

Alderman White School

Parent's Forum 25/11/2020 via Zoom

Chair – Helen Hanslow

Minutes – Rachael Priestnall

1. Feedback from previous meeting.

- Extra study lessons for Year 11: These are all set up now and working well. We are now into 1st week of progress exams and are having a mix of on site and remote sessions before and after school. Students have taken this on and have been asking for extra sessions.
- School lunches:
 - o Mrs Holling is meeting with NCC on Monday to discuss increasing the variety on the main meal menu. She will also discuss the sale of drinks in single use plastic bottles.
 - o Board outside – An easel style white board will be placed outside to advertise the main meal of the day to guide them to the right queue. This will be done when Mrs Holling returns to school.
 - o Keeping the two 30 min lunch breaks for now.
- Google classrooms: Update on today's agenda.
- Chrome books: Parents have been emailed about this. On today's agenda.
- Exams 2021: Students just need to concentrate on learning and doing the best they can and to make sure all work as hard as they can. The exam layout & protective issues are working well. They are doing a great job of getting on with what they need to do.

Action: Mrs Rockley to send out the details of Prom.

2. Lunchtime arrangements (Louise Wilson): Some students say that they don't have enough time to eat their lunch and are late for lessons.

Mrs Mellors explained that the last couple of weeks have been exceptional circumstances. Three kitchen staff have been absent, leaving only 2 kitchen staff plus one supply person. While the staff have done their best, there has been an impact on the quality and quantity of hot food, and not the range that students have been used to. Donna is looking forward to returning and a more normal service will return.

Other points to note:

- Mrs Holling is meeting with NCC to discuss the 'Recovery Menu' as it isn't of the calibre and quality that we had before.
- We have reverted back to year 7's coming 5 mins early to keep the year groups separate.
- Donna has discussed ordering turkey for Christmas dinner, although logistics will be different this year.
- If a student hasn't finished their lunch, we encourage them to sit and finish their food and then to explain to the teacher why they are late. Some students do take their food to eat on the way to the lesson.
- Due to the current catering challenges, we do know that this week some have had 10 minutes to eat food when previously 15 minutes.

Question: Those eating sandwiches have nowhere to eat and have to sit on the muddy field.

Space for each year group has been sectioned off in the hall for students to eat sandwiches. We have noticed that no year 10's have been eating in their area. We have opened the gym up for this too. Most of the time there is seating available. One day was very wet and the hall was full. The old hall chairs are now 'outside' chairs, so there is something for them to sit on.

We are looking into providing permanent seating outside and outdoor cover.

3. BROMCOM update (Alex Young)

The Trust made the decision to move to new admin system to replace Go4Schools, SIMS, parent pay, SQUID, MyEd. The system name is BROMCOM but the parent area is called 'My Child At

School' and all announcements, information, attendance, behaviour, inspire points and payments will all be in one place.

This is being rolled out to year 7 parents at the end of next week, and to all other parents in January. Year 7 parents will also be able to see the reports.

There is an app and a website. This is a good, intuitive system for both teachers and parents and looks to be very positive. Behaviour can be viewed on a lesson by lesson basis for an individual child.

4. COVID Catch Up funding update (Annwen Mellors)

The school are using this funding to focus on access to technology and launched a scheme for parents to purchase subsidised chromebooks with discount to those on free school meals.

- 232 have so far signed up to the scheme (1/3 of the school). This is excellent take up.
- This is mainly in years 7, 8 and 9.
- Over half of year 8 have taken it up.
- We are promoting the take up with those on free school meals.
- When we get the devices, we will look at how we use them to support student learning.
- If we have money left over we will look at how we prioritise that.
- School provide a subsidy, but once purchased the chromebook is yours.
- School have a management licence so they can be brought into school.
- They are 'work devices' rather than play device and are subject to use on the student network in school
- There is the option for school to buy it back in first 3 years.
- Thank you to all supporting this.

Questions: Is scheme still open? What is the likelihood of them needing to use them in lesson? Do we get one just so they can use it in school? Can we order one later?

Mrs Mellors replied that there is not a straight forward answer to that. We want to see them being used in action, and see if teachers/students find it useful.

We don't want students being disadvantaged for not having one. If we find we want to keep it going, we will need to find a scheme to provide further devices at the best price possible. This money is available for this at this current time. If we do make it a requirement, it is likely to be with younger year groups. Students currently are not able to bring their own devices into classrooms due to insurance and management issues (safeguarding).

The scheme is open until Friday. We plan to make another offer in the spring term but can't guarantee the price. There is an 8-12 week delivery time.

Question: Will future year 7's need one?

Mrs Mellors explained that at her previous school there was an expectation for this and they found it to be successful. Teaching & Learning is delivered in a different way at Alderman White, however events have overturned this, and circumstances are different. We would need to build in the use of devices in the classroom. It could supplement work we do as there are often problems of having access to computer rooms. This would be something to be considered.

5. AOB

Question: Michelle Daniels – Uniform policy: Do we need to buy a blazer for January or will the option to not have one be extended?

Mrs Mellors replied that as these are still uncertain times, we will be proposing that the Governors extend this into the spring term. It could be reviewed at Feb half term or Easter. We recognise that we will now need to maintain flexibility re blazers for Year 11s. We would need discussion with the uniform supplier too as they may not have stock available. We want to give half a term of notice of any changes.

The majority of students not wearing a blazer still look smart in a jumper. Some are pushing boundaries with uniform, and we are working on this.

This is a wider debate going forward.

ACTION: Mrs Holling will send letter to all parents about this after the governors meeting.

Other points to note:

- As it's winter and the gym is currently out of use due to exams, students can wear a plain black/navy sweatshirt over their PE jumper to keep them warm. No hoodies.
- The modern PE jumper is more lightweight than the old ones.
- Students can also wear a suitably coloured base layer under the PE top and school uniform.
- D of E hoodies are not to be worn for PE as these are for the purpose of DofE only. GLAM hoodies (which are distributed by the PE department) are permitted. No other hoodies are to be worn.

Question: Johanna - Changing table partners: We had an email about changing table partners. Please can you share your plans so we can manage expectations.

- When we made the decision to change things around, we assumed that staff would seat groups as they wanted. This not been the case (yet). It may be that there were no urgent reasons to do this. We will encourage staff to do this where required.

Question: Clare Sayers - Lockers/Exercise books: Our students are carrying a lot of books to and from school. Is there any way we can store them at school rather than carrying back and forth?

Mrs Holling replied that we do have lockers and hope to return to make use of those. They were originally allocated by central system and they were all mixed up. As we need to keep students in year group bubbles and need to avoid physical crossover in corridors, we needed to review the system and have collected locker keys in. When the time is right, we will re allocate lockers in year groups.

We are currently encouraging students to take books home. This way if they need to isolate, they've got all the books they need to work from home.

Some students are bringing in every book every day. They do not need to do this. Most only have 3-4 subjects per day. Encourage them to get into the habit of taking in just what they need.

Mrs Mellors thanked everyone for attending.

Next meeting before February half term. Date to be confirmed.