

Parent Forum Meeting

Friday 5th February 2016

Matters discussed	Action
<p>In attendance from Ernest Bevin College: Fiona Wilkins (FW), Marketing & Communications Manager; Mr Winston Lee, Deputy Head of Green Tie (Year 7) achievement; & Caroline Dowdell, Governor</p> <p>FW welcomed parents and asked if there were any topics parents would like to discuss. There was a good turn out of parents, approx. 25 students being represented. Parents indicated they would like to discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The new reports 2) Parents Evening 3) Homework especially Doodle, online Homework 4) How to contact Staff <p>REPORTS – FW explained that the format of reports at Ernest Bevin had changed this year due to the changes brought in by the Government to the National Curriculum and the removal of levels. Previously parents would have received a level that their son was working towards. With the removal of levels EBC have invested in a national recognised system that is being developed in line with the new National Curriculum – it is being used in schools across the country but there is no longer a national system as specified by the Government and schools could choose to report on pupils' progress as they felt appropriate.</p> <p>Whereas the old national curriculum and system of levels was a 'best fit' system ie the teacher would pick a level that the pupil was nearest to in terms of their attainment, the new National Curriculum is about acquiring skills appropriate to subject and age. The new EBC reports for Years 7, 8 & 9 (Key Stage 3) record the number of skills secured. So for each subject the report indicates the number of skills that have been assessed, the number where expected progress has been made (Green), the number where there is good progress in these skills (Amber) and the number of skills not yet mastered (Red). Teachers would assess the skills secured using Doodle, assessed tasks, homework, class work etc. The aim is to secure all skills in the year and the new system enables teachers to identify which skills students still need to work on.</p> <p><i>Questions and Comments from Parents</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>There is no indication of what skills the pupils have not yet mastered (RED) and so parents feel unable to help their children with these skills.</i> 2) <i>How do we know what skills are being assessed?</i> 3) <i>Parents had no idea at what point they should be concerned (ie what is a reasonable number of skills to have mastered)? They do not have anything to compare their son with eg where they are in the class, the year etc. if they are not mastering the skills is it because they haven't understood or haven't been taught it?</i> 4) <i>How can parents help support the child?</i> 5) <i>It is very different to parents experience of Primary School where you could talk to the teacher and understand what is going on</i> <p>NOTE: Pupils should know which skills they had been assessed for and which ones they have not yet mastered. This information is given to the boys by their teacher.</p> <p>DODDLE – was introduced as part of the National Curriculum changes as it provides a standardised method of assessing whether students have understood a topic. Advantages of using Doodle are that it is a package that is used Nationally and is under continual development so not a standalone Bevin system.</p> <p>Pupils like doing their homework on Doodle because it is on computers, it is in Quiz format etc. FW reassured parents that it is a rigorous system tests the boys at an appropriate level.</p> <p>Teachers like Doodle because it gives them a good picture of what topics the boys have understood & allows them to tailor their lessons to any knowledge gaps that show up in homework tasks. It is an automated system that feeds directly into the school's assessment manager system.</p>	<p>FW to feedback all these comments to the Leadership team at EBC</p>

Points raised by Parents included:

- 6) When Teachers give homework that has not yet been covered in class this can be demoralising for pupils who struggle with the task
- 7) What should a pupil do if someone other than their teacher sets them a task on Doodle? Do the pupils do the task as normal or is it a mistake they should ignore?
- 8) There are no options to go back once an answer has been submitted
- 9) It is not possible to retake the test unless the teacher resets it
- 10) How do teachers know if the pupil has done the test alone or with the help of a friend, a parent or sibling? Is external help providing false results?
- 11) If a child has done very badly in a test, is it because they haven't understood or they weren't concentrating when they were doing the test?
- 12) When the pupil logs on and sees a lot of red scores, it can be demoralising.

PARENTS EVENING –

Year 8 Parents Evening is on Thursday 14th April

Year 7 Parents Evening is on Thursday 28th April

There had also been a Year 7 Induction Evening for Parents on Thursday 17th September 2015.

In the past the college had organised Personal Development Days twice a year where parents had a 10 minute appointment with their son's tutor. These had stopped 2 years ago.

Questions/Comments from Parents

- 1) This is very late in the year to have a first meeting & too late if you discover there are problems?
- 2) How do we know if there are problems?
- 3) How many teachers can you expect to see?

FW explained in other year groups Parents Evenings were held earlier in the year and in some key years eg Year 11, there were two parents evenings in a year. However the evenings were held at the beginning of the summer term for Years 7&8 to ensure the boys were well settled in college, the teachers had a full picture of their capabilities and could provide some meaningful feedback.

FW advised parents to arrive early for Parents Evening and not to join very long queues. Some teachers had sent a letter home in the past saying everything was ok with certain children and the parents didn't need to see them. You should aim to see your son's tutor and any subjects you had concerns about

If parents had concerns prior to Parents evening they should raise them with their son's tutor, either by putting a note in the planner, telephoning the college or contacting the teacher of that subject.

FW showed parents the full staff list on the college website

<http://www.ernestbevin.london/curriculum/contacting-staff>

and showed parents the additional information about the curriculum being studied in each year on the curriculum pages of the college website, using English as an example

<http://www.ernestbevin.london/curriculum/english>

CONTACTING STAFF

FW said it was not college policy to give out staff email addresses but that the majority of staff are happy to respond to emailed questions from parents. Concerns could be raised with your son's tutor, or the subject teacher by writing a note in the planner, or telephoning/emailing the college. If your question was not answered you could try emailing the Head of Department or the Head of Year.

Questions/Comments from Parents

- 1) Did teachers check planners for notes from parents?
- 2) Some said they had telephoned the college and not received a reply
- 3) Others said they had not received a response to emails etc
- 4) A parent suggested the teachers' email addresses were inserted by the name on the report

Mr Lee, Deputy Head of Year 7, responded to parents' questions & concerns

E-SAFETY TALK REMINDER – Tuesday 9th February at 6pm in the Library

This will be fed back to the Leadership team so that changes can be made if necessary

FW to feed back to Leadership team

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