

Parent Forum Meeting

Thursday 9th May 2019

Matters discussed	Action
<p>In attendance from Ernest Bevin College: Ms C. Swift (CS), Vice Principal, Catherine Carroll (CC), Governor, Trudi Williams (TVW) Deputy SENCO, Fiona Wilkins (FW), Marketing & Communications Manager</p> <p><i>Parents present indicated they have children primarily in Year 7 & 8</i></p> <p>WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION: FW thanked parents for attending and explained CS would be talking about plans for Assessment Week, TVW would give a short presentation about helping your child to revise and CC would be talking about Governors work on Community and Inclusion. We would also like to talk about setting up a Parent Group and there would also be opportunities for parents to ask questions.</p> <p>ASSESSMENT WEEK: CS explained that the intention is to collapse the timetable for Assessment Week 17-21st June for all Years 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12. The younger years would do their exams in their tutor bases but in future years we would look at running exams in the hall or other exam settings. There would be an exam in the morning and afternoon and the week would be broken up with extra PE, art and drama sessions. So that it is not exams all day and every day.</p> <p>Q: Can the Exam timetable be sent home to parents to help them prepare their child? <i>Yes the intention is to send home an exam timetable.</i></p> <p>PREPARING FOR ASSESSMENT WEEK: CS explained that the college is aware that many students don't know how to revise. Revision skills will be taught in tutor time and in Year 7 21st Century skills lessons over the next 4 weeks. Every Head of Department is preparing a revision list for each year group which will be sent home so that children and parents know what they have to revise for.</p> <p>Q: Will it be one exam per subject? <i>The aim is for one exam per subject but some subjects may prefer to do two short papers eg language reading and listening but each subject will have only one slot on the timetable.</i></p> <p>Q: Will the top set sit the same test as the bottom set? <i>Yes the plan is for children in the year to sit one paper.</i></p> <p>HELPING YOUR CHILD TO REVISE: TVW explained that she and Ms Baum had run parent workshops last year on different topics such as building boundaries and revision tips which she had run in March last year when she was head of Year 11. The idea of the workshops is that they are collaborative with parents sharing experiences. The college hoped to run more of these workshops in the future.</p> <p>The role of the parent is to help organise a child by for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a home environment where the child can work eg quiet place or time • Help with a revision timetable • Sensible control of mobile phone usage • De-clutter study space • Nutrition, lots of healthy food and drinks as they get hungry • Equipment such as pens, calculators etc • Study Guides eg GCSE guides or the ones sent home from school • Regular breaks and fresh air eg exercise, walk, watch a TV programme • Sleep – need at least 8 hours so make sure they go to bed at a decent time <p>A few tips to make an easier life for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give Praise • Feel Positive • Conversations: ask what they are studying • Remember that not every child is independent, some will need help • Learning skills of independence can take time and that is okay. 	

During the exams:

- Attendance is the most important thing, child must attend and be on time
- Pace themselves - It's not over until it's over
- Have something to look forward to after the exams
- Discuss all the outcomes even the bad ones to help build resilience
- Use positive language
- Look after yourself as a parent so you can cope with their issues/moods

Q: How do we find the curriculum guides as the links that were sent home now say link expired? The KS3 & 4 booklets are on the website on the Year Group pages and there is a button on the app that says Revision Tips and both booklets appear there. There are lots of other resources under that button for example the Maths Department has put together a very comprehensive list of websites with additional papers, questions and resources. That link is there. It can be difficult to find sometimes on the website but we have used the app to signpost the resource eg Exams & Revision Tips buttons..

COMMUNITY AND INCLUSION – Catherine Carroll introduced herself as a Governor who had been appointed in January. CC is an Associate Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Inclusive Education, UCL Institute of Education. She is looking for parent input to help inform the internal discussion that is going on around the vision for the college going forward with respect to what it means to be a community school and what it means to be an inclusive school. She would also like views on how better to engage the community. One of the things we are looking at is setting up a Parent group (PTA) and we would like to use this group to gauge whether there is any appetite for it from parents.

Parent Comment: *At Primary school there is a nice community feeling and you go to secondary school and there is a big blank. It feels like you are throwing your child into a big black hole and they don't really tell you what is going on. It would be great if we would organise more events for families say Father and son sessions, or fairs, BBQs etc.*

Parent Comment: *There is a large Muslim population in the school and I am very grateful that the school is so supportive of families and their faith. In the current climate parents could play more of a role in educating the school and other members of the community of different faiths about aspects of the Muslim faith such as the reasons for fasting during Ramadan and to help dispel stereotypes such as extremism*

REVISION TIPS – Catherine Carroll recommended parents to look into the Pomodoro Technique – a simple but effective technique that encourages you to break tasks (or revision) into chunks of 25mins as it helps create achievable goals.

She also mentioned looking at Steve Peters, the sports psychologist who worked with British Cycling in the build up to the Olympics and his book the Chimp Paradox as a good source to help in mind management and getting rid of distractions.

Finally she suggested to parents they should encourage their children to make their revision as practical as possible. Eg when you ask someone who has run a marathon or swum the channel they all talk about the training sessions they have undertaken but never mention the books they have read. Therefore if your child is revising for a history test that requires essays to be written, they need to practice writing essays and not just read their text book or notes to revise. Talk to your child in terms of revision is training for their 100m sprint which is the exam.

CLUBS UPDATE – we have received funding from a charity called Magic Breakfast and are now able to offer breakfast to all students in the mornings from 8.15-8.45am by the pupil entrance outside the food tech room. It is bagels, jam, spreads, etc and fruit juice. Please encourage your sons to come and have breakfast, it is open to everyone and we would rather the boys got to school on time and had breakfast here than were late or hungry for school. There is also a homework club in the library every day from 3.30-5.30pm which is supervised by staff and the boys can use the computers and print out work etc. And SEN Study Plus Club which is Monday, Tuesday and Friday 3.30-4.30pm. It is not compulsory but it is run by key workers in Special Educational Needs Department and they will be able to help.

ACTION: FW to make the links to revision sites and exams more prominent on the website.
Completed 13/5/2019
links on front page

FW to ask about making the links last longer.

ACTION: CC will send information about Community and Inclusive Schools research and a link to a very short survey to the parents who attended the meeting for completion

ACTION FW added links to Pomodoro Technique and Steve Peters TEDx talk to Revision Tips on the My Ed app

SETTING UP A PTA - FW spoke about the college's desire to get a group of parents who could help at events such as the Year 7 Induction Evening to help welcome new families into College. The idea would be to start small and have parents helping with refreshments at some school events and then if there was appetite from parents to organise some fundraising events. Other Secondary schools organise Parent Information evenings and some social events but the focus of Secondary PTAs was often more on supporting parents than organising big fairs etc.

Parent Comment: I would like to fundraise for text books especially Science so the children can work from these at home

Parent Comment: My child was injured on the playground last week and I think as a sports college we should have a proper sports playing surface so they are not playing on concrete.

Parent Comment: I would like to fundraise for more books in the library.

Parent Comment: I put my name down to be a rep for a PTA but was never contacted about it again, s will it happen this year?

ANSWER: CC said Governors were keen to see this initiative get off the ground this year and would push the school to resource these efforts.

There was general agreement that parents would like to have a PTA in college and some would be able to help at events like Sports Day and Year 7 Induction Evening.

The aim would be fundraising and community engagement.

It was agreed that parents who would be happy to help would indicate on the sign in sheet and we would aim to have an initial meeting at Year 7 Induction Evening on 11th July. All parents would be invited via My Ed

OTHER PARENT QUESTIONS::

Question: How do we find out about trips as my son seems to miss all the opportunities?

Year 7 & Year 8 PGL trips unfortunately had to be cancelled this year due to low take up, these are the main trips in Years 7&8 but the big trips like Paris (June 2019), Skiing & Italy (2020) are open to all year groups. Paris trip was advertised before My Ed so was probably done with children asking for paper letters. Italy was advertised to all parents and reminders sent home to parents via My Ed app. Next year's Ski Trip will be advertised shortly.

There are also curriculum trips organised by individual departments throughout the year and students are invited on these based on interest, ability or as a reward for good work etc. Registers are taken and the aim is to give the opportunities that arise to as many children as possible but in the same way that not everyone is on the football team, not everyone will be picked for the STEM trips.

At the end of the year, there are usually whole year trips eg Year 7 went to London Zoo last year. Plans would be afoot for some of these larger trips at the end of this term.

Question: Will parents be sent a copy of the exam timetable?

Yes it will be sent home via My Ed app and on the website as soon as it is finalised.

Question: Revision Resources – there were lots of resources on Kerboodle for Science at the beginning of the year on Cells but there has been nothing new added?

Question: Maths Watch – my son has done all the questions on Maths Watch is there anything else?

Yes, the Maths department have lots of other resources on their Department page. You can access it through the Revision Tips page. Its call Maths Revision resources and you need to scroll down. There are lots of recommended websites listed.

Question: Parent Pay- when is this going live?

Plans for this have had to be put on hold at the minute, but we still hope to launch it as soon as possible.

ACTION: parents who had expressed an interest would be contacted and a message about setting up a PTA would be sent to all parents

ACTION: Governors to undertake a review of trips and how they are communicated.

ACTION: Exam timetable to be sent home by half term

ACTION: CS checking with all departments to supply appropriate revision resources

ACTION: Communicate with parents when PP is live