

Parent Forum Meeting

Wednesday 11th October 2018

Matters discussed	Action
<p>In attendance from Ernest Bevin College: Ms C. Swift (Vice Principal), Ms T. Williams (Deputy SENCO) Fiona Wilkins (FW), Marketing & Communications Manager.</p> <p>Ms R. Sheikh (Principal) & Caroline Dowdell, Vice Chair of Governors also briefly introduced themselves</p> <p><i>Parents present indicated they have children primarily in Year 7 & 8 with one Year 10 & one Year 12 new to the school</i></p> <p>FW welcomed parents and explained that Parent Forum meetings are to encourage parents (particularly with those new to the school or new to the secondary system) to come in and ask questions in an informal setting. If parents have particular concerns about their son or his work they should contact their son's tutor or teacher directly. Contact can be made by writing a note in your son's planner or by telephoning the college (0208 672 8582) or email (mail@ernestbevin.london). Please note the majority of teachers are teaching during the day so you will need to leave a message and expect a call back when they are not in class.</p> <p>Parent Coffee mornings take place once a term and there will usually be a short presentation from a member of staff about a topic of interest to parents (eg Keeping your children safe online, Getting the Most from Parents Evening.) There is also the chance for parents to ask questions and meet other parents.</p> <p>Other ways of keeping in touch with what is going on in college:</p> <p>MAIL OUT: a pack is sent home in September with a letter from the Principal, a calendar for the year and a Guide for Families. Please ask at the office if your son did not bring one home this year. Please be aware dates on the calendar are set in June/July and can change later in the year eg sports day, so do double check with the app/website.</p> <p>MY ED APP: general information about the school by clicking buttons on 'My School' page. These buttons are updated through the year eg with Exam information so do check them occasionally. Messaging should primarily be used to report attendance. Other messages will be forwarded to the relevant teacher if known but office staff who check the inbox will not be able to supply homework/log ins. It is best to communicate with teachers, tutors or Head of Year through the planner or by phoning.</p> <p>A message will be sent home once a term with a link to your son's report. This will usually be at the end of term/beginning of new term.</p> <p>You can also check attendance, timetable, achievements and behaviour points. If you do not see your son's data please check the office has the mobile number you are using for MyEd listed as a Primary contact.</p> <p>SCHOOL WEBSITE – we are in the process of launching a new website ernestbevin.london which went live in September ahead of the school open days. Some information is still being transferred across eg curriculum pages but we hope to have more information for parents on it soon. The old website is still visible ernestbevin.org but is not being updated & will be switched off after half term.</p> <p>Question: Why are both sites still live and why is the information not updated regularly?</p> <p>Both sites are still live as we are in transition between the old and new sites. The information will be updated regularly during the year, but it is still work in progress.</p> <p>FOLLOW UP: The old website was archived at the end of October and all</p>	

resources (eg curriculum guides, staff lists, calendar, policies) have been updated.

Question: Why is some of the information on My Ed out of date eg some pages link back to the old website & there is a still a link to Fronter but not to Canvas?

Some of the pages still link back to the old website because this information is not yet accessible from the new website. Fronter is still live because some teachers still have resources on it.

FOLLOW UP: Given the go ahead to remove Fronter and replace with Canvas. The Canvas link went live on My Ed in October. Other resources have been added to My Ed eg link to Department pages, clubs etc

BEVIN NEWS – newsletter is emailed home to parents usually once a fortnight. It contains photos/reports about trips and activities that have taken place usually outside the main curriculum. So far this year has only been one in September and another one due this week because there are fewer of these activities in the first few weeks when classes are settling in. You can also download it from the website or pick up a paper copy from Reception.

Question: How do we find out about clubs/enrichment activities?

FW handed out a paper copy of the clubs and mentioned Japanese & Mandarin which had been promoted recently by staff which were not included. College is still updating the timetable and this will be sent home and uploaded to the website as soon as possible. It is not available at the beginning of term because teachers need to gauge interest and available slots.

FOLLOW UP: The enrichment timetable was sent home to parents via email in October and can be seen on the college website and app. There are also paper copies in Reception. A few new clubs have been added since this guide was produced. We are looking at issuing an update

Question: Do boys need to sign up for clubs or can they just attend?

As far as we know Baking Club is the only one that is oversubscribed so boys must sign up and they are allocated a place on alternate weeks. For other clubs the pupil should speak to the teacher who is organising the club. Boys are encouraged to be proactive and join clubs they are interested in. If they have problems they should talk to their tutor or Head of Year.

Question: Is Mandarin still offered & how can our son pursue it in Year 8?

MFL Dept reply: The Mandarin teacher started at the end of September and is offering a Mandarin club. Your son should speak to the Mandarin teacher or Head of MFL if he is interested in continuing to learn Mandarin.

Question: Wouldn't it be better if clubs information was sent home as not all pupils find out what is going on?

Some information about extra activities eg Year 7 Football trials is sent as a message via My Ed but it is dependent on teachers requesting the message to be sent. The majority of clubs are advertised in college on the plasma screens and via tutor groups. Not all clubs start at the beginning of the year and some clubs start up because the boys ask for it or an opportunity arises during the year. So it is a dynamic process. There is capacity to send forms for activities & trips via My Ed but we do not currently use it because not all parents are signed up to My Ed.

Question: How are trips communicated? Sometimes my son misses out and sometimes he goes on a trip that I did not know about?

Letters are sent home. Some trips are open to all eg skiing, Paris trip etc and places are allocated usually on first response but check with the teacher who is organising the trip. Other trips may be offered as a reward for good work/interest in a particular subject or to a class or year group. Information should be sent home & consent should be given for all trips off site so parents should know if the son is off site.

FW to check about uploading Canvas button & update other links

FW to chase Enrichment TT & circulate to parents & upload to the website

FW to check

CS to feedback to senior team

CS to feedback to Senior Team

Question: How do you pay for trips and is it possible to pay on line?

Currently trips are paid for in the office. The college is looking into setting up online payments which should make it simpler to pay for trips and pay for school meals. It was not possible to do in the past due to incompatibility with the online systems and a concern that not all parents are able to pay online.

MARKING & HOMEWORK – CS showed a powerpoint that had been shared with all students in tutor time at the beginning of term. It outlined expectations of homework and marking. The college policy was updated and says that homework should be set regularly and feedback given. Homework will be marked possibly by the student or a peer in class. Two pieces of homework should be 'deep' marked by the teacher every half term. This should include comments on WWW – **What Went Well** and EBI – **Even Better If**. Students are encouraged to respond to the feedback and improve their work using a green pen.

Question: How does the college balance sporting activities and catching up on classwork/homework?

If a child misses a lesson due to a sport fixture or other activity. They are expected to catch up any missed work and complete homework set. The boys should talk to the teacher or ask classmates to make sure they are doing this. We find the boys who do a lot of sport tend to become very organised and also do very well in their GCSEs. We have been a sporting college for a number of years and can give numerous examples of boys who have played sport at national or international level and achieved a string of 7,8,9s or A/A*s at GCSE. Our sports coaches are trained and double up as mentors. Also if boys start falling behind in their work or missing target grades, a conversation will be had in college about cutting back on sport and improving academic performance.

Question: Assessments – how do parents know when the tests take place and what will be tested? Last year we knew it was assessment week but didn't know what test was happening on which day.

Dates are marked on the college calendar

In Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9) the assessments are carried out in class during normal lessons. The boys should be told what to expect and when the test will take place. We can look at sending more information home in future.

In Key Stage 4 & 5 (Years 10 & 11, 12 & 13) mocks and end of years will be done in the hall and this information is sent home, posted on the website and the app. Particularly with regard to public examinations. Boys should be aware of their exam timetable.

FOLLOW UP: this information has been added to the calendar, year pages on the website and Key Dates on the parent app.

Question: My son missed an assessment last summer because he was on Reception Monitor duty and did not retake it so just got an N mark, is that right?

No he should have been given an opportunity to take the test but occasionally boys do miss tests and so no mark will be given as there are tight deadlines to put the data into the system to generate reports. You can query it with his teacher.

Question: How do I find out how my son has done in his assessments?

This information is sent home in his end of term report. You can talk to subject teachers about the assessments at Parents Evening or contact them at other times during the year.

Question: How can I help my son prepare for assessments?

Ensure they are up to date with classwork and homework. Many teachers will upload revision material on to Canvas or set extra questions on Maths Watch etc. We also have a school subscription to GCSE pod which breaks subjects down into small chunks and there are quizzes, some topics will be relevant to younger boys.

Question: How does my son log into Canvas and is there a separate log in for parents?

Ongoing Action – the college is looking into online payment systems and hopes to have one up and running during the academic year.

FW to circulate the powerpoint on marking and upload to the website

CS to ask about sending assessment information home for lower years

CS to request boys not to be on Reception duty during assessment weeks

CS/FW to ask about uploading more curriculum/ revision notes to website or Canvas

Your son's log in to Canvas is the same as his network log in. He should have it noted in the front of his planner. If he is having a problem he should talk to his tutor or go to Network Services who will help him. There is no parent log in but you can ask your son to show you what his is doing.

Question: Is the log in for Maths Watch different & where do they get this from?

Yes Maths Watch log ins are different. Your son's tutor or Maths teacher should have his log in and he should note it in his planner. Again he should ask if he needs help.

FOLLOW UP: Science and MFL also use Kerboodle. Students can ask their science or MFL teachers for logins. They are encouraged to write these in their planner.

PARENT WORKSHOPS – TVW explained she had piloted these workshops last year having been a Head of Year for 5 years and realising there was a need for parental engagement, involvement and support. She had run two workshops one about supporting your child through exams and the other about Building Better Boundaries. Feedback had been overwhelmingly positive and so the decision had been to continue and develop the programme this year. The first workshop of the year is Thursday 11th October at 6pm in the Library and will be about Building Better Boundaries with your son. TVW hoped many parents would attend.

Comments from parents who had attended previous workshops had included that it was comforting to know they weren't alone in experiencing problems when their son became a bit older and started challenging boundaries. Parents were also generous in sharing strategies that they had found helpful.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

Question: Will the buddy system be developed beyond the initial football session?

The PE department runs buddy sessions for Year 7 four weeks in to term where they get to meet boys from other tutor groups and the year above. This buddy day is part of the induction process and to help the new Year 7s get to know other boys in college. It has been run in this format for a number of years and there are currently no plans to change because it would eat into curriculum time. There are other schemes in college where older boys can help younger boys eg reading scheme.

FOLLOW UP: Response from Principal. It is not possible to extend the buddy schemed at this time because it would eat into curriculum time.

Question: My son had an accident last year and was unable to attend college because he could not climb the stairs. We met with the head of year who suggested the learning support centre or referral room but neither were suitable, are there no rooms on the ground floor that could accommodate this sort of thing?

The college is not wheelchair friendly and there are no lifts in the main building. In this situation you did the right thing by discussing with the Head of Year but unfortunately it was not possible to offer an alternative space on the ground floor where your son could be properly supervised.

Question: My Ed – achievement/behaviour points- teachers should tell the boys what the points are for. My son was given a behaviour point for talking in class but he didn't know what it was for & I had to contact the teacher. Is there a way of including more information?

The information to accompany behaviour/achievement points is very limited and does not include the subject or teacher at the current time. This is to do with how the information is recorded and displayed via My Ed. You did the right thing by following up with the teacher and getting to the bottom of the problem.

Parents to attend the workshop, look out for future workshops and suggest topics that may be of use to them in the future.

FW to feedback comments to Senior team about possibly developing the buddy/mentoring system through the year

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