plate and metal cutlery but only two students a day chose to do so. There are also looking in to an alternative to the polystyrene boxes.*

*Mr de Souza wondered if the council members from across the year groups could monitor the picking up of litter at the end of break and lunch and encourage their peers to use the bins rather more?*

## **Communication/ Information**

There is concern that many students don't know how to access school emails from home, use the school and media portals etc. and, therefore, a request that IT Services produce a guide accessible to all.

*IT Services have agreed to produce a knowledge base for students to refer to for accessing school services.*

## **Parentmail**

Some students are struggling with the Parentmail app and how to associate money to the account for canteen purchases. There was also a question about the disparity between use of paper consent forms for trips and consent on parent mail website/app.

*ParentMail App – how to associate money to account for canteen purchases Payments are made as a separate transaction for every item. For example if a trip has been paid for, the money will automatically go to Finance and is connected to that specific trip. Money that goes onto the account for 'dinner top-up' is what the students can see when they scan their thumb print. The ParentMail account does not hold onto any money other than dinner money and therefore anything that is on the account will have been put there by the parent/guardian to be used in the canteen.*

**ParentMail – disparity between use of paper consent forms for trips and consent on parent mail website/app.**

*Consent forms are generally not needed if the school trip is within school hours. Some trip organisers, however, will request one if they feel it is necessary. For trips that are out of school hours:*

*- If it is paid for via ParentMail, there is a box to tick when paying. (Again, trip organisers may decide they would like paper copies alongside this.)*

*- If paying by cash or cheque, a paper consent form will be issued when a place has been secured.*

## **Bullying/Anti-Discrimination.**

Ms Mack will attend next school council meeting to discuss further.

- Reluctance to report bullying comes from fear of snitching and lack of belief that anything will be done.
- Bullying on buses seems to be an issue – can anything be done to police this?
- Reporting someone for negative behaviour has been made into a joke/ not a serious thing to do or worth doing
- Within school council and surrounding people cyber bullying isn't seen as a prevalent issue (not suggesting this is the case across the school), often insidious bullying
- Certain year heads/teachers seem to have a very good approach/understanding of how to appropriately and minimally invasively deal with concerns – perhaps this should be unified.
- **Need for understanding within staff that students report their concerns to them as a last resort (as are often too nervous to do so/don't want to talk about it/snitch), and so even if what they are reporting isn't textbook bullying or seem significant to the member of staff, it will be to the student and shouldn't be brushed off.**
- System of reporting bullying/negative events by writing a statement appears pointless and often takes too long to be followed up.
- Tutors are supposed to be the most trusted/closest student-teacher relation- this doesn't seem to be the case. Whilst often unavoidable, tutors change often and with new timetable contact time is even less. Almost non-existent relationship between a tutor group and their tutor in many cases- not ideal and not viewed as a person of trust to talk to.