

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

1) **Prize Giving** - Parents would like to know what the criteria are for receiving prizes - both at junior and senior level.

- It is felt that these criteria should be made clear to both parents and young people to allow them to aspire to achieving.

- Why are progress awards not being awarded at the main prize giving - these young people have achieved just as much if not more than the ones who are top in subjects.

- Marr Trust donated money in the past for academic awards - all children used to get £10 book tokens. Is this still happening as young people not receiving the monetary rewards any more? - Elaine at least partly answered this on Wednesday, do we feel we need more information?

Response

All senior prizes are based on the SQA results. The junior school awards are based on achievement and effort in class. The school is aware that not all awards are given out on a prize giving evening due to time and size of hall constraints. However, student's efforts are highlighted at 'Celebrating Success Assemblies'.

The Marr Trust still supports the prize giving but any donation by them is between the Trust and the school

2) The timing of the Colours awards being given out.

- too late to allow students to have them on their blazers to wear during the school year.

- Could these be given out in June to allow for this to happen over the summer.

- Especially important for 6th year students.

Response

Due to academic results and prefects being appointed after the summer holidays it is not possible to intimate colours/band awards until after school returns. Students will be advised of the latest awards prior to the September weekend

3) School Team Photos - could these be put in the Diary? They are an inclusive way of celebrating team spirit and achievement and a memento for young people to look back on in future.

Response

This is a matter for the PE department. However Rae will speak to Craig McPike

4) Art Display - so much fantastic material is produced by the young people at Marr - could this be displayed and perhaps even have a fundraising evening where they sell their work?? - this has been suggested before??

Response

Some art work is already on display. Now that the building work is completed more art will hopefully be displayed around the school

1/ 2 / 3 and 4 could be grouped under Celebrating Success??

5) School Calendar - It would be helpful to have school trips on the Calendar to allow parents to be aware of what is coming up. Example is in 2nd Year just now there are two trips being proposed and the first was very over subscribed - The young people believe that there is a second languages trip scheduled to Barcelona - Elaine HT Report from last meeting said that there was a trip planned to Barcelona in Sept 2018 for 1st year. I believe Rae verbally stated that it would actually obviously be a Second year trip (bit quick for new first years to go away). I wasn't confident on looking at the HT report and minutes to state categorically one way or the other - an entry in the Calendar with the year group who will be travelling would be really helpful. - I think we covered this in the meeting and the outcome was the Rae agreed that trips were to be put in the calendar and that it was in progress?? Correct?

Response

School trips at secondary school are not like primary school trips where P7 always go to Dolphin House and classes always have a trip but are very much bespoke and are driven by teachers. As soon as a request has been approved pupils in the particular subject and year are made aware of the forthcoming opportunity.

Trips can be put in the calendar at the start of the academic year but this should not be taken as final as further trips may be arranged/announced. More expensive trips will usually be intimated further in advance to allow time to save or fundraise

6) Discipline - Parents are wondering about the process for discipline at school - specifically within the classroom but also the wider school environment.

Comments were -

-The process is there but is written in 'Education Speak' - it would be helpful to have a translation document for Parents and Students to refer to and understand easily.

- Is the process being followed consistently by all staff - seems to be some cases where punishments are being handed out in very large quantities and quite randomly?

- Concerns that better behaved children are losing out on teaching time because of teachers having to deal with bad behaviour. Also concerns that when children are excluded, the result is that they are moved to the head of departments classroom and they then may be disrupting Nat 5 or Higher Classes?

- Suggestions about mentoring programs which are available - as per Jackie's email MCR Pathways etc.

- Parents have volunteered to be involved in working with the school to develop preventative measures - following CALMS presentation - no one has come back to them asking for involvement? Is there an update on this?

Response

Any matters that parents have concerning discipline at the school should initially be raised with their own child's guidance teacher

7) Dyslexia Friendly Schools - This had been raised previously at a couple of meetings - parents had volunteered to be involved in a focus group but have heard nothing back? is there an update on the focus group? Could we have this discussed at a meeting in the future?

Response

This can be discussed at a future meeting if desired. Fiona Young is happy to talk with any parents who have concerns

8) Homework - concerns from parents about the lack of it in the junior phases of the school and then young people are suddenly bombarded with a huge increase in the senior phase.

Comments--

-Feeling was that a more gradual approach would be sensible

- Consistency was mentioned parents noting that some young people had homework every night while others had nothing.

- Homework planners had been mentioned at last meeting as a topic to be followed up on.

Response

The school this year is using the GLOW classroom rather than planners. Parents will be able to use their child's password to access the site.

Homework will very much be dependent on the subject. Under the Curriculum for Excellence model students are encouraged to develop at school and consolidate at home. Students should therefore be encouraged, if no homework is given, to review recent class work at home and ensure that they have a sound knowledge of what has been taught

9) Sanitary Bins - It seems that there are not sanitary bins in all the girls toilets - the consequences being quite disgusting

Comments

- perhaps this is a hangover from the unisex toilets and bins need to be relocated? - is it correct that toilets are no longer unisex?

- there is an expense associated with emptying these - if it is not being done for financial reasons would it be possible to mark the doors of toilets which do or do not have bins so that girls know before they use the cubicle?

I believe that this has already been raised by some 5th year girls with Mrs Maxwell and the ones they reported to her have improved - so perhaps something already in progress?

Response

Sanitary bins are in 'girls' toilets with the exception of two sets of gender neutral toilets. The girls know where these are situated.

10) Lockers - young people had lockers taken from them - are these going to be returned to them? What will the process be?

Response

The lockers were withdrawn from the students whilst a uniform system was set up and lockers in the new part of the building recently handed over became available. Lockers are now being allocated to students. Students have been kept aware of the situation

11) Class Sizes - concerns about class sizes being over the 30 maximum in the senior phase.

The example given was a Nat 5 Maths class where children are apparently being asked to register in another class and then return to be taught in the Nat 5 class so that there are not too many showing on the register in the Nat 5 class.

Comments

This must be particularly difficult to manage when teachers are already teaching 3 subject levels in one class - feeling that this was not the way that the 6:6:6 model was explained when at consultation phase. I believe we have covered this and been told that the 3 level teaching is a Scotland wide thing and the large classes are categorically not happening ?

Response

Any questions or concerns about specific class sizes should initially be raised with the guidance teacher of the student

12) Lack of Attendance on Last Day / Week of term.

Comments

- given the figures Elaine presented at previous meetings regarding absense in relation to performance it is really concerning.

- it seems to be a culture and this is still with both staff and pupils - pupils are not encouraged to attend school on the last few days.

-Teachers are not there when students do turn up

- could we revisit the discussion about incentives to attend - changing the culture etc

Response

Pupils ARE encouraged to attend up until the last day of term. The figures for the end of 2016/17 showed improvement. Parents and teachers should continue to encourage students to attend all school time up until the end of term

13) One I forgot to mention the other night was the cost of delivery for school PE t-shirts

- I am already looking at this for Craig McPike at the moment (It overlapped with some hockey stuff). I have a quote from MBLEM who will be able to stock in town hopefully and have also been approached by Colin Hill (Gilmours) who do the hockey kit and so he will also provide a quote and can offer free delivery.

Response

As has currently been happening any discussion on this matter should continue to be between interested parents/ sports groups and Mr McPike in the PE department