Ref: 1829 MB/EM

Dear Parents, 15th February 2019

**Response to Parental Feedback**

From this term and moving forward, at every Parents’ Evening we will be asking you to complete a questionnaire to give us your feedback on how we are doing, what is improving and what still needs to improve. As a Senior Leadership Team we will then analyse your responses and follow up on any issues that we are not already aware of, whether they are individual concerns or recurring themes.

In the last few weeks, Year 9 parents have attended a consultation with staff. I would like to thank all Year 9 parents who contributed valuable feedback through the parent questionnaire. There were 108 forms returned from families in the school and this represents a good indicator of parental views. We are thankful to you for your positive feedback and your comments on how the school can seek to improve further; a good school is one that listens and responds and we know this is something we needed to improve.

The overall summary of the feedback we received from Year 9 parents is detailed in the statistics below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | %  agreed |
|  | My child feels happy | 97% |
|  | My child feels safe | 99% |
|  | My child makes good progress | 95% |
|  | My child is well looked after | 100% |
|  | My child is taught well | 95% |
|  | My child receives appropriate homework | 87% |
|  | This school ensures that pupils are well behaved | 98% |
|  | This school deals effectively with bullying | 86% |
|  | This school is well led and managed | 96% |
|  | This school responds well to concerns raised | 83% |
|  | I would recommend this school to another parent | 88% |
|  | I receive valuable information about my child | 81% |
|  | I have found Class Charts to be a valuable resource | 87% |

We also asked you for personal comments on what you feel has improved about the school since September.

**The main areas of improvement were identified as:**

* Student behaviour
* Class charts
* Communication
* Teachers and teaching improved
* Leadership
* Less supply teachers
* Homework

The questionnaire also reflected some parental suggestions on how the school can continue to develop to meet the needs of the students and families in the local community.

**The main areas of suggested improvement were identified as:**

* Communication
* Still too many supply teachers
* More communication regarding students’ progress
* Homework
* Hot meals availability/ 2nd sitting time to eat
* Queuing system at lunchtime

Below we have summarised some key actions we are taking in these areas and other areas that we had stated were a priority. Our intention is to update you following every Parents’ Evening. Obviously individual issues will be addressed directly with the person concerned.

**Behaviour**

Everyone agrees that behaviour for learning has improved significantly. The behaviour system is now fully embedded and is well understood by both students and staff. Governors who toured the school recently remarked on the calm atmosphere and platform for learning evident in all classrooms. This has also been acknowledged by our students during a recent pupil feedback activity. Concerns over consistency from teaching staff when applying the system have been raised and we are working together to address this issue. A certain level of inconsistency with any new system is to be expected. We are aware of this and we are constantly discussing strategies to reduce the overall levels of inconsistency. If you are significantly concerned about a specific example, let us know.

**Communication**

This was clearly a huge bone of contention prior to September and we are working hard to improve communication. Upon review we feel we have improved in the following ways:

* Social media updates and insights into our day to day events
* Quicker and more effective responses to parent queries, concerns and complaints
* Seeking, listening to and taking account of parent feedback
* The development of a response strategy
* Clearer, more transparent, more consistent messages
* Positive parents evening meetings - staff being much more informed and informative
* Engagement reports
* Class Charts
* Regular letters and updates

We still need to develop:

* A timely response when an initial query, concern or complaint is logged
* Clearer and simpler policies
* Response timeline guidelines for parents and reasonable expectations
* Who to contact
* Website information

**Staffing**

Since our last update we have continued to recruit a further number of high quality teaching and support staff to ensure a full complement of permanent staff. We have now appointed a new Second in Maths who will start in the summer term (our current Second in Maths, Mr Twist, has overall responsibility for the development of Teaching and Learning across Maths). We also have a new permanent Art specialist starting after Easter. This is because Mrs Shipton, current Head of Art, has taken up a part time post in another school following her maternity leave. Mrs Wong, maternity cover in Art, has secured a permanent post at another school. In the interim we have engaged an Art teacher who has been working for us at one of our other schools. We have also recruited a new receptionist and a science technician. In addition, two regular cover supervisors will start with us to ensure when supply is required they are known to the students and they are familiar with our systems. We are also delighted to announce that our search for a quality Physics teacher has now been successful, which is fantastic given that there is a significant nationwide shortage of teachers of Physics. This currently means we are fully staffed from Easter.

**Lunchtime Arrangements:**

Continuous improvement has been in place since September in a bid to provide a calm and civilised lunchtime experience for our students. These improvements include: significant additional accessible seating and service points in the main hall and ‘ROSLA’ building; a full hot menu served daily; extra tills and food counters and a fully supervised queuing system. Added to this, students are no longer allowed to eat outside of the designated areas and this has helped us with supervision, ethos and litter. We intend to introduce a hot pasta stall in the main hall which is separate to the hot queue and we are in constant discussion with our catering service to find ways to ensure there is choice and speed of service throughout lunchtime. This is still work in progress; lunchtime is significantly better than it was but we are very aware that further improvements are still preferable.

**Homework**

This was a really 50/50 split. Some parents are very pleased with the frequency and quality of homework and some clearly feel there is not enough or not enough depth. Those of you who came to the initial Introduction Evenings in September will recall that we told you that homework should have a significant impact on student learning and independence. Research clearly shows that homework is most effective when it is focused on developing recall, revision, re-drafting, wider reading and individual research. This means that we will rarely be setting homework that requires extended writing/written tasks, as this will be happening (where needed) within the classroom environment, in the form of timed activities and assessments. Class Charts was successfully launched in the Autumn term to further improve communication between teachers and parents about homework and we will be following this up with parents who have not been able to access or fully utilise the system. All homework is now recorded on Classcharts so pupils, parents and teachers are all fully informed of the learning that is required at home, hence the need to get everyone using this valuable resource.

**Student Progress Updates**

This is quite a lengthy topic and we will send our response to this issue in a separate letter. Other concerns were raised in areas such as bullying and SEND. We have found these to be very individual cases and what we can say is, if we know about it we will act on it.

Thank you once again to the Year 9 parents for taking the time to fill out the questionnaire and helping us all to continue to strive for excellence at Burscough Priory Academy. We have now had a further Year 10 Parents’ Evening and once we have analysed the feedback from this we will send further updates.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M. Berry Mrs L. A. Gwinnett

Head of School Executive Headteacher