

SENIOR REPS MEETING MINUTES – Friday 25 January 2019

10:00am in the Senior Library

Staff Attendees:

DP Head
GP Head of Senior School
LL Head of Administration and PA to the Head

Class Reps

Year 7	Penny Jackson and Kristina Redhouse
Year 8	Gemma Wood and Isabelle Haynes
Year 9	Julie Elder
Year 10	Cheryl Freeman-Phillips
Year 11	Bernadette Van Nierkerk
Sixth form	Hayley Lindsay

1. Apologies: Cheryl Freeman Phillips, Gemma Wood

2. Class Reps items

i. Lunches

The last week has been a successful week for lunches with many parents' joining GP this week. Pupils are enjoying the food and selection. There was a concern about the food running out but this has been addressed and was purely down to teething problems and staffing issues. New members of staff joined this week and DP is keeping an eye on the food at different times throughout the lunchtime period on a daily basis. Lunch is now being served by staff to ensure sufficient quantities of food are left for the Senior students and in particular those who attend a club before they eat lunch. It was suggested that senior Students have noticed that the younger children are touching and handling food and this will be addressed with a talk to the children during their weekly assembly.

Match Teas and food for After School Wrap Care are also being looked into but it will take a little time to achieve perfection in all areas.

ii. SEND Students Languages/GCSE Choices and Support around Exams

Modern Foreign languages are compulsory and we offer French and Spanish. French is the more difficult language to learn. However, we are fully supportive of children who have learning support needs and for those students with these needs, our advice is that they take Spanish and drop French. The dropped language lessons will be replaced with study support lessons. There are concerns that due to this, students are not taking the full number of required GCSEs. GP advised that dropping the more difficult language (i.e. French) would benefit children with difficulties and sitting either 8 or 9 GCSEs is totally acceptable and makes no difference to their on-going education. This is not a matter which can be made optional for all students as we do not want children pulling out of languages just because they don't enjoy it. Languages are needed not only for the lingual aspect but also for students to obtain an understanding of the culture of the countries they study. We are currently exploring adding Spanish to the Prep School curriculum. In Yr 9 there is as an option to take Spanish or French or both. As mentioned before, French is harder to learn and those with difficulties should follow the route of Spanish so that they can continue with Spanish later.

GCSE Support Lessons - JE enquired of what GCSE support lessons are available for children to learn how to study. GP confirmed that these are already offered in school in Yr 7 8 and 9 and this prepares students for the latter years. Students are provided with Study skills, revisions techniques by teachers and offered resources to try. Yr 7 and 8 are given bespoke learning to learn lessons. There is a revision session for parents and pupils for Yr 9 and 10 on March 12. *Can we put out to Yr 7 and 8?* We will be putting out a similar event but GP does not want the children to burn out – this will be done during the Summer term 6 weeks prior to their exams. All pupils take learning to learn lessons weekly.

IH asked if the amount of testing has increased. Yes, this has happened and if grades aren't achieved then we work with them – if they fall below their minimum expected grade they will be retested.

We offer full support to all to improve on their work.

IH advised that Parents have expressed concerns about lack of practical subjects available. Yes, there are plans. We did change Business Studies to Economics and Art to incorporate sculpture/ceramics/photography for GCSE and A Level. There is a meeting next week to bring in creative/technological design in Years 7 and 8, and ECDL in Year 9. Yr 7 and 8 will be using the Microsoft Surface and they need to improve but using the equipment will assist with this. Looking 1-2 years ahead as we get a critical mass of students at A-level more subjects may be brought in.

Home Economics/Textiles – Home Economics is a club and is popular. Textiles is incorporated within Art lessons. Mrs Robinson is developing the students' passions and helping them to follow the path they wish to follow without throwing away the general basic Art.

ICT rooms are being moved to the basement 3 rooms for all of the ICT/Computing/Technological design.

iii. School Bus Service

LL was able to offer an update on this. The particular parent who asked this question has now had their requirement fulfilled as two spaces became available on the Orpington Route. We look at the bus routes on a regular basis and as the school grows, we plan to increase the number of routes. We do now run our own mini bus for the Oxted route and also for the Sevenoaks Station late bus at 5.30pm. There will not be a change in ad hoc booking as we do not have sufficient space on a daily basis.

iv. Is there to be a structured Career Advice Programme?

We do run and develop this yearly. Mr Leddington and Mrs Read run this and there is a sheet of information which has been added to the Website. Letters are sent out to Yr 9 regarding choices and their specific programme. In Yr 10 there is a more intense procedure and students have a more formal interview and talk through their options. As a school we have to have impartiality and we cannot tell the children what they should do but we do provide them with information and opportunities.

The Network Evening event is being extended to Yr 10 and of course 11/12 and 13. We invite people (including parents and ex-parents) to this event which is relatively informal but gives students and the opportunity to chat to people from all types of Industry. We are looking for more volunteers, preferably non office based (maybe Nurses/Doctors/Paramedics). JE mentioned that there are lots of mums who have given up careers who could come and talk. GP mentioned that they would be most welcome. Last year the producer of 'The Inbetweeners' came along and was very popular with the students. Anyone you can recommend, please speak to Mr Leddington. Please could Rep's mention this to parents and ask them to look at the Bulletin for further information.

We also run Assemblies where we run Q & As with students. We have a big change this year in that we are arranging Medway Educational Business Partnership to arrange Work Experience for them. There will also be a chance for students to arrange their own work experience choices from the Network evening.

v. EPP Programme

EPP – Follows on from Radnor House Twickenham – RHT are further ahead than us but we are half way there. We have brought in the T20 Lecture Series which encourages children to come and speak about things they haven't heard about before. For example Mr Leddington did a talk on 'Sapiens - Where we came from'. GP will be talking about Science and Maths and the importance of this in Renaissance Art for Years 7 up. Following the talk there is an opportunity for students to discuss what they have heard.

We are looking to build a more exclusive talks for each of the Year Groups.

With the original EPP, teachers were able to nominate 2 pupils per class but this made it too exclusive. We are trying to move away from this. We are aware that the school website needs to be updated since the talk GP gave to parents in September 2018.

Parents wondered if it would be possible to make faculty events more inclusive. Faculties are working on developing events for as many pupils as possible. The Escape Room was an excellent, popular trip last year, but it is only available for small groups.

vi. Pre warning of PSHE Lessons

It was discussed that some children return home after these lessons with questions and anxieties about topics which are discussed. GP advised that all topics are on the website so information can be obtained from there. Moving forward we are going to ensure that more notifications are entered into the Bulletin.

vii. Not showering after sport and leaving school in sports kit

It was requested if students could leave school in their sports kit rather than not showering and putting their uniform back on over sweaty and often muddy bodies. We do have showers available but there

are not enough and there is a changing culture about showering at school. We will consider and discuss children leaving in sports kit (but this would mean wearing their tracksuits) - it is likely that this will go ahead.

We are going to double in size over the next year and we are exploring increasing the changing rooms and we will be converting the storage in the Sports Hall to accommodate these.

We are still inundated with unnamed lost property. Please could Reps ask parents to please name all items.

viii. Toilets and Water Fountains

We had an inspection in 2018 and the Inspection confirmed that we had sufficient toilets and water fountains around the senior school. LL will obtain clarification from Workshop as to the exact number.

Since the meeting, LL can now confirm that we have:

Senior School – Main Building

Ground Floor – 7 Girls’ WCs, 1 Boys’ WC & 2 Urinals. 1 x fountain and one tap for water bottles.

1st Floor – 2 Girls’ WCs, 2 Boys’ WCs & 2 Urinals. 1 x Water Fountain

2nd Floor – 3 Girls’ WCs, 1 Boys’ WC. 1 x Fountain

STEM

3 Girls’ WCs, 2 Boys’ WCs

Sports (not including changing rooms)

1 Girls’ WC, 1 Boys’ WC, 1 Disabled WC. 2 x Fountain

We do of course also ensure water is served with lunch and also there are jugs of water in the Adam Room for students to drink.

ix. SMHW/Teams

Comments made by parents are that on occasions staff are omitting the timings in as to how long the homework for each subject should be. It always says half an hour. We are looking at altering this to show this as blank and we are speaking to SMHW so that we can be more specific. As to whether homework should be half an hour (handed back to the Tutor within a short period) or for example two hours (to be handed back to the Tutor in 1 week). Whilst we agree there have been teething problems we have seen more growth in using it and parents seem on the whole to be happy.

x. Tennis

We are looking to start Tennis after half term but as we share the tennis courts with the netball players, this will take place as a club rather than as a curricular sport lesson. GP is talking with Mr Rock about and will speaking to the new Director of Sport regarding the Summer Sport Curriculum providing more flexible choices (i.e. Athletics, Tennis, cricket etc all to be explored).

GP is looking into holding a Parent/Teacher/Student Tennis Competition (it being his sport to play).

xi. Languages

It was requested if we could put Year 7 into sets for languages as some have better ability than others. We have looked into this and trialled it in the past but it failed. We find that helps to have mixed

abilities in language classes as the students are able to help each other improve if some are stronger than others.

It was asked if we could look at timetables as French and Spanish are next to each other but GP explained this is difficult as we have part time teachers. We try our best not to do this but it can't be helped and this is under constant review.

xii. Mobile Phones in Homework Club

These may be used for a quick check of SMHW and to check a text and respond to a parent but if this abused with games etc, phones will be removed. It is not necessary for parents to text their children as the Reception is covered until 6pm and parents can call Reception who will arrange for children to be sent to the car park to meet them.

xiii. End of day parking and parents' parking in drop off/hatched zones

Can parents park in the drop off zone at the pm pick up? This is not viable as it blocks the pathways and therefore parents and children (especially from Prep) cannot utilise the pathway. There is sufficient overflow parking in the staff car park if the parent car park is full. It was suggested that this would not be preferable to children as they would have to walk further and would not know where their parents were. JE suggested that parents could get out of their car and walk to meet their children.

It would appear that 6th Formers are not using the staff carpark and parking in the parent car park. GP will address this with Mr Leddington.

There is one parent (no name mentioned) who continually parks in the restricted hatched zone in the carpark. This is not fair on other parents and is dangerous for pupils walking into the car parc. Could we use Cones and arrange for more staff to be present at pick up time?

There are staff now in the car park at pick up and we hope this is easing most of the above issues.

Could we enquire of the Local Authority to ask if they could widen the entrance into Combe Bank Drive? We have looked into this before but to no avail.

xiv. D of E

Mr Kemp will be holding coffee mornings for Yr 10 and above to meet with parents to discuss. There will also be one for Yr 9 parents. It was asked if the outdoor expeditions count towards DOE. They do not due to the age they commence and also it is a requirement that they do not have an adult with them to qualify for DOE.

Furthermore, DOE is only 1 night 2 days, OAE expeditions are actually longer (although the trekking is shorter).

xv. Tutor time reduced on days students have sport

Tutor time is 20 minutes and this cannot be changed as it would be challenging to balance the curriculum and tutor time for every curriculum sports day. If there is a fixture there is no Tutor Time.

We ask Pupils to change in their lunch break not only for fixtures but also for curriculum sport.

xvi. House Charities

GP is behind in this and apologised but will arrange visits by the charities each house supports. The houses have been working on plans for fundraising for their specific charities. It was questioned as to whether this could be discussed at Tutor times as students appear to know nothing about what they had raised etc. GP pointed out that there was an Assembly at the end of the first half of the Autumn term where all chosen charities came into school with the exception of MacMillan. Cheques were handed out to the charities for the funds raised and the change of one of the charities was also announced. The new national charity is RSPCA and there was a house charity change from Hospice in the Weald to Bradbourne Riding for the Disabled – We will get the speakers in during the course of this school year.

The house boards are outside the Dining Hall. We will update these to include the charities.

3. A.O.B.

Claire Standley has resigned from being a Year 7 Rep.

School Portal – This was looked into last year but didn't work – We are now exploring using SIMS which is our management system and we are setting up a meeting with them during February. It is something we are very keen to introduce.

Microsoft Surfaces - From Sept Yr 7 and 8 will have surfaces. We will be conducting a Beta test this year with Yr 7 in first half of Summer Term to ensure we have wifi capabilities etc and get training done with Yr 7 so they are ready in Yr 8. It is a facility being provided to aid good teaching not to replace it.

We will be looking at the other years once we have introduced to Yr 7 and 8 and ensured that it is functioning properly. We have spoken to and spent time with other schools running the same system and we have learnt what not to do. We need to ensure that both staff and pupils are confident with use and that everything works 100%

New Year 7 – CR wondered if it would be possible for the current Yr 6 to join in with the taster days with the new entrants for Yr 7 before they start in Sept. Taster Days for new Yr 7 are always independent of the current Yr 6 and friendships are often formed between the new external students and the current Radnor students are missing out. Can the experience day in June for the new Yr 7s and the current Radnor Yr 6 be combined. GP will look at this and will speak to Wendy and DP to see if we can organise a social prior to the June full day experience. The difficulty is that until they have signed on the dotted line they may not join Radnor in September which could also lead to disappointment.