

Tavistock College
Parent Council notes
Autumn 2018

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Autumn 2018 Agenda

Mobile phone policy

Homework

Lockers

AOB

Notes

TFO opened the meeting explaining that this was not a PTA but a truly representative group of parents that if they come together, can be a vital tool for school improvement. The council can email 'Chair' Jo Persse on the above email with ideas for future agenda items, discussion points or indeed as an alternative method of getting messages to the school SLT via TFO.

Mobile Phone Policy - Not sure of the current policy

A great discussion around why we should have them at all in school and ideas ranged from a total ban from the site, a 'in the bag' ban whilst on school site and the current policy, although parents were not 100% of the current policy - TFO explained this.

Parents agreed that the basic principles of the current policy were good and would meet all parties needs.

However, much like the staff some clarity and alterations to the policy are needed. (as well as being consistently applied by all staff) including but not exclusively;

- Tougher consequences for inappropriate usage of mobile phones / devices. Parents supported the staff views that the device should be removed and collected by parents at their earliest convenience. There was a question about college opening hours, therefore availability for working parents.
- Headphone usage and consequences should be the same with confiscation and parental collection.
- Charging of mobile phones in the school - parents were shocked that this even happened (that staff allowed this to happen)
- Assemblies should be held to announce these / any changes, and parents were adamant that students be consulted.
- Parents welcomed the fact that we would communicate with parents regarding not using this form of communication with their children during lesson times. Parents felt that there should be a message about emergency contact coming through the school only.
- Parents welcomed the thought of a future parental forum based around mobile phone safety, social media etc - TFO stated that the spring term parent forum could be used for this. Parents publicly stated how useful the other parent forums had been.

Homework

In an open forum the parent council raised the following concerns around homework;

- Consistency of setting, collecting, marking, punishment for no completion of homework across the school.
- A lack of apparent feedback / marking on homework tasks - (TFO took the opportunity to inform of the difference between marking and feedback)
- The question was raised about a homework timetable, to support students managing their work at home and parents too!
- Unsure of consequences if and when homework is missed (if collected)
- Is there a way that a teacher can state how the homework will be marked when they set it on SMHW?
- Certain staff leave the 'how long should this take' blank - this is not helpful and some parents and students under or over do homework because of this.
- Year 8 parents present did not see the point of having planners, suggesting this should be a year 7 only thing, if an online homework platform is to continue?

TFO stated that as for homework he would speak to BPA and that he was sure that work would be done to alleviate some of the concerns and solve some of the issues, TFO also stated that we would communicate this through FF

Lockers (sent in via the new parent council email

Some parents view is that lockers would be a way of supporting our younger students with the transition and that they should not have to carry wet coats around with them all day. They stated that would be willing to pay for the hire of a locker, as they did in their day. Not all parents were passionate about this however TFO stated he would look into the feasibility of having lockers and report back in the next meeting.

Clubs

Some parents discussed a lack of clubs, which was countered by others who stated how much the school put on, not only in PE and Creative arts but in revision as well. (TFO will put club lists on the FF)

TFO stated that the clubs that were run, were run on a voluntary basis and in fact in some cases by volunteers themselves such as badminton and judo.

On the back of this discussion, parents asked if they could be communicated with if clubs are cancelled at short notice as they have to sort childcare or collections, TFO said he would look at ways of doing this possibly through either social media or scholl comms messaging.

Items for next time

Parents would like feedback on this week's items and to have an opportunity to discuss;

- Uniform
- Clubs, what can parents do?

Calendar

There was immense frustration regarding the structure and layout of the current calendar, that has led some staff to either miss events or require emergency childcare to cover so they can attend previously dated or timed events.

LBY stated that he had spoken to SJO regarding this from a UNION point of view and that SJO was sorting this around exact timings of events not set up or take down time to allow staff to plan.

Staff wanted printouts month by month of 'directed time events' and then they should not be changed, the online calendar can then be for information. And IF there are any changes can an email be set up to enable staff be aware of any changes as soon as possible.