

MALTINGS ACADEMY

PARENT COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES 11 February 2010

Members:

Present:

Pauline Davies	PD	No
Alan Foskew	AF	Yes
Sue Goodman	SG	No
Wendy Groves	WG	Yes
Mandy Haines	MH	Yes
Sue Hayrettin	SH	Yes
Sandi Jenkinson	SJ	No
Patricia Jones	PJ	Yes - Chairperson
Linda Mason	LM	No
Clair McKeown	CM	No
Debbie Murfitt	DM	Yes
Darren Smith	DS	Yes - Secretary
Daren White	DW	Yes
Vanessa Way	VW	No
Anita Mason	AM	No
Trevor Allen	TA	No
Penelope Waldie	PW	Yes – Governor Link

01. Apologises for Absence

No apologies were received

02. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the 13 October 2009 were confirmed and accepted by the meeting as a true record.

03. Chair, Vice Chair & Secretary

Both Patricia Jones and Darren Smith have agreed to stay on in their respective positions until the end of the current Academic year, at which point both will be standing down immediately at the commencement of the next Academic year. We still currently have no Vice Chairperson and therefore, this is open to any member of the Parent Council or any parent that wishes to be involved to put themselves for the position.

04. School Coat

There has been recently a campaign that has reached the local press regarding the practicality of the current school coat. A Facebook campaign has been set up by one parent, presently the Parent Council will not comment on that suffice to say that there are two forums for airing Parent concerns and that is either the Parent Council or the Parent Governors.

It is suggested that the existing coat does not provide the warmth or length protection for the children.

The Parent Council have the following suggestions to the Academy whilst acknowledging that the Academy should not allow students carte blanche to wear any form of coat, but that there should be two options available;

1. The present coat format that the Academy organise noting which a large majority of parents and students are fine with.
2. And a longer thicker coat with those parents that wish to order a longer thicker coat would have to make the extra payment involved, noting that it would be a substantial cost as the Academy couldn't justify the cost of pre-ordering a large number of oversize coats. This would have to be a standard coat design making the existing coat supplied from the same suppliers of the current coat to retain uniformity.

Further to this and for those that feel the existing coat is acceptable but want more warmth another option would be to reinstate an Academy jumper, standard V Neck Standard blue/black colour with Academy logo.

05. Student Attendance

One of the Parent Councils HOT TOPIC's this Academic year is the issue of Attendance. We have already agreed that we will support the Senior Management Team (SMT) in their pursuit of maintaining good attendance levels.

The Parent Council will not be involved in the implementation of the attendance criteria, but will be supportive and vocal to other parents in reminding them of the repercussions of their pupil missing half a day, a day, a week over the course of the child's Academic career.

Reference was made in the meeting to the purported offensive and confrontational nature of the standard letter that is received by parents where their child's attendance drops below 95%.

It was recommended that the Parent Council have an input in to this and any other standard letter that the Academy sends to Parents to ensure that the response from the parents is the right one to ensure that there is not confrontational attitude from parents to the Academy. DW will speak to Mr O'Sullivan about this issue.

The Parent Council appreciate that there will always be serial offenders in relation to attendance and support the measures that the Academy take with these pupils and parents.

Communication is another of the HOT TOPIC's that the Parent Council are championing this year. It is still felt that the method of communication between the Academy and the Parents is still wanting and could be greatly improved. As with the issue above it is recommended that the SMT utilise the Parent Council as a sounding board for communication from the Academy to the Parents. The Parent Council are supportive of the Principals weekly newsletter and feel that this is a step in the right direction. The PC feel that a meeting with the SMT would assist in this matter and it is anticipated that a meeting will be organised to assist in this matter.

06. Mr O’Sullivan – Principal

With the recent announcement by Mr O’Sullivan of his leaving the Academy in the Summer, it is felt that the Parent Council should acknowledge everything that Mr O’Sullivan has achieved in turning around the old John Bramston School to the new Maltings Academy. Our Chair will write a formal letter to Mr O’Sullivan expressing our thanks on behalf of the Parents.

07. Early Exams

A comment was received from a member of the Parent Council as to the communication that the Pupils are receiving in reference to taking early exams. The report back is that pupils are being advised that if they hit their expected grades in early exams that they can then drop that subject for the remainder of the Academic term to concentrate on other subjects. The reality is that pupils are not being able to drop the reached subject and as such are gaining no real benefit from taking the exam early.

DW is going to find out the Academy policy on taking exams early and the communication of dropping subjects once the grade has been met.

08. Parent Council Format

Discussion took place about the format of the parent council and whether or not the name Parent Council was a put off to new parents joining – suggestion was made to change the name to the Parent Forum. Principally on the basis that it is a forum for parents to express concerns that they have about general matters relating to their pupils education and the Academy, noting that pupil specific matters should still be directed by the parent through the proper channels already laid down by the Academy.

The current members have been asked to review their thoughts on the forward motion of the Parent Council for the next meeting.

09. A.O.B

No other business was discussed

10. Date of Next Meeting

22 April 2010 – 7.00pm in the Staff Room