**Notre Dame Parent Forum**

**Thursday 25th February 2016**

**6 pm in Room C10**

Present: Neil Cully (Deputy Head teacher) and 6 parents with children in Yrs 7, 8, 10, 11 & 12.

A parent of a student in Yr 7, who was unable to attend this meeting, responded by email and these contributions are included in these minutes.

The meeting opened with a welcome and prayer.

1. Apologies: Brian Conway (Head teacher),
2. Matters Arising:
   1. Uniform Consultation: NCU explained that the overwhelming response to the consultation from parents, staff and students had been to maintain the current uniform requirement. As a result, the Governing Body had decided that there will be no changes to current policy with regard to school uniform.
      1. A question was asked about whether parents and students had been informed about the outcome of the consultation and decision.
   2. Notrenet:
      1. What do parents think about the changes made to the navigation within Notrenet? *There was a mixed response from parents at the meeting about these changes. One parent replied, via email, “*I would like to take this opportunity to add that, in my opinion, the Notre Dame’s Website clean-up thus far has made navigating the site much more user friendly.”
      2. *There were some other suggests made of how we can improve the appearance and content of the Notrenet home page, as follows:*
         1. *Could there be more information on the home page for parents? Could we reduce or move the icons showing current house points and replace with an icon/hyperlink to Wisepay, which would be much more useful.*
         2. *Having an icon for ‘jobs’ and a separate one for ‘how to apply’ on the homepage seems unnecessary. Could we have a link to newsletters on the homepage so that parents are more aware of them?*
         3. *Can we keep the calendar as up-to-date as possible and include information about school trips, with possible hyperlinks to enable more information about individual trips to be displayed? Via email one parent replied “*a list of what's happening for your child's year group would be most helpful. This would avoid events being missed. Could be included in a section on the Notre Dame website specifically informing what events are coming up in each month for each Year group?” This parent went on to add “Although extremely useful, I find the Calendar a bit ‘sparse’ in provision of information for upcoming events which are included.  The one challenge I have in particular is being able to quickly identify when upcoming Parent Forums will be held, as well as Parent Surgeries – and if they are for all Year group parents to attend and speak to teachers or for a specific Year group.  Perhaps more information could be included in to specific Calendar events for further clarity.”
         4. *There was a suggestion that we should email parents about school trips rather than rely on students bringing letters home about them. Parents felt that advertising forthcoming and future trips on the website would increase parental awareness.*
3. New assessment and reporting system at KS3 and Yr 10 (9 to 1) feedback from parents and carers:
4. Has the switch been well communicated? *The feedback from parents who attended the meeting for Yr 8 was that the presentation and explanation of the new 9-1 assessment and reporting system was very informative.*
5. Does the new grading system help you to understand whether your child is progressing? *Feedback from parents was that the first progress review of this academic year was more difficult to interpret because of the changes made.*
6. Open forum: questions and suggestions:
   1. *Communication with parents:* 
      1. *Parents feel that currently we are not using the parent call email facility as much as we could to further improve the quality of communication. Mr Cully said that he would investigate and consider this suggestion.*
      2. *Parents suggested that we could increase aware of and interest in the parent forum meetings by:*
         1. *Sending out the minutes of the previous meeting with the email inviting parents to attend the next meeting. Mr Cully welcomed this suggestion and said he would implement this recommendation for the next meeting.*
         2. *Proposing a later starting time for these meetings, e.g. 7pm rather than 6 pm. Mr Cully welcomed this suggestion and said he would consider this change for next year but would stick to the current published start for the rest of this academic year.*
         3. *Having a more flexible agenda that includes suggestions from parents and specific items from the school. A request was made that the proposed curriculum changes arising from the implementation of the EBacc, such as the reduction in teaching time for Drama at KS3, be an item at the next parent forum meeting. A request to have a presentation about the new St John the Baptist Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) and its implications for Notre Dame be included at the next meeting too.*
   2. *Pupil access to form rooms at lunch time:*
      1. *Via email a parent asked* about lower-school form groups who do not have an indoors space at lunch time where they can sit, especially on cold and/or rainy days.
   3. Boys toilets:
      1. Via email a parent raised a concern about the condition of boys’ toilet facilities.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm. The next meeting will be on Thursday 14th April 6pm in C10.