

MINUTES OF THE STUDENT VOICE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 21 MARCH 2014

Present:

NAPIER

Benjamin Bilton 9CY
Will Morgan 9THE
Emma Samways 9THE
Rosie Uden 10BD
Lucy Armstrong 10CD
Will Caldwell 11NR
Dan Easterbrook 11TL

TRENCHARD

Kate O'Brien 9RD
Belle Marshall 9RD
Beth Miller 10SG
Natasha Perry 10PE
Olivia Zuu 11DD

HENNING

James Burr ridge 10HB
Ellie Timlin 10KM

STRATFORD

Matt Torok 9GHI
Lucy Bone 10ASM
Tara Chittenden 11GH
Adrienne Jenkins 11MJ

Kyle Reynolds 13DS, Mr Foley, Mrs Chittenden, Mr O'Donnell, Mr Johnson, Mr Gallagher, Mrs Buck

Apologies were received from

1 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING/MATTERS ARISING

Some items requiring discussion following the last meeting appear on the agenda for today's meeting.

FROG – Dan said that although most people use Facebook as their main form of contact they need to start using FROG instead. He is planning to get the Student Voice FROG project up and running.

Dan asked the meeting whether there was anything that people wanted on FROG other than dates of meetings, etc. It was pointed out that teachers have been putting revision notes and guides on to FROG for students to access. However, it is apparent that not everyone can access FROG from home and complaints have been received.

Dan stressed that FROG has always been a 3-year implementation plan and is hoped that it will be more integrated and user-friendly in the near future.

One comment received was that FROG OS seems pointless at the moment as you have to use the link to go back to the original FROG. Dan replied that this will also be looked at in the future. Year 9 students are happy with FROG which they feel is generally better than systems they were using in their previous schools. It is usually easy to access files and easy to navigate.

2 PUPIL VOICE VISITS FEEDBACK

DASP Links – Dan and James visited the Prince of Wales School and spoke with students. They received good feedback about what the school is doing. The main focus was on projects and which the students enjoyed the most. They enjoyed focussing conversations around this.

Ben, Dan and Harry visited Charminster. They spoke with the School Council about projects and what everyone had been doing to help Comic Relief and about helping children in India. A rota has been set up amongst students to help with the running of the school. Eco Charters and a School Charter led by students have been drawn up and displayed around the school.

At Broadmayne School a video was filmed during a tour of the school by Rhianna, Ellie and Zoe.

KC said that the next schools to be visited will be Damers and Frome Valley. Ben Bilton will visit Frome Valley together with another member of SV. KC asked everyone to identify which schools they attended so that SV members could be matched with their former schools.

Will, Dan, Maisie and Tara visited Sunninghill and Manor Park to get feedback and handed out booklets. They asked students what they thought made a good working environment and also what they considered to be outstanding teaching and learning.

More visits are needed to schools.

3 STUDENT VOICE VISITS FEEDBACK

Outstanding teaching and learning presentations to teachers. Dan, Will, Maisie and Tara have feedback on this from Sunninghill, Prince of Wales and Manor Park.

4 6TH FORM LINKS

Kyle said that the idea of linking lower school to 6th Form has now evolved. There will be 20 places available for SV members to sign up for to be paired up with 6th Form students for a day on a first come, first served basis. He invited Year 10 and 11 students to sign up. He stressed that 6th Formers have volunteered to buddy up with lower school students and that the students must be mindful of this when accompanying them. They will not need to wear school uniform on the day they are in 6th Form but will have to make sure that they use any 'free' periods to catch up on their work.

It was stressed that this will not simply be a day away from lessons. SV members attending 6th Form will have to look at how the lessons are delivered compared to GCSE lessons. Are the lessons delivered in a different way? Do the teachers treat the students in a different way? Is the teaching and learning good? Feedback will be required.

The first pairings will be made early in the Summer Term after the Easter break and then again in the Autumn term. It was recognised that the most likely students to be pairing up will be those in Year 10 as it will be too close to exams for Year 11s to take time out.

5 COLLEGE VOICES FEEDBACK

HENNING

School Link - Mr Johnson said that the College has formed a link to a school in Northern Tibet. Mr Gallagher already has links with a charity supporting the school and orphanage. There will be a video exchange.

Weather permitting, filming will take place this afternoon in and around the school to give the students in Tibet an idea of what Thomas Hardy and Dorchester are like. A forum page has been set up on FROG so that videos and photos can be uploaded. It is hoped to get open up communication between the two schools.

Charity – Mr Johnson said that they have been trying to raise money for charity and that they sold Christmas Cards at Christmas. Unfortunately, however, profits were not as hoped and they aim to relaunch the idea.

Environment – Henning is campaigning around litter in school and its surrounding area. It is also hoped that Henning students will be involved in the redevelopment of Alexander Gardens and, in particular, the grass free lawn.

NAPIER

School Link – students are waiting for letters from El Salvador. 9NS will be taking photographs and video footage to email across and it is hoped that Skype links will be set up.

Environment – Napier is hoping to rebrand and relaunch the student Canteen. Mr Dean would like to open this up to Student Voice for discussion. Tara suggested that a better salad bar was provided and asked for more healthy options. Dan suggested that it would be nice to have a ‘proper’ canteen with trays and proper meals. Kyle pointed out that the 6th Form Canteen doesn’t provide many healthy options either. Mr Foley said that he would like to improve canteen facilities within the school and doesn’t think that it will be too difficult to do. He said that small changes could be made which could make significant differences to the food and the environment. Mrs Cheney is leading on this. Mr Foley said that cashless payment systems are being looked at – this would help reduce queuing times. School management are willing to put money, time and effort into this.

Dan pointed out that there isn’t really anywhere for people to go and eat once they have purchased their food. It was wondered whether the canteen space could be opened up.

Mr Foley suggested that representatives from SV have a meeting with Mrs Cheney and someone from the canteen to discuss what is needed. He said that a decision would be needed before the summer so that changes can be made.

Student Voice members to discuss the canteen with their College links and get ideas of what they would like before the next SV meeting.

ACTION - ALL

Charity – the Pie and Hot Chocolate Festival was cancelled. In its place will be an Easter Hunt, the prize being a giant easter egg. Chosen charities are Cancer Research and the Dorset Air Ambulance.

TRENCHARD

School Link – Trenchard has linked with a school in Tanzania. They are going to photograph the life of a typical Thomas Hardy student and it is also hoped that student to student links will be set up.

Charity – The poppy charity supporting The British Legion will continue. Julia’s House has also been selected to be supported.

STRATFORD

The Stratford FROG pages were shown to everyone who were all impressed. The pages are kept updated regularly and show everything that Stratford students are up to.

School Link – Baba School, Afghanistan

Environment – Stratford students are hoping to be able to plant 37 acres of trees to help the environment (an area roughly equivalent to the school grounds).

Charity – Weldmar and Water Aid

6 REWARDS (Tokens and Ties)

TOKENS

Will asked for feedback on Rewards Tokens. It was agreed that the awarding of tokens has died down considerably since they were introduced in September and that many students didn't view them as much of an incentive as rewards for tokens were not that good. It is considered that many teachers have forgotten that have tokens to award, even though they worked really well at the beginning of the Autumn term.

It was unanimously agreed that Postcards that are sent home are highly regarded by students and a popular way of recognition of students' achievements.

It was suggested that the token system is made more competitive with better rewards.

Mr O'Donnell said that, this term, the number of tokens being given out and logged is half that of last term. He added that the quiz has proved popular and that the debate competition has been going well. He also said that teachers need to ensure that tokens are sustainable adding that students should remind teachers to give them out. Perhaps posters might be placed in classrooms setting out what tokens should be awarded for.

4 April will be a non-uniform day for students in the College with most tokens.

TIES

There is still quite a considerable stock of black ties and the way they are awarded needs to be looked at. Students in year 9 and 10 agreed that black ties are viewed as something to aspire to and that they should be kept. However, it was pointed out that the way that sports ties are handed out needs to be looked at as some students represent the school regularly but cannot always get to all practice sessions or matches and might therefore be overlooked. It was felt that the sports ties should be awarded for the commitment made by student rather than just representing the school.

It is hoped that future black ties will feature coloured stripes to represent the College that the students awarded them are representing.

Mr Foley stressed that rewards need to be meaningful and asked the students to consider how the system should be driven. He added that the Old Hardyans may be willing to support/sponsor black ties but costings would be needed before a final decision could be made.

7 ELECTION

A new SV Senior Panel will need to be elected at the next meeting. It was agreed that the election process used last year worked well and that it would be repeated.

Those SV members wishing to stand for election should put together a manifesto to be presented at the next meeting (Summer term) and new officers will be elected. ACTION - ALL

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Gallagher is doing research on Student Voice. He is looking for students to give feedback on lessons and learning and is putting together some questionnaires with this in mind. He has asked whether SV members

would help with this. This would link in with the work that SV are doing on outstanding teaching and learning and will email information that SV already have on this to Mr Gallagher. ACTION – Dan

Mrs Chittenden asked if there were any year 9 or 10 students who would like to help with the Deputy Head interviews on Monday 24th March. Volunteers were asked to stay and talk to her after the meeting.

Dan asked for clarification on where students are allowed to be during break times as students have been asked to move away from Science and MFL corridors. If the weather is not good there is not enough room for students to be in the canteen and/or theatre. Where can students go?

It was suggested that part of the Sports Hall was cordoned off during break times (particularly wet breaks) so that games can be played and students have somewhere to go.