

# Parent Group Meeting

## Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015

Matters discussed	Action
<p><b>In attendance from Ernest Bevin College: Mark Weatherhead (MWW) Vice Principal, Fiona Wilkins (FW), Marketing &amp; Communications Manager Trudi Williams (TVW), Head of Yellow Tie Achievement &amp; Caroline Dowdell, Parent Governor</b></p> <p><b>GUARDING AGAINST EXTREMISM</b> – this issue has received a lot of attention nationally and the college will be running a parent’s information session on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 6pm.</p> <p><b>REPORTS</b> – Mr Weatherhead showed parents the current format of reports that are sent home and asked for feedback on what information parents find useful to be included. He said the idea of the report is to foster a conversation between parents and teachers. A report is issued each term and is a list of subjects with a Minimum Target Grade (MTG) in each subject.  <b>Parent Q: would it be possible to include more information than just a number for the level of attainment as the numbers don’t always reflect the effort put in or the progress made?</b>  MWW explained that the end of year report would contain more of a narrative but it is not possible to include this on each report due to the length of time it takes teachers to write reports of this nature. However he did explain that the reports also show a grade for effort, so if your son has high effort grades but isn’t quite hitting their MTG it should not be a great cause for concern.  MWW explained that a lot of work had been put in this year to ensure the integrity of the data and that it is now more accurate than ever. With 90 teaching staff, the aim is for consistency and a number of procedures and training etc had been introduced to ensure this. So the subject teachers input data, the Head of Department will moderate it within the subject. It is something the college constantly works to improve.  <b>Parent Q: would it be possible to give more feedback during the year?</b>  MWW said the college did have systems for postcards home, notes and phone calls but it may be the case that staff needed to be reminded to use these more frequently. In College boys are rewarded for good work and effort with achievement points and are given certificates when they reach a certain number of points eg first milestone is 25 pts.</p> <p><b>LIFE AFTER LEVELS</b> – parents may be aware that the current system of levels is being withdrawn by the Government. There has been little guidance to schools on what should replace levels. Bevin was working with a group of other schools across the country and using their recommended approach. It was thought to align to the new GCSE levels where 1 is the lowest grade and 9 the highest.</p> <p><b>DODDLE</b> – We have been trialling a new system called Doodle with a couple of classes and Heads of Department etc. This gives a qualitative output. It will be introduced across the college in September.  <b>Parent Q: Would it be possible to use colour coding or percentages?</b>  MWW: We can certainly look into it, we use a colour coding system around college on achievement boards – Green for hitting targets, amber cause for concern, red need to do something urgently</p> <p><b>SCHOOL TRIPS</b>  <b>Parent Q: How do we find out about school trips?</b>  Trips are advertised by individual departments who are running them and letters will be sent home to relevant student year groups. They are also advertised on the college website if the information is provided.  In Year 7&amp;8 trips tend to be short day trips eg Science Museum or History Trip to Bodiam Castle. They also have the opportunity to take part in foreign trips eg Ski-ing or the languages trip to Nice, France. Parents should be aware that often the objective of the trip is more than just a curriculum gain, it is to give pupils a wider view of the world and encourage independence.</p>	<p>Parents to note</p> <p>MWW to remind teachers/HOD to use postcards etc</p> <p>More information on Doodle to follow in next school year</p>

## **PARENTS' EVENING –**

Mrs Dowdell Parent Governor introduced a discussion amongst parents about Parents' evening and how they found the evening and if anyone had come across systems in other schools that they had found easier to navigate.

The School had recognised that the hall is not big enough for the whole year group and some teachers are put in the drama room or nearby to ease the pressure.

*Other ideas suggested included:*

Film Room for Younger Children

More seating available for those queueing

Clearer queuing systems (number tickets or time slots?)

Rearranging the room as there was usually a big empty space in the middle

Letter home from an individual teacher saying your son is doing well & you don't need to see me at Parents' Evening

Coffee/Refreshments

Run it over 2 nights

Start an hour earlier & school finish an hour earlier

Other Parental experience said that time slots worked if you were on time, others were on time and the teachers ran to time, but could go wrong if anyone was running late. Another school everyone had to stand up which made the whole system go more quickly but was very tiring!

Parents present agreed a list of priorities

- 1) Letters home saying everything was ok & you don't need to see me
- 2) Rearrange the hall
- 3) Ticketing for queues that are extra long
- 4) Earlier start
- 5) Better signage (Can't always see the teacher's name on their desk)

Mrs Dowdell  
will feedback  
to Governors/  
Senior team  
at College