

Notes from Parent Action Group meeting on May 11th 2015

Present: At least 13 parents (none new) plus Richard Corser, Julie Prince (Business Manager) and Maxine Fox, 18 pupils represented.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Boys (11)	1	6	2	1	1
Girls (7)	2	1	2	1	1
Total	3	7	4	2	2

Progress since last PAG meeting

Richard Corser gave an update on progress regarding homework issues raised at the last meeting, outlined in the document [Homework Actions](#) on Parent Action Group webpage.

Homework should be thought of as Independent learning.

Mr Corser is monitoring the setting of homework and is confident that it is all being put into SIMS by teachers. However from the parents point of view this does not seem to be the case, use of SIMS is variable, some teachers are entering every piece others are inconsistent and some have never posted any on Sims despite regularly setting it. This is proving very frustrating for parents whose children do not write anything in their planners - especially when these children do not seem at all bothered by the consequences of not doing their homework. [ACTION required by RC to ensure consistent use of SIMS by staff]

Homework marks cannot be put on SIMS however attitude to learning grades can be recorded in SIMS.

It has been discovered that SIMS is not good for recording the actual homework task only that a homework has been set. For this job the Moodle VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) will be resurrected , offering support for students outside school, with missed classwork, homework and other resources available. Moodle had been used more in the past but the staff who championed its use have since left USH. It will be a major task for staff to familiarise themselves with Moodle and get it populated. It should be ready for September. Parents will have to use their child's login for now. Moodle is already accessible but there isn't much on it.

[School to be aware that access via Apple devices still problematic]

Homework Club, first session on 11th May – promoted around school and via tutor groups. Pupils from years 7, 8 and 11 turned up for a variety of reasons

- Work/life balance ,
- quiet place to do homework away from unwanted attention of parents
- quiet reading relaxation before going home

School hopes to offer refreshments in the future.

Discussion around planners

Consensus amongst parents is that ideally they would not have to get involved in homework, school would ensure that pupils did an appropriate amount with sufficiently robust sanctions in place. No one actually wants to closely supervise homework. Problems arise when pupils never seem to do any homework at all and parents can't find out whether they should be. Parents don't mind how they access this information ie planner/Moodle/SIMS but they want to be confident it is accurate.

There was some discussion about features of the planners, for example are the coloured pages for indicating levels of understanding worthwhile. Importance of modelling how to use the planner, year 6 at Shirley Junior school are starting to use a type of planner to build good habits.

- Planners are still not being used effectively with many pupils simply not writing in them.
- Tutors should play a greater role in encouraging their correct use.
- Subject teachers don't check that HW is written in the planner
- Perhaps put week A/B on a summary page and organise by subject rather than as a diary to show a consecutive record of homeworks in a subject.
- Use of photos of homework
- Stickers with HW task to just stick into diary

Motivation and Rewards

Maxine Fox took the opportunity to explain the Point system of rewards. On a day to day basis pupils are rewarded with achievement points on SIMS for good behaviour in class, excellent progress/homework etc. Staff members log points into SIMS and are becoming more aware of their use. Extra curricular activities such as regularly attending a school club or representing the school in a team also attract SIMS points.

At the end of each term Point scores are calculated to decide who will receive a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Headteachers award. The Points system aims to encompass all aspects of school life so that pupils who make an effort are rewarded no matter what their level of achievement. For example attendance, punctuality, and SIMS achievement/behaviour points are taken into account as per the table. Also used are measures of progress made in that terms lessons, Attitude to learning grades for that term, and any Catch ups or Exclusions for that term. Each term Points are recalculated with only the SIMS Achievement/Behaviour score carrying forward (ie the ones parents can see on SIMS). For years 7-10 the Points decide who is invited on the end of year reward trip – the top 50 Point scorers in each house. In year 11 they count towards Prom ticket discounts of 25%, 50% or 75%.. Maxine feels attendance at period 6 revision classes was higher as SIMS achievement points were offered as an incentive.

It was suggested that extracurricular activities outside school could also be awarded points eg karate belts or representing a sports club in competition. This mature version of show and tell could give school a chance to find out more about a pupil's interests. [ACTION Maxine Fox to consider further].

The award ceremony at the end of the year (at Central Hall recently) rewards progress and achievement and uses nominations from staff.

e-Safety

Julie Prince talked about e-safety, it is something Ofsted are keen on so a new page has been added to the website with links to useful sources of information. USH working in partnership with Wildern school on this.

A parent mentioned they had been to a really good training session on e-safety and could recommend a speaker.

Julie invited feedback from parents on e-safety page