

# Parent Forum Minutes



**CHILDREN COME FIRST.**



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**Meeting title:** Autumn term meeting of the John Ferneley College Parent Forum  
**Date and time:** 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 5pm  
**Location:** Meeting at the school

**In attendance**

- \* Natalie Teece, Head of School. NT.
- \* Kat Russell, Assistant Headteacher: Behaviour and Attitudes. KR.
- \* Jennifer Norwood
- \* Alex Owen
- \* Nicola Evans
- \* Natividad Leach
- \* Anna Duval, Clerk.

## Welcome and Introductions

Mrs Teece (NT) welcomed parents to the Parents Forum meeting and introduced Mrs Russell (KR).

NT explained that previous Parent Forums had an agenda shared in advance but this time the meeting is led by questions raised by parents. A MS Forms survey was sent to all parents in advance of the meeting to give feedback and raise questions.

- Year 7 new students. A parent said that it took time for year 7 students to settle in and it was daunting at first especially in the first week and in mixing with older students. NT said they have now introduced 'student angels' that help other students, but this started a couple of weeks into term and next year will be ready in place for the start of term. KR said that last year there was a staggered start for year groups due to covid that gave time for new students to be welcomed before the older students were in school.
- Access to science labs and computers. A parent said that there was not enough availability for classes to have adequate practical lessons and asked if the forthcoming school expansion will include more provision. NT said the building expansion consultation meeting took place recently, planning permission has been granted and that building work is due to commence in December with a completion date of summer 2023. NT said the school is currently operating over PAN and that the expansion is to meet the needs of the current students and to improve facilities and not to increase student numbers. The expansion will include a library, 3 computer labs, and general teaching classrooms. This frees up rooms in the main building for 2 existing computer rooms to be converted into a science lab, and a design technology

room and three classrooms will have laptop banks added. The works will be ready for the start of the new academic year. NT said the expansion plans will include additional staffing. NT said longer term the school will also be getting additional field space as part of the new housing development project.

- Futures careers. NT said the school welcomes parents or members of the community to visit the school to speak to students about their career. The students benefit from hearing first-hand accounts of various careers, and it helps them when thinking about their future career and subject options. NT said that if parents would like to consider coming into school to speak or know someone who may then to please get in touch with her.
- Homework clubs. A parent said their child is saying they are struggling with some of the school work but has not spoken to the teacher for help and asked if the school has a list of recommended private tutors. NT said parents will shortly be getting progress information. Students will have sessions in tutor time to reflect on their progress and to consider areas they need to prove. The school does not have a list of private tutors but have various homework clubs available at lunch time and after school. The homework clubs have staff who help students and encourage them to expand their answers. KR suggested BBC bitesize or Oaks National Academy for online learning resources that can be used at home. NT said the maths department have recently sent an email to parents about 'sparks' maths online learning.
- A parent said they feel their child needs more challenging work particularly with maths and needs motivation. NT suggested a discussion with the teachers and for the student to have a careers meeting that may help them think about what career they may want and what qualifications are required.
- A parent said that their child says there is not enough time to finish their packed lunch. KR said the lunch break is 40 minutes and some children eat part of their lunch at morning break to give time for playing sport with friends at lunchtime.
- Parents said shoes wear out quickly on the 3-g sports pitch. NT said there is a large stock of shoes suitable for the pitch that can be borrowed from the P.E. changing rooms as the school wanted to make the facility available to all students.
- Year 7 groups. A parent said children are asked in advance of joining the school to name friends to be in same class as and their child did not get any of those named. NT said if they have also selected to study a different language choice, they would not be together as the class groups are arranged by this. NT said that they gather information from the primary schools to inform suitable class mixes and that often children from smaller primary schools know less people.

- Homework. A parent raised the issue of the lack homework their child is receiving and feels that their child has not been able to develop independent learning and worries that this will impact their ability for revision. The parent said the child doesn't get an hour homework a week never mind a day. The parent is in discussions with Mrs Robinson, Assistant Headteacher, KS3 progress lead and it was found that the child had wrote all homework given in their diary but was not being given much. The parent said the school has no system in place to audit what homework is given out. A parent asked why tutors are countersigning homework diaries that list no homework without questioning why there isn't any. NT said head of departments plan a homework sheet for teachers to set across the term. NT will follow this issue through as part of the reviews that she is doing across all subjects. NT said that it is important for students to have regular homework that has meaning, is purposeful, will stretch and challenge them and gives opportunities for further independent study.

NT said she will follow through the individual issues raised from parents with the appropriate teachers.

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

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.