

LEIGH TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY **PARENTS COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 1st March 2010

Attendees:

Academy staff:

Pete Finnegan, Principal Chaucer, Doreen Chaffe – Restaurant Manager

Parents:

BRUNEL: Chris Baker, Tracy Roblett, Vicky Lester, Lindsey Summers,
Elizabeth Peters, Christine Ford

CHAUCER: Ann Burch, Glenda Philpott, Tim Field, Mo Jenson.

DA VINCI: -

DARWIN: Emma Isidorou.

Apologies: Jacqueline Ellis, Karen Brooker, Kevin Nutter, Dave Auty.

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Chris welcomed Pete Finnegan, Doreen Chaffe and parents to the meeting. Apologies were accepted.

2. Restaurant Manager's Q & A

Chris explained that there had been several meetings this year where issues concerning the restaurant had been raised, so Doreen had agreed to come along to discuss how it works and cover any questions about specific issues.

Doreen began by explaining how the government's healthy eating plan is implemented and showed us the 3 weekly menu plans that they work from.

Questions were asked about the lack of choice on lunch 4, which has been a main concern for parents, and on the 'meal deal' package, which some students don't want. Doreen said that the choice does become slightly limited on last lunch, but students can ask for a sandwich/baguette of their choice to be made if there is nothing they want/like on the shelf.

The meal deal arrangement works out cheaper for students, but some mains are available separately, and if they only want a pudding that is possible too. The meal deal leads to students not having just a bowl of chips (only served once a week anyway) for lunch. Breakfasts are available but are not taken up by many students, even though they are good value for money. Parents asked about cost and limiting daily spend in the restaurant, there is no pricing information on the website. Doreen said that any parent can contact her to ask to see what their child has bought at any time. Limits can be put onto the cards if needed, and about £2.50 a day should be enough for good meal. The prices and full menu can be put on the website. Cards can be a problem for her so she requested that we remind students to wear their lanyards and have cards ready to speed up the service. She also reminded parents that they do not serve fizzy drinks and is worried that parents let them bring so many 'energy drinks' into school as this is not part of the healthy eating scheme. Water is freely available from the machines so students can refill bottles as needed. Chris thanked Doreen for attending and giving a good explanation of the restaurant and its products. Doreen left at 7.35pm

3. Principal's Q & A

A parent asked about children being able to get out of the grounds within the school day. Pete said that since the half-term break the school is in 'lock-down' during the school day and no one can get out without a member of staff knowing. Chris said that during the holiday she had visited the building and noticed that the side gate to the back of the building was open and unattended. Groups of people and children were able to wander round unattended, although they were there for various sports events under the extended schools agenda. Pete said the gym is also open to the public now with about 130 members so there are often people on site. It is quite successful and there may be plans to extend opening to during the day in holiday periods.

A parent asked if year 11s will get study leave prior to exams. Pete said that any 'study leave' will be on site prior to the exam, but after that subject has been taken they will not be expected to attend further lessons. If they have to stay in school because they are waiting for an exam later in the day, there will be space for them to study. It was suggested that parents should go through the exam timetable with their children and ensure that they know where they should be during this period.

There were no other questions so Pete left the meeting at 7.55pm

4. Minutes of previous meeting and Matters arising

These were agreed as correct. The progress on uniform issues was discussed further. Chris explained that a new internet company would be supplying the uniform alongside Longfield Wools. The new company will provide it more cheaply egg from £22 for the blazer. The decision on the PE kit is still to be finalised, but they will be supplying it too. There are some concerns about Longfield Wools as they still hold money for items un-delivered; Sue Crocker needs to know if any other parents have monies outstanding at Longfield Wools and what it is for. Parents still would like to see a 'previously used' uniform shop within the school somewhere, Sue is considering how this could work as a joint effort between parent council and 'enterprise' students as a business idea.

5. Parent Governor update

Dave Auty contacted Chris to say that although he attends all the Governing body meetings, he does have difficulty in getting to our meetings due to his work commitments. He is aware that this is not ideal, but asks if we will accept an emailed report for the meeting if necessary. It was agreed that he is a good representative for us to have on the Governing Body, and whenever he cannot attend a meeting a report on any issues will be acceptable.

6. Any other business

A parent asked about staffing, particularly at senior management level, following the proposed changes at Wilmington. Various rumours were circulating and this was perceived to be causing uncertainty amongst students. A long discussion followed about the effect of the Leigh's involvement with Wilmington Enterprise College on our students, staff and results and queries raised. It was decided that the group would like to put these concerns to the Governing Body at the next meeting. Chris agreed to request attendance of a Governor at the next meeting.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm

Next meeting Monday 26th April 2010