

GTS Parent Forum Meeting Minutes - 12/10/15

Present: Angela Whitlaker, Ricky Slocombe, Gill May, Lynne Grigg, Miriam McCurdy (Chair), Sue Kavanagh, Sharon Lambert, Gayle Craker, Penny Stowell, Tracey Amos (Headteacher)

1. Miriam welcomed new parents and gave a brief explanation about the aims and value of the Parent Forum.

2. Chartwells Catering:

Tracey Amos encouraged all parents to complete the survey about Chartwells - the new catering company. The information so far shows that numbers are significantly up for the main meal, and the responses have been generally positive. Tracey will check that certain items (e.g. milk) are reasonably priced.

3. Duke of Edinburgh completion:

There was some concern voiced by parents that their children would not have the opportunity to complete their Duke of Edinburgh expedition. Apparently as the expedition can not take place over the winter months, it will now be done after March next year. The Ten Tors have a 35 mile team which will start after the 1st of February '16, but the school is looking for a new member of staff to take over this commitment.

4. Open Questions - Tracey Amos

- school uniform - there is still an issue with girls wanting to wear fashionable uniform - skinny trousers in particular. The school up until now has chosen not to be prescriptive about where to buy uniform, however, the governing body may decide to take this route in the future.
- the statistics exam for some Year 10 students will count as an extra GCSE, but will not be a substitute for the Maths GCSE.
- Year 9 are starting some GCSE modules in English and Maths, to prepare them for the new exam system.
- pupils will now be taking their options in Year 8 so that they have three years to cover the expected increase in exam content at Key Stage 4. There will be no coursework. The school therefore want to develop a 'whole school approach' to memorising for exams, they would like to provide a menu of strategies that the students can employ.
- volume of homework for Year 10 - are there ways for less able pupils to deal with this?
- Future Opportunities Evening - parents and pupils should attend even if they have been before, as there will be new establishments attending, and it provides a good chance to look at different options.
- a note was made that the Year 10 parents evening on the 25th April '16 is scheduled for the same week as Year 10 work experience.

5. Items for the Spring agenda:

One of the Senior Leadership Team will be present to go through each of the year groups to explain what impact the changes to the exam system will have.

NOTE: A thank you was extended to the school for the success of the Year 6 'open' events - the morning, evening and taster day were thought to be a really good introduction to GTS. Both Year 6 students and older pupils at GTS who took part thoroughly enjoyed themselves.