

Minutes of Parent Action Group from Thursday 28th January 2016

Present: staff Aimee Floyd, Phil Taylor, Helen Hudson, Claire Williams

Chair: Kate Stone

Parents representing most year groups (no parental representation from yr. 8)

Draft Teaching and Learning policy presented by Aimee Floyd and Claire Williams

The new policy which has been worked on by senior leadership in consultation with pupils was explained and reviewed.

The policy has been based on the habits of mind (created by Arthur Costa) which are embedded in the USH ethos. This involves preparing pupils to be resilient and reflexive workers who are able to deal with the unknown through:

- dealing with problem solving and planning
- self-evaluation
- self-monitoring
- turning to others
- changing (flexibility of approach)
- ability to communicate effectively
- ability to reach an informed conclusion or judgement independently

It was noted that the current and new GCSE exam system may not encourage this type of learning however the workplace look for these characteristics.

It has been noted that pupils are not active enough in their learning as research has shown that the pupils deeper understanding, engagement and enjoyment of lessons improves when they are required to have a more active input.

Staff have been working in trios experimenting and observing the impact of putting different aspects of the policy into place. The driving force behind the policy is 'We think, we feel' with a focus upon the ways in which students think and approach their learning as well as their emotional buy in to achieve their very best.

Parents reviewed the policy and suggested some element of rewording is required to add clarification. The role and expectations of the pupils also needed to be included.

Measurements of Performance presented by Helen Hudson and Phil Taylor

Attainment 8

From 2016 schools will no longer be measured on the percentage of pupils gaining 5 A* to C grades but will be using this new measurement.

This involves a weighting of the individual pupil's best 8 results giving weighting to Maths and English as follows:

English	20%	(highest of Literature or Language)
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Mathematics	20%	
EBacc 1	10%	(subjects include History, Geography, 3 Sciences, Computer Science,
EBacc 2	10%	a language)
EBacc 3	10%	
Other	10%	(pool of all other subjects)
Other	10%	
Other	10%	

USH are cutting down on the number of subjects a pupil will study to focus effort on those remaining.

GCSE grades changing

From the exam series 2016 pupils will be rewarded with a numeric system from 1-9 rather than A* to G. The current yr. 10s will receive a mixture of grades and numbers but the following cohorts will receive all numerical grades.

Life without levels -USH steps

From September 2015 National Curriculum levels are no longer to be used as a measurement of progress. Each school has to develop their own way of tracking progress. USH has taken the route of each department writing 37 descriptors of steps needed to achieve a GCSE Grade 9 (current top end A*).

It is noted that gaining competence in different subjects happens at different rates, and not all progress will follow a linear pattern from the start of yr. 7 to the end yr. 11.

Estimated attainment 8 grades for current pupils will be calculated from Reading and Maths scores at KS2. Pupils in yr. 11 target grades are based on FFT scores (KS2 results and a number of other factors showing how similar pupils in a similar school would perform).

When new pupils start at USH CATs tests will be used for baseline assessments rather than KS2 results allowing more accurate target setting particularly for new subjects. This will also allow for different targets in different subjects, unlike the current yr. 11 cohort.

There will be a Parent Information Evening for pupils in yrs. 7, 8 and 9 to explain the steps

[Parents reviewed the system. It was noted that descriptors of the 37 steps should be made available for parents on the website so they have an understanding of what their child needs to do to progress.](#)

Performance Data

Reporting of the performance to parents will occur 3 times a year. There will be 3 data captures per year, at 12 week intervals. There will be 2 short reports and 1 long report per year.

The attainment summary on the report will show the pupil's current USH step with approximate old National Curriculum level, an end of year USH step target and an end of yr. 11 USH step target with new style GCSE grade.

The current USH step column will be traffic lighted (green=in line with expected progress, amber=may not make expected progress, red=unlikely to make expected progress) which will make it easy to see where there are problems.

Parents reviewed the report. It was noted that the graph for progress in Maths and English may remain as in its current format or may be changed to include all Attainment 8 subjects. It was felt that this be confusing.