

Parent Forum Minutes



CHILDREN COME FIRST



Meeting title: John Ferneley College Parent Forum

Date and time: 7th March 2023 at 5pm

Location: Meeting at the school

In attendance

- * Christine Stansfield, CEO Melton Education Trust, and Executive Headteacher at JFC.
- * Elizabeth Strickland, Personal Development Lead at JFC.
- * Emma Charlton, Trauma Informed and Therapeutic Well-being practitioner.
- * Grace Rogers, Communications and Events Assistant.
- * Anna Duval, Clerk.
- * Rachel Allen
- * Calum Brown
- * Nicola Brown
- * Pia Delucchi
- * Samantha Drummy
- * Nicola Evans
- * Inca King
- * Natividad Leach
- * Jennifer Norwood
- * Martina Ogbonna
- * Alex Owen
- * Archana Solanki
- * Sarah Szopa

Welcome and Introductions

Mrs Stansfield welcomed parents to the meeting and introduced herself and the staff attending.

Mrs Stansfield said that parent forums and listening to parents views are very important. She outlined how the remit of the parent forum is to get feedback from parents and to give opportunities for parents to share ideas where improvements can be made. Parents were reminded that these meetings do not discuss items relating to specific pupils, specific parents, or individual staff. Mrs Stansfield said that if parents have any individual request they can be written down and handed in at the end of the meeting to be followed up with relevant staff.

A MS Forms was sent to all parents in advance of the meeting to give feedback and raise questions to the parent forum. Mrs Stansfield addressed these at the meeting and used them to shape discussions.

Mrs Stansfield said that parent forums meet each term and hopes that this is the start of a regular conversation with parents.

Feedback from Parents What is Working Well.

Parents said the following was working well on the MS Forms replies:

The flow of going from one teacher to the next.

A teacher is very reliable in sorting out issues and queries.

Having dedicated children and teachers.

School clubs, communication with tutor and other staff members.

Works when the children are accurately supported with their learning.

No mobile phones and uniform policy are positive additions. Pupils now talk at break time and uniform is cohesive throughout the school.

Communication with parents and pupils. Enrichment opportunities. A sense of community within the school. A concise website of information. Caring teachers.

Great support from SENDCO Assistant.

Point's system.

I feel all of my children are doing very well at JFC.

Communication is very good between school and parents (on the whole) although some emails following parents evening have never been answered.

Generally, my children are happy and thriving.

Some increased pupils voice.

Student and teachers have an excellent relationship - all available to support year 11 particularly after school revision sessions- I appreciate this is a huge commitment and above and beyond their working hours – thanks.

SEND support is fantastic.

The communication from teacher to parent.

Mrs Stansfield said she started working in the role of executive headteacher in January and was very interested to read from a parental viewpoint what is going well in the above MS forms replies. There were some nice comments on teachers, tutors, and clubs.

There was a general sense that parents are pleased with the stance the school has taken on mobile phones. The rule is that they are not to be seen during the school day. Mrs Stansfield said she is interested to hear parents views. She felt it was positive that students get a break from devices during the school day. Entertainment is being provided at breaks and lunches via 3 music stations now that students don't have access to their phones.

Feedback from Parents: Things to Improve?

Parents included the following on the MS Forms replies:

Parent evenings. Maybe a minute between each slot as sometimes doesn't connect straight away.

Dealing with disruption from students in class.

Communication on staffing structure.

Bulling.

Support with behaviour.

A quicker and firmer response to what appears to be an increasing number of fights between pupils!
Very concerning!

Printable timetables on School Gateway for pupils to access.

Update on the extension and when it will be finished. Any further plans for development. What improvements will be put in place?

Wellbeing / more support in supporting students with mental health and individual needs Also more on supporting a therapeutic time table for students that need it.

I like to know why inclusion and wellbeing has been put together because this is two different needs!

Achievement and progress.

Student choice.

Ex head teacher.

After school sports provision. Every term, I request the sports enrichment programme. It takes ages for me to get it, it's rarely published, (the website is still, I think, showing the Autumn Term.

I have very sporty kids who want to engage in this. It then takes ages to get going, then often doesn't happen in the first and last week of school or gets cancelled with little notice so my children are then left at school. In my opinion, it looks good but isn't that great.

Uniform as it's slipping again, and as a parent who complies, I'm fed up with buying the right uniform when others just don't do it. Seems to be a lot of very tight leggings which isn't or wasn't part of the uniform.

Toilets- I know it's ongoing and sometimes being monitored - but my child struggles to get a toilet at break as others in there vaping.

Offering larger sporting options. Sports that introduce young people to a different sport they would not normally have tried.

Update on the Strategic direction.

Mrs Stansfield said that the Mrs Teece, who was Head of school at JFC was unwell in January and has made the decision not to return to post. Mrs Stansfield is now based at JFC and is the Executive Headteacher for JFC and also has the overall responsibility of the Trust. She said she has good knowledge of the school as she has previously worked in the role and works closely with the senior leadership team.

Mrs Stansfield said she has been talking to students to ask them what they want the school community to look like and said attendance rates are slightly lower than national. She wants school to be a happy place for students and staff and that they feel they belong. She said she wants this school to be one of the best in the country. When getting feedback from students they said they would like a non-uniform day, and this will take place on red nose day.

Mrs Stansfield said a lot of work is taking place and progress is being made. Some students were taking longer than they should be getting to lessons. Mrs Strickland said the students have said they want an education and good qualifications. Being in lessons is the best place to achieve this. The Heads of department are developing the curriculum and ensuring it has the best impact as possible.

Mrs Stansfield said that she has talked to students in assemblies about the strategic direction of the school. The physical building and emotionally whereby if each student comes to school wanting it to be the best place and communicate warmly, they are likely to get more out of their interactions.

Mrs Stansfield said that chairs will now be provided for students in assemblies.

Mrs Strickland said post pandemic it was important when welcoming students back to school to have structure and routine. They now need to add more enrichment. Students have said they want more trips so she will be organising trips alongside subject leaders. Mrs Strickland said she wants every student in the school to have the opportunity to have a school trip.

Mrs Stansfield said she is looking at the senior leadership structure working towards a single vision for children to leave with a full complement of skills to enable them to lead their best lives.

Parents asked about the Year 10 staff. Miss Hansen is on sick leave and Mrs Seed is Head of Year 10. Mr Kachhela is behaviour inclusion manager and work across all years.

Parents asked about the curriculum and asked if the ASDAN curriculum will be offered again as it was previously. Mrs Stansfield said they look at the emerging needs of students and there will be appropriate curriculum offered.

Parents asked why inclusion and wellbeing has been merged. Mrs Strickland said they wanted a member of staff to be available all day and often find that wellbeing and inclusion needs cross over. There are students that need support from both areas, and it helps see who is supporting the student.

Extension update – the new building is due to be opened for the autumn term.

Personal Development.

Mrs Strickland said she has been Head of Personal Development for the last 3 years. She said they are finding that they are responding to different challenges than pre pandemic. She said the parent survey that took place last week had many responses around student wellbeing.

Mrs Strickland said there is someone on call at all times during the school day that can triage students and signpost to meet their needs. The overall aim is to be able to get students back into lessons and learning but some students have been socially anxious and unable to attend lessons and need extra support.

Mrs Strickland said she has a whole school wellbeing tracker that helps them identify students requiring support. Students with higher needs have an assigned member of staff. Some students need support and therapy, and this can be provided in school rather than wait for this to be accessed via the G.P. which has a long waiting list for support. There are five practitioners that come into school who run different types of individual or group sessions. Students are referred to these sessions through the wellbeing team, pastoral team or by parents. Mrs Strickland said she is looking into an app for students to be able to say how they are feeling, and she can then offer them support. The aim is to be able to support students earlier.

Mrs Stansfield said everyone experienced the pandemic and for many it impacted wellbeing. The personal development curriculum wave 1 is for all students and is delivered in classes. Mrs Strickland said that everyone had mental health and can have bad days and need resilience. The children are taught different techniques they can use. (e.g., grateful journal, 54321 grounding technique.) Parents were shown a handout showing the Personal Development Learning Journey at JFC that shows the personal development curriculum topics taught age appropriately over the school years. The personal development curriculum can be flexible to respond to current situations.

Therapeutic, wellbeing and Mindfulness Intervention

This is one of the therapies on offer to students.

Mrs Charlton said she started this role in January and previously worked at Sherard. She uses practices from yoga to help individuals feel safe in their body. It is a therapeutic approach to improve wellbeing from the inside out and the intervention focuses on recognising and understanding physical sensations in the body. The sessions are tailored to each student's needs.

Parent asked how students get referred. Mrs Strickland said they mainly come through the pastoral team (heads and tutors) and she matches the student to the therapies. This therapy, talk therapies, teen help (who has access to multi agencies) or wellbeing in sport.

Parents said it would be useful to roll this out to all students as it could benefit all students. Mrs Charlton said the long-term plan is to be able to offer it to all students as they can learn techniques that they can use when they require it.

Parents said they would like students to have sessions on life skills, money skills and online safety.

Parents questions

Parents said they would like the parent forum to discuss the academic curriculum. Mrs Stansfield said the emerging needs identified by parents and students was wellbeing and therefore the focus of discussions at this parent forum was to inform parents and ask for parental views of the school's personal development curriculum and support for students. She said she is really happy for a forthcoming agenda to look at progress, tracking and how they ensure students are learning.

Parents said that students need to be happy and safe first then the learning will come, and they will achieve. The meeting discussed how wellbeing and academic progression go hand in hand.

Parents asked for the response figures from the recent parental survey:

Parent survey: 95 responses gave the following as their top answer:

43 Wellbeing.

30 Education performance.

13 Safety.

8 Enrichment, trips, and opportunities.

The students survey had enrichment, trips, and opportunities higher and the academic performance lower.

Mrs Stansfield asked if parents had any other topics they would like to discuss at future parent forums.

Parents expressed concerns over homework. This was discussed at the last parent forum and parents felt that it has not improved and there is still a lack of homework being set, inconsistencies of approach and a lack of feedback.

Parents said that the behaviour of some students in classes is detracting from other students learning. Parents said teaching students self-discipline will help learning. Parents asked what the base line of acceptable behaviour is. Mrs Stansfield said behaviour could be a good topic to cover at a future meeting.

The next Parent Forum meeting will be arranged in the summer term.

The meeting closed at 6.15pm.