

MINUTES

St. Olave's P.A. Form Rep Meeting

Date: Thursday, 19th January 2017 @7:30pm

Location: Main School Library

Attendees:

Mr Budds (Assistant Head), Charlotte Rutter, Winnie Leong, Jennifer Franks, Bola Ogunwusi, Lin Limbrey, Ingrid Macpherson, Olga Evans, Brid Nunn, Tiffany Barradell, Kate Cameron, Rinku Chibber, Siobhan Gee, Narinder Gill, Harbi Kaur, Sue Watts, Lakshmi Bandi, Shubhra Tripathi, Elizabeth Garnham-Jong, Zey Kagan, Baoching Liu, Charlotte Machado

Apologies:

Rachel Peek, Farhana Alam, Stephen Corion, Francesca Ludicello, Helen Patel, Julie Costard, Sarah Eldridge, Catherine Fleet, Paula McCabe, Nicky Davies, Jim Ward, Laura Clayden

Questions for the school

1 Use of computer / mobile

A lot of homework seems to be set for completion on the computer or mobile, be it directly as in research, or indirectly as in word processing

Some parents are concerned that pupils will lose the ability to write legibly and fast during exams.

The school strives to provide sufficient hand-written work in class and at home so that when the exams come, the boys can still write fluently and effectively. We have to move into the 21st century and prepare the boys to be computer savvy. The school does not give teachers explicit guidelines as to how much work is to be completed on the computer but if any parents have any concern about the balance on a particular subject, please speak with that subject teacher or head of that department.

When undertaking online HW, the boys get sidetracked with Skype, WhatsApp if they have to 'chat' to discuss HW.

Parents want to know if guidelines about usage and homework obligations could be raised at school level.

When the boys go off to University or work, they will have to be able to use computers maturely, sensibly and responsibly and ensure that they don't get too distracted; completing homeworks of this sort enables them to rehearse this discipline in a more structured, controlled and supported environment. Parents also have a role in ensuring that boys are on task at home.

Parents may want to consider apps such as 'www.screentimelabs.com', 'Ourpact' etc to more directly control what their sons can access and help ensure that they remain more on task.

2 Homework

Could homework be posted online to help children who have missed class e.g. due to music lessons etc?

In line with school values, students should take responsibility to find out their homework from their friends. If, having spoken with a peer, the boys need further clarification, they should speak with their teacher at break or lunch. The proposed system of posting HW online would create an additional onus on staff and the school is sensitive to any issues concerning or impinging upon staff workload.

3 Syllabus/textbooks

Parents want to know if they can have information so that they can help their boys. There is particular concern with Computing as to whether up to date content is being taught in the lower school.

Mr Budds will consult Dr Onifade regarding the computing syllabus.

4 New teachers

i) What is the school's position on employing teachers with no experience or teachers training?

Some parents report concerns about teachers who have degrees in the subject they are teaching but no teaching experience as a degree alone does not mean they are able to impart the knowledge effectively and efficiently.

The school has a detailed and rigorous Initial Teacher Training programme and does hire new teachers who are subsequently trained in school in order to get new blood into the school; however over 70% of the staff have extensive teaching experience of ten years or more. The school recognises there is a balance to be struck between employing experienced staff (who come at a higher financial cost to the school) and younger staff who bring fresh enthusiasm and interesting new ideas; the high proportion of more experienced staff facilitates training and support for those newer to the profession. The recruitment and retention of younger staff is also a key part of the school's longer term staffing strategy to ensure that we are fully staffed in subjects where demand is high and supply is low. We are strategically recruiting staff in some key subject areas at careers fairs at Oxford and Cambridge with a view to securing the most able and promising trainee teachers and fostering healthy long term working relationships with them, to the greater long-term good of the school community. The school's leadership team remains sensitive to the overall composition of the staff body and feels that we are striking the right balance currently in terms of experienced teachers and newer teachers.

Does the school have a programme in place to monitor the quality of the teaching of the new teachers

ii) i.e. ensure books are marked, answers are given and the results obtained by students are inline with students taught by experienced teachers?

The school has a thorough programme to ensure that staff who are new to the profession are well supported in their Initial Teacher Training (ITT) year, their Newly-Qualified Teacher (NQT) year and their early years in the profession. In ITT and NQT years, teachers have a reduced timetable, less responsibility for pastoral care and a programme of lesson observations and feedback to ensure that they can benefit from ongoing professional development. There is a thorough support programme for new teachers to reach Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), and to pass their NQT year. The programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) continues for staff at all levels via a range of INSET opportunities, training courses (such as the Outstanding Teacher Programme, in which St Olave's are accredited facilitators), via the ongoing peer-to-peer developmental observation programme (a.k.a. the "Triad" system) and via the school's Performance Management Review programme and ongoing Quality Assurance programme of academic and pastoral work. In short, teachers at all levels of experience are very thoroughly supported within the school, and none more so than those new to the profession.

5 IPMs

Some teachers return the actual exam papers for IPMs while others don't. Is it possible for the IPM test papers to be returned or at least copies, with the correct answers, so the boys have them for future reference and revision?

Teachers are reluctant to give out IPM papers, particularly for GCSE and A-Level classes as the syllabuses are new, resources from the exam boards are still relatively scarce and staff will need to re-use some papers for future cohorts. However if students have specific problem areas, they may consult the specific teacher.

6 Listening to music

Some parents report that some boys are allowed to listen to music while doing work in class as long as it does not disturb others. Is this allowed during exams? If not, some parents are concerned that the boys will become so reliant on music to help focus and concentrate that they will be unable to concentrate during exams.

Please refer to the school's Rules and Regulations Policy for Years 7-11 with regard to the use of electronic devices eg mp3 players etc. In theory all such electronic devices should not be used in class during lessons. Use of headphones and MP3 players is not permitted in the exam hall. The school encourages the students to mimic exam conditions when doing work.

7 Certain subjects are placed/valued to be more important than others.

Parents are worried that there is a "hierarchy" of subjects which marginalises the role of Art, for instance, and that Ebacc plans are already having a terrible effect on takeup of creative subjects in schools. The creative industries are already facing shortage. Is St Olave's giving the right message and what can the school do to support these subjects more effectively in the face of budget constraints?

There is no hierarchy in the subjects but statistically there has been a higher demand for STEM subjects relative to Arts and Humanities subjects. The school is actively looking into a possibility of a 'volunteer' system (like the Librarian system) to replace the Art Assistant.

Boys are not encouraged to take solely Ebacc subjects.

8 RS GCSE 2017

Which exam board are the boys sitting for? Could they have dates for completion of syllabus, provision of revision checklist, mocks and actual exams?

Can this information be on school website with a link provided?

The Class Reps wants to thank Mr Lake for his detailed response (summarised below): the school website is for the new course, not the current Year 10s. Moodle, however, is entirely geared towards the current Year 10s.

Link to Edexcel's page for this course <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/religious-studies-2009.html>

On Moodle, students will find the following under the Examination Resources headings:

Past papers

Revision resources

Keywords lists

(There are also some resources here that are currently hidden and will not be made available until after the mocks)

Under each of the Unit headings, they will find:

A pdf revision guide

A list of all possible C type questions (nb this is effectively a revision checklist, since these questions cover the knowledge side of the course)

A list of useful quotations and references

End of Syllabus

In the next two or three weeks, depending on class (some classes have missed more lessons than others). This leaves almost a term for revision before the real exam, and some opportunity for revision in lessons before the mock.

Mock Exam

This was set for Tuesday 21st Feb. Letter with arrangements went out on Thursday 19th Jan.

It's slightly shorter notice than Mr Lake wanted, but a March date for the mock wasn't possible.

Support for Mocks

There will be at least two whole-class revision lessons for each class before the mock exam, depending on when the class finishes the course. These lessons will focus on exam technique.

For students identified as having struggled over the course, there will also be four revision sessions outside of lesson time, one for each unit. A letter to parents will also go out for this.

All students will be given printed copies of the blank C-type question grids for their own revision purposes. These double as a revision checklist.

(NB – Mr Lake does have completed versions of these, but they will not be made available before the mock exam)

Actual Exam - this is on the website - 15th May, 9am

9 GCSEs: 2018

When will boys be provided with revision checklist, and when parents can get access to list of exam boards, dates of mock and actual exam?

Can this information be on school website with a link provided?

This will be given out once the boys have completed their course. If this has not happened by then, please ask the specific teacher.

Year 11 mocks are usually the first two weeks in January. We have not been advised of the actual exam dates yet. The school should get confirmation around Nov/Dec 2017.

Mr Budds will follow up with Heads of Department for the links to each exam board but the boys themselves should be aware of the links to the relevant websites.

If a parent needs to email a specific teacher, the email address format is the initial followed by surname then @saintolaves.net - or go on the school website and under the subject, there is a 'click here' link to contact a particular department.

10 Support

Does the school provide any guidance /training on revision techniques and managing stress and anxiety as the boys approach their GCSEs?

Yes. Revision techniques are covered in the PSHE curriculum and in each subject as well. From last year all Year 10 boys have access to mindfulness for stress techniques. It has proved to be quite a useful technique for the boys. Two members of staff are qualified Mindfulness practitioners.

- 11 **Revision guides, extra support & supervised study**
Are any of these available for boys, especially in Year 10 as they prepare for GCSE?
In terms of revision guides for particular subjects, it is best to email the specific teachers but Mr Budds did offer to see if it is feasible for Mrs Goodman to compile a complete list for all the subjects from the Heads of Department. Extra support is given in terms of booster classes / clinics but mainly geared towards Year 11 as there is probably a greater need there. Supervised study periods however are not available to Year 10s as they have a full timetable in their curriculum model and no opportunity to do so like Year 12.
- 12 **Support when applying for Year 12/13**
Does the school provide any support and guidance to students and parents in making decisions and applying for Year 12/13 education?
Yes, there is an annual internal options evening for Year 11 in February, with presentations given by Mr Budds, the Headmaster, School Captain and Head of Year 11. There are opportunities for students to attend up to five subject-specific presentations during the options evening. For any presentations which students/parents are unable to attend, handouts are available, as is information on the school's website. Every Year 11 boy will have an interview with a senior or middle leader at the school, and their parents are encouraged and entitled to attend. During the interview, we will discuss the boys' plans, career options and university aspirations. If there is no fixed plans, options will be reviewed from another angle i.e. what are their favourite, and/or best subjects? Pupils are encouraged to reflect on mock results and Year 11 Full Report to inform their decisions in respect of subject selections. From Year 12 to Year 13 the students will have decided which subject to drop predicated by their career or university requirements. For some the school will encourage students to drop a particular subject based on their performance; Year 12 students will have completed 3 IPMs and have an Interim Report by the time they need to make their selection in January. They would also have 1-1 mentoring with the tutor at least once a term (and twice for some). If that is not enough, the Head of Year, Assistant Head of Year and Director of Sixth Form are all available to offer further advice should it be required. Students are very well supported as they progress through all aspects of their Sixth Form options process.
- 13 **Clarification of required grades for entry to Year 13 from Year 12**
There seems to be confusion of the required grades. Some students feel they were told they needed 3A grades to return to Year 13 but the prospectus states a requirement of 3B grades.
An email from a teacher seems to be suggesting that the majority should attain A grades but this is different from it being a requirement.
The school requires at least 3 B grades at AS Level or in equivalent internal exams for students to continue their preferred combination of subjects into Year 13. The letter from the Head of Year states that the majority of the students should be getting A grades based on their performance and this expectation is consistent with the level of performance which students will need to achieve if they aspire to make competitive applications to the most prestigious universities in the UK (i.e. the Russell Group).

14 AS students

Are AS students required to attend classes on the days when they do not have exams as their exam is provisionally between 15 May and 16 June?

Yes with the caveat if an AS exam is in the afternoon the students can have the morning off. As the AS exam period runs from 15th May to 16th June inclusive, the students are expected to attend school everyday except during Activity Week 1 (which commences on 22nd May). The Year 12 internal exam week will run from 19th June to 23rd June and during that week there will be study leave when students do not have a timetabled exam. The students will be given another 3 days off, 29th June and 5th + 6 July 2017, for university open days. Students are allowed to write in and request other dates for University visits; these requests for authorised absence will be considered by Mr Budds on a case by case basis.

15 6th Form

What is the total number of students in 6th Form?

What percentage St Olave's Year 11 boys make it to 6th Form?

Do St Olave's boys get preferences for 6th Form admission if they were involved in extra curricular activities during Yr 7 - 11, should they not meet the grades criteria?

There are 436 students currently in the Sixth Form. Generally it is just over 90% of our internal students who continue into the Sixth Form at St Olave's. Involvement in extra-curricular activities does not give Olavian students leeway in terms of the 64 point admission criterion outlined in the school's published Admissions Policy.

16 Fizzy Drinks

Why is there a fizzy drink currently being sold in the school canteen? It claims to be "1 of your 5 a day"?

Mr Budds has now investigated the sale of "Hydra Fizz" which is available through the school canteen and does indeed claim on the bottle to be "1 of your 5 a day". The drink claims on the label to be "School Compliant" although does not specify what the term actually means, beyond "Compliant with school standards". The drink is made from 50% fruit juice from concentrate (no added sugar, only naturally occurring sugars) and 50% sparkling spring water. The units in which it is sold are 300ml bottles, each of which contains 87 calories. The website of the manufacturer is available at the following link: <http://www.sunmagic.co.uk/whats-new/sunmagic-launches-hydra-fizz-range-02-08/>

The NHS Choices website provides the following information: "Fruit and vegetable juices and smoothies contain a variety of vitamins that are good for our health. Unsweetened 100% fruit juice, vegetable juice and smoothies can only ever count as a maximum of one portion of your recommended five daily portions of fruit and vegetables. For example, if you have two glasses of fruit juice and a smoothie in one day, that still only counts as one portion. This is because fruit juice and smoothies don't contain the fibre found in whole fruits and vegetables. Have other types of fruit and vegetables for the other four (or more) portions. Fruit juice and smoothies also contains sugar that can damage teeth. It's best to drink them with a meal because this can help protect teeth. The sugars found naturally in whole fruit are less likely to cause tooth decay because the sugar is contained within the structure of the fruit.

When fruit is juiced or blended, the sugars are released. Once released, these sugars can damage teeth, especially if you drink juice frequently. Even unsweetened fruit juice is sugary, so keep an eye on the amount of fruit juice and smoothies you consume. Your combined total of drinks from fruit juice, vegetable juice and smoothies should not be more than 150ml a day – which is a small glass. For example, if you have 150ml of orange juice and 150ml smoothie in one day, you'll have exceeded the recommendation by 150ml."

[This was from http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/water-drinks.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/water-drinks.aspx)

17 Use of mobile phones in school

Some parents feel that St Olave's is unusual in its attitude as many schools have stricter policies.

- the concern is distraction in class as some boys are on their phone during lessons;
- lack of social interaction especially for the less socially able boys;
- responsibility for safeguarding issues that may arise whilst pupils are online during school time

The boys and parents are asked to refer to the Rules and Regulations Policy concerning the use of mobile phone; the policy specifies that *Mobile phones must be switched off at all times in lessons, form and year meetings and assemblies. They must not be used between lessons. They may not be brought into any school examinations. Phones can be used at morning break and lunch times, except when queuing for food, and must not cause any inconvenience to others. The same rule applies to hand held games consoles and 'MP3 Players' with the added proviso that, for safety reasons, these should not be used walking to and from school or around the School. Pupils may not take photographs or make videos on the School premises without prior permission from a member of staff. This includes the use of videos or cameras on mobile 'phones.* This policy will be reiterated during assemblies. Parents should encourage their sons to participate in clubs and societies at lunchtime if they are concerned about spending too much time on their phones. Policing the use of mobile phones in terms of what the boys choose to access is not possible. The school hopes the boys will self regulate and feels that it will create problem if the privilege of being able to use a phone at break and lunch is now withdrawn. It was suggested that perhaps parents should consider getting their child a non smart phone or get app (e.g. Screentimelab) to cut down the access, as in Q1.

The relevant policy information relating to where and when the phone can be used around the school is on the second page of the Rules and Regulations 7-11 Policy (http://www.saintolaves.net/uploads/admin/download/file/39/Rules_and_Regulations_Policy_for_Years_7_to_11_inc._Agreement_.pdf)

Policy relating to appropriate usage is in terms of types of sites accessed and school security protocols is covered by the Student Acceptable Use of Network Policy (http://www.saintolaves.net/uploads/admin/download/file/167/Student_AUP.pdf)

Material relating to use of phones and online media in bullying is covered by the Cyberbullying Policy (<http://www.saintolaves.net/uploads/admin/download/file/26/Cyberbullying.pdf>)

18 Lunch time and extra curricular activities

Boys seems to be confused about lunchtime, especially the younger boys. Could parents have more information, maybe a schedule?

Is it possible to find out which clubs the boys have attended each term?

Lunch time clubs are on the school website.

http://www.saintolaves.net/uploads/ckeditor/attachments/1595/Spring_Term_-_2017.pdf

Mr Budds said he will ask the Head of Years 7-11 if there is a case for having a page in the Lower and Middle School planner. Failing that parents can see the list of activities, on the student's school report, attended regularly during the year.

- Any Other Business

1 Conduct of boys

Can the school please tell the students to treat other students with care. Some pupils have told their parents that younger students sometimes get barged or pushed by older students in the corridors.

The school has implemented one way systems in certain corridors and is constantly reviewing how we manage the challenge of managing student numbers in a school of 1065 students which was designed for only 650 pupils. The need to show common courtesy to everyone they come into contact with is reiterated to students frequently via assemblies. If there are specific instances of boys being injured in any incidents whilst moving around the school, it is important that the school is notified so that they can follow up appropriately.

2 Care of sports equipments

Could the school please remind students about being responsible when handling sports equipment, especially hockey sticks, as there are parental concerns that injuries can be sustained due to misuse.

The PE Department regularly and continuously reinforces all appropriate messages regarding the safe handling of sports equipment. Mr Budds will find out if there is an injury book and also how many of the teachers are 1st aid trained and how properly trained to recognise concussion.

3 Valuables

Valuables have gone missing during PE/Games. This also happens during away games/after school clubs. Is it possible for the teacher running that activity lock the valuables at the start and return at the end?

Students should leave their valuables in their lockers and are repeatedly advised not to bring them into changing rooms. However if the boys do bring it during games, Mr Kenwood can lock them up and he has often reminded the boys of this. Parents are requested to reinforce the school's advice in this matter.

4 Notification during away games

Is there any way parents can be notified of delayed returns from away games? There were several occasions when delays had happened and parents were unable to get any update. Only boys who took their phones were able to notify their parents.

Notification is given on Twitter. Most if not all the boys have their mobile phone to contact their parents regarding likely arrival times. Students should learn to take responsibility to inform their parents of their estimated time of arrival. Another way is for parents to download apps such as 'Life 360', 'Find your friend', 'Trackidz' etc which will be able to show the location of your child's phone. Some of these apps will also allow the parents to monitor and control the usage of the mobile phone (which will help to address the concerns regarding mobile phone usage).

5 Policy on illness

What is the school guideline or policy when a student has suddenly taken ill?

Recently a student was taken ill and attended the office for assistance. The boy was left to rest in a room and later he was allowed to leave the premises alone, In this instance the boy had a high temperature and caught the train home alone.

Is it possible for the parents be notified when a student has taken ill while at school?

The protocol when a student falls ill is to go to the School Reception who will then inform the parents. Students who contact their parents directly without informing School Reception will not be released when the parents arrived. Students are not allowed to go home on their own. Mr Budds asked for details of this incident for him to investigate further. Please remind your child that the Reception must be informed if he/she falls ill while at school.

6 First Aid

As part of PSHE could the school provide/offer first aid training? This is seen as a basic life skill and feels it will contribute to building confidence.

Mr Budds will look to see if there is any First Aid training in any of the syllabus and if not, will explore the possibility of doing this during the activity week. Some parents have indicated that they are happy to fund the course or this could be one of the items the school request from the PA.

7 Issues with staff

A number of parents have raised concerned about a particular teacher and the teaching methods used, with some pupils feeling demotivated and raising concerns about marking work for themselves. Sometimes homework books are not returned for over a week.

The parents want to know what action is open to them if concerns persist.

The school has a Complaints Policy. This can be used by an individual or issued as a joint complaint raised by a Rep. Following the policy, the first point of contact when raising a concern should be the Form Tutor. If the Form Tutor cannot resolve the matter, there is a clear escalation process outlined in the policy. Details are in the school policy:

http://www.saintolaves.net/uploads/admin/download/file/23/Complaints_Procedures.pdf

- Other Issues

New 6th Form criteria :

Any feedback from the PTA on their consultation of parents regarding the new sixth form entry requirements.

Any feedback/update from the Head?

It was minuted in the last meeting that the Headmaster has written on several occasions to parents explaining the occasion of the policy change, its rationale and its implementation. Governors have been consulted and were satisfied with the way in which the Headmaster dealt with the enquiries raised.

- AOB

1 9 1/2 or 10 1/2 maximum subjects to be chosen in Year 8. Are the boys allowed extra subjects on top of this? If not, why? Other schools offer more subjects.

The school feels it is not right to dilute the boys' efforts across a broader range of subjects than that which is currently offered. The current key stage four curriculum model has been carefully discussed by the school's SLT and Governing Body and this is reflected in the agreed policy on curriculum structure.

- 2 How many got their first preference subjects in the Sixth Form?
Every Sixth Form student was timetabled for their first preference subjects. If pupils change their minds regarding their options after the options submission deadline, the school does its best to accommodate the revised preference, although as the timetable is constructed on the basis of student preferences expressed by the options deadline, certain combinations of options may not subsequently be possible if students request a change of subjects.

- 3 Can mindfulness be introduced in all classes, say 15 minutes a day?
The school has only two members of staff who teach mindfulness and a busy curriculum to cover, so this would not be feasible. However there are many apps available if any parents are interested in their child developing his or her practice of mindfulness.

- 4 A parent reported that one Year 7 class had been tested on topics not yet taught to the class; the class was one of two Year 7 classes taught by the same teacher, and the other class had covered the necessary material. This caused distress to the boys as they were not prepared for the test.
This was a one-off situation and an isolated error, as both classes are being taught the same syllabus but not necessarily at exactly the same speed.

- 5 Elocution classes : follow up from previous meeting
The school is looking into it as a paid club. Mr Budds requested for details of the peripatetic teacher (at the time of circulation this opportunity has now been promoted by Mrs Goodman).

Date of next meeting & meeting close

Thursday 11th May 2017, 7:30pm in the main school library