

**Parents Association meeting**  
**8<sup>th</sup> June, 2010**

**Present**

Shabina Gaman, Lene Taylor, Maggie Clifton, Ravinder Dhesi, Charlotte B, Mike Lawrence, Jennifer Elkins, Rani Shukla, Julia McDaid, Caroline Prior, Kathy Dargavel, Pete Banks, Simon Carter

**Agenda**

1. Minutes and matters arising including:
  - a. Homework
  - b. Overview of curriculum
2. Reporting pupil progress: Simon Carter to present and lead discussion
3. Fundraising for a minibus: Pete Banks to present and lead discussion
4. Parents' views on changing the timings of the school day
5. AOB

**Minutes**

**1. Minutes and Matters arising**

- a. Homework. Kathy Dargavel had raised this with Senior Management. This is a priority for us. We know that we need to continue to work hard at ensuring that setting and marking homework is consistent across all curriculum areas and the school. Parents expressed the view that the homework timetable should be adhered to, and that it should be on the website. Kathy said that this item will be revisited on a regular basis. If necessary, we should set up a focus group and invite curriculum leaders to attend.
- b. Overview of curriculum. Kathy reported that she had asked curriculum leaders whether they could do this and the ones that responded said that this would be possible. However, with quite radical changes to the curriculum next year, this could be made part of the overall information to parents, and be made available on the website, and there are already plans to deploy admin staff to update and improve curriculum information on the website. This is also an item that Caroline, as a Governor, will raise and support at Governors' meetings.

**2. Reporting pupil progress: Simon Carter to present and lead discussion**

Simon Carter summarised the old system of reporting to parents – profiles, review days and parents evenings - and outlined some of the problems ( the amount of time teachers spent on writing profiles, the difficulties non-English speaking parents had in reading them, and inconsistencies in the way different teachers reported on progress). Simon then explained proposals for a new system and showed an example. Profiles would give parents numerical data on levels, previous levels, attendance, positive and negative behaviour logs and

The profiles would be backed up with review meetings, parents evenings and, at the end of the year, there would be a tutor written report summarising academic and personal achievements and contributions to the life of the school.

Parents liked the format of the new system. They said it was clear and told you what you needed to know. A DRAFT example is below:



# ACTON HIGH SCHOOL & CENTRE FOR MEDIA ARTS

## ACTON HIGH SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORT: SUMMER 2010

**NAME:** Simon Carter

**ATTENDANCE:** 100% **POSITIVES:** 100 **KEY STAGE 2 ENGLISH:** 4A **MATHS:**

4A

**TUTOR GROUP:** 9A

**LATES:** 0

**NEGATIVE:** 0

**KEY STAGE 2 SCIENCE:** 4A

SUBJECT	END OF KS3 TARGET	CURRENT NC LEVEL	ATTITUDE TO LEARNING	HOMEWOR K	LATE TO LESSONS
<b>ENGLISH</b>	6A	7C	1	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simon needs to use more complex language in his prose</li> <li>- Simon needs to learn to use more empathy with the characters</li> </ul>					
<b>MATHS</b>	6A	5A	3	3	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simon needs to revise complex quadratic equations</li> <li>- Simon needs to attend the homework catch up sessions as this is a problem area</li> </ul>					
<b>SCIENCE</b>	6A	6A	1	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simon need to develop his ability to evaluate evidence from experiments</li> <li>- Simon needs to revisit the topic of electricity as it is an area of weakness</li> </ul>					
<b>LANGUAGES</b>	6B	6C	1	1	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simon needs to work on his speaking skills. He needs to be more confident in his delivery of the language</li> <li>- Work on learning the key French vocabulary, especially verbs, to make writing more expressive</li> </ul>					
<b>TECHNICAL &amp; VISUAL ARTS</b>	6B	6C	2	2	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Simon need to look at improving his evaluation skills and needs to identify how to improve projects from errors</li> <li>- Explore a wider range of design styles to improve initial development phase of work</li> </ul>					

Attitude to Learning: **1** – Contributes fully in class; always properly equipped; very good behaviour

**2** – Makes some contributions in class; usually properly equipped; satisfactory behaviour

**3** – Reluctant to contribute in class; poorly equipped; poor behaviour

### 3. Fundraising for a minibus: Pete Banks to present and lead discussion

Pete Banks explained that he had been successful in buying a school minibus with Mandy's backing and support. This minibus will be of great benefit to students. It will be used on a regular basis for sporting fixtures and also for a wide range of activities in other curriculum areas. Examples are – visits for Gifted and Talented pupils, volunteering activities, Duke of Edinburgh and Arts Award trips. More members of staff will be trained as minibus drivers. We need to fundraise for the annual running coast, however. These are likely to be between £2,000 and £3,000 per year. We can do a non-uniform day which will raise about £800 - £1,000, and would like the help of the Parents Association in securing the rest.

Parents were pleased with the news and said they would support fundraising. The following ideas were suggested:

- “Sponsor a mile” eg at 5p per mile
- Send a letter to parents from the Parents association asking for a voluntary £5 (or more) donation. **Action: Pete to provide a logo with Acton High School Parents Association for a letterhead, Caroline Prior to draft a letter. Send out in September.** “Supported by the Acton High Parents Association” could be written on the minibus.
- At events where there are large numbers of parents, eg parents evenings, have a stall and a bucket asking for loose change
- Show how we are using the minibus on the website
- Film school events and sell DVDs to parents for £5
- Put progress on website

### 4. Parents' views on changing the timings of the school day

Kathy asked for initial views on the idea of altering the timings of the school day so that the lunchtime was shortened to 45 minutes and students finished 15 minutes earlier at 3.15 pm. Kathy emphasised that there were no firm proposals to move this forward and if it were decided to pursue this option in the future, there would be full consultation. The main reason behind shortening the lunchtime was that students were often bored and any incidents usually occurred in the last 10 – 15 minutes. Caroline said that she had observed students at lunchtime and agreed with the reasons for shortening it.

Parents had no objections in principle but they raised the following points:

- Lunchtime clubs must not be adversely affected. Would 45 minutes be enough time to have lunch and attend a club and have a break?
- Rehearsals and music practices – particularly in the run up to a concert – needed a decent amount of time. If lunchtimes were shortened, could extra time be made for them in lesson time?

### 5. AOB

#### a. School dinners

Concern was raised that the canteen was running out of food and some students were not able to get something to eat or their choice was severely restricted. Kathy said that this did sometimes happen and that the school raised it with both the kitchen staff and the catering company. A new kitchen supervisor is starting next week and this will bring improvements, it is hoped. Kathy also said that school dinners should be a regular item at Parents Association meetings.

The price of bottles water was also raised. It is very expensive (80p). Kathy said that free water in jugs was provided in the dining hall, there were three water fountains inside or outside school and that students were encouraged to bring their own bottles of water.

**b. OCR Nationals - ICT**

Parents would like much more information about this so that they understood it better and could support it at home. **Action: Head of ICT to put information on the website.**

**c. Internet Safety**

Kathy drew parents' attention to a session for parents on the next Flexiday on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June, 9.30 – 11.2 noon on Internet Safety and encouraged parents to attend and to pass the information on to other parents.

**d. Support on new Year 7s Induction days**

The Induction Days are Monday 5<sup>th</sup> July and Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2.30 – 6 pm. Kathy asked for volunteers to come to these sessions to welcome parents, offer refreshments and, most importantly, to talk to them about Acton High and their own experiences. Jennifer, Mike, Shabina and Lene kindly volunteered. Kathy will put out a call to the wider parent body to gain more volunteers.

**e. Trip to Portugal**

It was noted that the recent trip to Portugal was really successful and very well organised, and that the school should do more trips like this.

**f. Future plans for Parents Association**

In September, there will be a new recruitment drive with Year 7 parents. Now that the Parents Association is well established, we should seek to enlarge it and also to formalise it. Therefore, in the Autumn Term, there will be moves to elect a chair and a committee.

**g. Kathy Dargavel is leaving**

Kathy announced that she is leaving the school and moving on to a new post in Kensington and Chelsea. She thanked the parents for their support over the last two years. The parents likewise thanked Kathy for her input and wished her well in the future. An announcement about her successor will be made in September.

**6. Date of next Parents Association meeting**

**The calendar of next year's meetings will appear shortly on the website.**

**ALL DATES OF MEETINGS AND MINUTES ARE POSTED ON OUR WEBSITE**