



Nether Stowe School

Parental Forum

November 22nd 2018

Headteacher's Presentation:

Headteacher, Glyn Langston-Jones, shared a presentation which provided an overview of the school priorities for 2018-2019 as well as a summary of the building work and an update in regard to conversion to academy status. The presentation is available on the school website.

Questions

Will there be any updates to the school uniform as a result of conversion to academy status? Can we have a standard school skirt?

There are no further intentions to amend the school uniform as a direct result of the conversion to academy status. A number of parents have enquired about their preference for a standard school skirt. This is something we explored the idea of in the summer of 2018 but decided against at the time as we did not wish to impose extra cost to parents at short notice. However, we will revisit the idea this academic year and, if necessary, put a proposal out in due course for parental consultation.

Will DT Food be on the curriculum for 2019-2020?

The intention is to have Food as a GCSE option and available in KS3 from Sept 2019.

Will there be any changes to the food in the canteen or more vegetarian / vegan options?

We always explore how we can improve the offer in the canteen and the facilities for students. We keep the menu under constant review and will always respond to student feedback through the School Council.

How is any disruptive behaviour dealt with and addressed?

Most importantly, the purpose of our reward system is to recognise and praise those students who regularly come in to school and show excellent attitudes to learning. Nevertheless, a key aim for the school is to eliminate any low-level disruption. I have set very high standards and expectations for all staff and students. Teachers should focus on teaching and pupils on learning. To this end, we have completely overhauled the behaviour policy and systems. Poor choices made by students are addressed quickly and teachers are empowered to act decisively. We have a clear system of sanctions and clear routes of escalation to enable us to deal with any unacceptable behaviour swiftly and effectively. Ultimately, any disruption of learning is not acceptable and is dealt with seriously and decisively.

Could we have more feedback from teachers or better-quality parents' evenings?

The lines of communication between home and school are always open. Teachers are busy professionals, but we always try to return a phone call or email within 48 hours. Parents' evenings are only one point of contact in the year and, by their very nature, are tightly time-limited. Nevertheless, it is important that parents feel that they can contact an individual teacher where they have a question or concern and I encourage direct contact. We are also looking at ways in which we can improve the experience of the parents' evening to allow more space for focused and purposeful

discussion as well as how we provide regular and good quality information about the progress of your child.

What is the school doing to enable young people to feel valued and respected?

We know that 99% of students come into school every week, work hard, make great progress and show brilliant attitudes to learning. We are incredibly proud of these students and we want them to be proud of the school. At the end of this half term, we are holding our first formal College Award assemblies which will recognise not only academic achievement across the school but the qualities, such as effort and determination, we want to see in our students in all lessons. Community and team work are two important concepts for the school and we want all students to feel part of something amazing.

Will the pupils have work experience?

Currently, we offer work experience to our pupils in Year 12. We have also recently appointed Miss Rose as our careers lead who will be working on meeting the Gatsby benchmarks of careers education good practice. However, there are no plans currently to introduce work experience lower down the school.

A significant part of our current plan is to ensure that our students are engaging with university experiences from an early age as well as high-profile and prestigious regional employers, such as Jaguar Land Rover and Rolls Royce, who are able to come in to school to work with our pupils and engage them with the world of work and the wider opportunities that are out there for them.

Currently, pupils in Year 8 don't seem to get much homework?

We have undertaken a lot of student interviews to review the quality and regularity of homework. Our evaluation has shown that pupils in the Sixth Form, Year 10 and Year 11 are getting a good amount of challenging and purposeful homework. Where there is some recognised inconsistency is in KS3. I have tasked a senior leader in the school to completely review our systems and policies for homework and we are investigating how we can use software, such as 'Show My Homework' to improve both the quality of homework and to ensure that communication with parents is as clear as possible so that you can support and challenge your child at home.

Why are the toilets not open to pupils at lunch?

Pupils are always able to access the toilets at lunchtime and we are looking to further refurbish our facilities. We also make sure that we have a member of staff who is able to monitor and check the toilets on a regular basis.

Can we make it easier for students to access music activities at lunchtime?

We want to encourage as much extra-curricular participation as possible. We operate a pass system so that we can monitor the number of students accessing support and activities at lunchtime and to ensure that numbers remain manageable.

What would you like more information on at the next Parental Forum meeting?

Sixth Form: Miss Riley (Head of Sixth Form) will attend with students to outline the development plans for the Sixth Form and to answer any questions.

Date of the next meeting to be confirmed