

LEIGH TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY **PARENTS COUNCIL**

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 11th Oct 2010

Attendees:

Academy staff: Jane Rowlands, Principal Brunel, Megan West, Vice Principal, Brunel, Sue Crocker, Business Director.

Visiting speaker: Chris Johns, Brigade (Uniform suppliers)

Parents:

BRUNEL: Chris Baker, Tracy Roblett, Christine Ford, Mandy Kennedy,

CHAUCER: Ann Burch, Jacqueline Ellis, Michael Holmes, Deborah Quinn, Glenda Philpott, Sharon Coles

DA VINCI: - Karen Brooker

DARWIN: -

Apologies: - Mo Jensen, Julie Partridge, Kevin Nutter.

Minutes

1. Welcome and apologies

Chris welcomed Jane Rowlands to her first Parent Council meeting and introduced Sue Crocker and Chris Johns to the group. Apologies were received and noted.

2. Sue Crocker and Chris Johns.

Chris invited the guests to give an overview of the service and system for ordering, and to comment on the issues parents have raised since they became our supplier.

Chris Johns said that the sheer weight of orders and bespoke item ordering - such as the PE shirts in blue/black rather than blue/navy – that caused a supply problem initially. They did not expect for example, people to order 5 blouses all at once. Both Chris and Sue assured parents that from now on orders will be dealt with more quickly, and to avoid issues around sizing variations, a stock of items will be available for students to try on before ordering. Chris said that some of the problems had been caused by parents ordering a couple or more sizes only to send some back.

Specific queries were then answered which included the PE shirts being poor quality as they fade and shrink – Sue Crocker will test this out herself; the girl’s blouses come up very big – 4” larger than the size ordered – Sue suggested that in future this can be remedied by trying stock items on first; we were reminded that Longfield Wools is still an alternative supplier but sources its items from different places. All parents present agreed that the girl’s blouse was not really acceptable as it is more like a man’s shirt and fitted ones would be preferred if they could be sourced. A parent said that she understood an arrangement was in place at Longfield Academy where college badges were supplied to be stitched on to items. Sue said this is being trialled at the request of their Parent council. Discussions continued on the differences between the 3 Academies and prospect of ‘someone’ specifically supplying the whole Trust.

Jane Rowlands and Megan West commented that the staff are also unhappy with the blouses as they look untidy left out, but the old blouse was brought in so that they didn’t have to be tucked in or have ties. Chris Johns indicated that the original suppliers of the fitted blouse went into administration but a three-quarter length sleeve could be available. Sue Crocker said that Principals need to discuss what they will accept or prefer and it can be looked into.

There is now a ‘uniform shop’ in the Academy and Sue said she would put details on the website regarding opening hours/days. Parents can order from the ‘shop’ and pay cash rather than use the internet for payment if they wish.

Jane asked if there was a facility for new parents to ‘save’ for the uniform prior to delivery by paying weekly into Sue’s ‘shop’ as the whole kit is very costly. Sue said she would look at ways of operating this.

Chris Baker thanked both Sue and Chris Johns for attending and they left the meeting at 7.45pm.

3. Principal’s Q & A

The discussion on uniform cost and supply continued and Jane asked if a 2nd hand shop was in place. Megan and the group agreed that there has been talk of one for a year or more but nothing has happened. If possible this could be done through a link on the website, or by parents going in on regular days to facilitate it. Jane and Megan said they would look into this.

The catering queues were an issue last month, Jane said they did not seem too bad; some of the queues arise where there is one line for hot and cold food. A separate line for cold items only might be considered.

Car parking has been followed up with police; situation is being monitored but appears to have improved.

Jane was asked about her initial impressions of the Academy. She said she has been impressed with the smart dress in post-16 and in general with behaviour. Maths is being targeted as the area for improvement; exams are in November so revision sessions have been arranged over half-term.

Over 30 Academy students celebrated completion of their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze awards recently, and the engineering/technology dept have been prominent in making and racing their cars.

A parent asked about post -16 work areas, as she was concerned that students had reported being 'moved on' from computers on plazas. Megan agreed to look into this as they should be allowed to work anywhere as long as other lessons are not affected. Jane is looking at an area that is under-used around the library to see if it can be made a more useful learning space for the senior students.

A Chaucer parent voiced concern that a year 10 class of 47 students was being run by only one teacher – Megan said this should not be the case so she would check it with Chaucer.

Chris Baker thanked Jane and Megan for their input and they left at 8.40pm.

4. Minutes of previous meeting - Agreed.

5. Parent Governor update – None – Chris said she would contact Dave Auty.

6. Any other business

Parents returned to the uniform issue as they felt it important to record their dis-satisfaction with the girl's blouses in particular. A vote was taken on the preference for fitted blouses over straight box shirts, and all voted for fitted ones to be re-introduced. This issue is being taken forward to Principals by Jane and Megan, so the vote will add weight to their opinions. Parents also wished to record their wish that uniforms are 'recycled', and that several are willing to assist in this.

Meeting closed at 8.55pm

Next meeting Monday 22nd November