Minutes of the Parent Forum
held on Tuesday, 14 January 2020

Present: **APC** Amy Pearce, **DTA** Gill Taylor, **BFD** Sally Banfield and **27 Parents**

The evening was opened by the College Sustainability Students who shared their hard work and success to date with the Sustainability Mark. They have received funding from the College Governing Board but requested parent support with fundraising and parent connections to further improvements to support the College environmentally.

The groups then split in two to discuss communication and SEND.

Communication notes made by parents are below;

Communication Notes:

Issues	Solutions
Group One	
• Communication around clubs, critera set, shared outcomes if you got in or not. Unsure where to find out the results. (Noticeboard finding out?)	• Shared criteria of club expectations, brief feedback. Shared with parents, especially early years.
• Mathematics surgery, sharing correct room where it takes place.	• Clear signage of the room.
• Communication regarding Bedrock English Literature programme.	• Bedrock/English themed Parents' Evening (March/June). Clear subjects/Year Group on emails to parents.
• Communication from English regarding: o Text o Outcomes o Targets o Results	
• Parents' Evening appointments, comes down to the teacher or team/subject area.	
• Year 7 Parent Booklet reviews needed regarding: o Notes in planner o PE kit even if not doing PE.	
Positives	
• Leaflet, really helpful, clear pathways.	
• Epraise, effective more teachers using it.	
• Bedrock/Mathematics Sparx, effective/engaging.	

Group Two	
• Lack of acknowledgement of email communication through the generic system.	• Response which details who the email has been forwarded to e.g. Head of Department/ Head of Year.
• Private number so parents do not answer, a message is not always left by staff.	• ICC as call name, why not?
• Navigating amount of information on the website.	• Possibility of adding Daily Bulletin to epraise/SIMS to make it more easily accessible? Linked to this the Twitter updates, particularly from the Library are heartwarming.
	• Use of Facebook (official College Facebook page) as additional communication e.g. for Ofsted communication.
Group Three	
• Enquiry form where does it go?	• Email, list of addresses
• Who do we email?	
• What is the College Policy of email/communication?	• Tracked systems? E-parent?? Yes please!
• Clarity of email; replies.	
• Website navigation, lots of information but not always easy to get.	
• Is the website fulfilling its purpose?	• Clear communication. Term dates on the front page. What week is it? Communication leaflet – clearer.
Group Four	
• No response from contact form on the website and no record of what parents have sent.	• Remove contact form, use the generic ICC email for everything, or send the email back to the parent to confirm receipt/registration.
• Emails to generic email address do not always get a reply even when marked FAO….	
• If staff phone from ICC it shows up as 'withheld number' so parents may not answer.	• Telephone number or ICC to show up.

• Parents feel un-informed about various things.	• More information by email regarding:
	  o When Parents' Evening will be
	  o When Enrichment details are available
	  o When trackers will come out
	  o What trackers will include from Head of Year? Overview/updates/newsletter
	  o Also post on Facebook page could include good news.

• GroupCall out emails should make clear which Year Group.	

Group Five	
• Reply is usually 'student should see teacher at lunchtime'. They are never in their room, hard with short lunchtime and clubs.	• 'Office hours', note on door saying which lunchtimes they will be in room. This would encourage students to see teachers at lunchtime.
• Students do not get a reply if they email teachers.	
• College Echo software makes it hard to read as you cannot expand.	• Just use a PDF?
• Epraise is fairly uninformative, I do not know when good notes are given or why? Whereas planners were a physical thing that encouraged parents to pick up and read teachers notes.	• Consistency either on epraise or planner.
• KITE books as an example where students are told this is really important, bad notes for forgetting etc, and then they are **never** used. Just heavy weight breaking their rucksacks.	• Research shows that students remember better if they make their own notes anyway. I have never been asked to use them once.
Group Six	
• Contacted the College and no reply following a letter home.	• Set up a system with the front office for specific flow of queries e.g. curriculum – always via Head of Year.
• Emails, Ofsted one was sent to us from a member of staff and sent to 'Central Admin, from A Pearce on email.	• All emails sent centrally from e.g. admin@... or icc@.... and monitored by IT. Promoted on the legitimate Facebook page – Ivybridge Community College.

Send Notes:

- A long discussion took place around communication for SEND parents.

- BFD explained that the website now had a direct button link to a new SEND email.

- Some parents expressed their concern that requests to SEND took too long to be answered. Other parents felt this was greatly improved.

- Discussion around My Plan consultation: parents liked the fact that the SEND team were present at Parent and Tutor Evenings. Some felt that the venue was not private enough to discuss individual needs.

- BFD mentioned the possibility of SEND surgery sessions where parents/carers could book a slot. This idea was positively received.

- A discussion was had around using epraise to send the My Plans home for consultations. BFD to investigate.