

Minutes of the meeting of the Parents' Consultative Group (PCG)

held at Scalby School

on Monday 25 January 2010

Welcome

Graham Casper welcomed everyone to the meeting. He told the meeting that a few more new members were required for the Steering Group which held one meeting every half term. If anyone was interested they should speak to him.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from;

Mrs Stephanie Hartley, IEB member

2. Internet Safety

Mrs Vicki Michael, Assistant Principal, Deep Support, told the meeting that she had been asked by the local police to speak to parents regarding a serious case of internet grooming which had occurred in another Scarborough school. She told parents that there was an information leaflet for them to pick up as they left detailing various websites etc from which parents could obtain information about keeping their children safe.

The main points that she thought parents should consider were:

- Monitoring their children's activities on the internet especially with regard to Facebook, MSN, Bebo and Skype.
- Checking who their children were talking to.
- Ensuring that their children were aware of the dangers of such things as posting inappropriate images etc.
- Ensuring that they have access to their children's account, know how to set privacy settings and making sure that their children know how to use them
- Not allowing computers in bedrooms and, if this was not feasible, not allowing webcams in bedrooms.

Mr Barry Evans said that the school planned to run parents' courses on use of computers and the internet. One such course – "Sims Learning Gateway" would take place shortly. Details would be on the school website and a letter detailing all significant dates for the coming term was available for parents to take as they left.

Mrs Michael also told the meeting that she had been asked by Mr Tarn to draw the PCG's attention to the proposal to change the school uniform to include a clip on tie. This would ensure consistency across the school in the way in which ties were worn. This change would not be implemented fully until September but pupils were able to wear the new tie from the beginning of the summer term and indeed were encouraged to do so.

3. Individual Advice and Guidance

Mr Jones, Associate Assistant Principal gave a talk to the PCG concerning the role of Individual Advice and Guidance. He explained that this was not just a Careers service but was concerned with all levels of learning and all ways of moving learning forward. The aim was to help motivation and to increase focus. Form tutors had been trained in this approach.

The aims of the IAG approach were:

- To provide multi-agency contact
- To be impartial and professional
- To desist from being in any way negative or judgemental.

The school had established an IAG policy and some members of the peer mentor groups had been trained by Mr Jones and the Careers advisors. Pupils were encouraged to discuss their individual development as learners with their peers.

It was intended to hold targeted career interviews to reduce NIEETs, there were 2 IAG days planned in the academic year and in the summer term specific areas would be targeted using outside agencies.

Mr Jones said that IAG was embedded in the Vertical Mentor Group curriculum through such systems as Praising Stars and Attendance Monitoring for example.

4. Immersion Days

Mr Evans gave the meeting the rationale behind Immersion Days in which students study one subject for the whole day. He said that on Immersion Days there was a different focus on teaching and learning. It allowed the pupils to see learning in a different light and allowed the time for them to try something new. The aim was to develop the pupils' "Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities".

5. Forthcoming Activities

Mr Jones told the PCG that on 2nd and 3rd of February "Stardome" would be in school as a Specialist Technology Activity. In line with the school's requirement to reach out into the community some children from local Primary schools would be invited to attend.

On 11th and 12th February there would be a “Rocket Day” at the Rugby club in which pupils would plan build and launch rockets.

Pupils would be selected for the above activities from the STEMS group by application. They would probably have to write a short piece on why they wished to take part.

The final of the Masterchef competition would take place on 11th February. The competition would be judged by a chef from a local restaurant to give the competition a more “authentic” feel.

6. Pledges

The meeting was told that the pupils were being encouraged to log their pledges on Scalby Learning website and to update their information with details of their progress. Some were already using this arena to post work and review each other’s work ie if they had produced a piece of music for example.

Mr Evans emphasised that the point of the pledges system was to promote the idea that school was not only about passing exams. Mr Evans confirmed that pledges do not have to be necessarily undertaken at or organised by school – evidence that the pupil had done what they claimed was sufficient. Pledges were also retrospective. Anything carried out in the last two years would count.

7. Attendance

Andy Robson gave a short talk to the meeting regarding attendance requirements. He stressed that this was not a matter for the PCG and that parents should study the relevant policies and laws for themselves before deciding whether to take their child out of school. He told parents however that Scalby School has an attendance policy which could be obtained from the office and that there were various websites with helpful information on this issue, in particular the Cambridgeshire County Council website.

8. Community Activity

Mr Casper told the meeting that there would be a community day at Scarborough Cricket Ground on Sunday 28th March 2010. Volunteers were required to carry out work at the ground to improve the ground and its facilities. There would be a barbeque etc. Help would be much appreciated and it would be good way of encouraging the children to take part in a community experience and put something back into the community. He encouraged everyone to volunteer along with their children and anyone else who may be interested. The school would be supporting the day so this could be logged as a pledge on the VLE.

9. Any Other Business

Mrs Williamson told the meeting that there had been a pleasing response to the repeat advertisement for a new Head Teacher. A long list had been drawn up and the IEB would shortly be observing applicants in their own schools. A shortlist would be drawn up for interviews on 22nd /23rd February.

The next full PCG meeting would be in April – details would be posted on the website.