

# LEIGH TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY

## PARENTS' FORUM

Minutes Of meeting held on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2014

**Attendees:**

**Academy staff:- Faye McGill - Principal Da Vinci  
Julia Collins - Principal Chaucer**

**Parents:**

**BRUNEL: -Linda King**

**CHAUCER: Fiona Williams, Nick Williams, Sharon Coles, Brad Langham,  
Sandy Taylor, Luisa Holmes, Jacqueline Ellis, Graeme Ellis, Michael Holmes**

**DA VINCI:-Sarah Hitchings**

**DARWIN: Jan Jennings, Lindsey Deakin**

**Apologies: Ann Burch (CH), Mo Jenson (CH), Karen Brooker**

### MINUTES

- **Welcome and apologies**

Michael welcomed everyone and gave apologies for those absent.

- **Principal Julia Collins Chaucer**

The watchword across The Academy is 'stability'. The highest estimated grades are currently in Chaucer but the focus is on achievement across all 4 colleges. The plan is to continue with the good things and improve on others where needed.

Mike Williams is on a secondment as Vice Principal in Chaucer from Longfield Academy. The new Principal structure has brought new energy, the rewards and consequences policy is being rolled out and reinforced across all 4 colleges and a consistent policy for standards of education is now much more apparent across colleges.

Last module - cross country run (well attended), Xmas panto, carols, winter wonderland.

New newsletter on website to be produced every 2 modules.

There will be a new Leigh website. What do parents want to see on the website?

938 applications received for Sept 2014 – heavily oversubscribed again.

From Sept 2014 there is proposed change to the structure of The Academy day.

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday remain the same, the end time of Friday will change to 3.30pm and Wednesday will end at 2pm in line with the rest of The Trust.

This will give a block of time for home / independent learning, and also staff training and professional development across all Trust schools.

There will be the same amount of lessons but lessons will be 80 / 85 minutes.

Students can remain in school if they choose and do Home Learning. Bus and coach companies have been consulted and can accommodate the change.

From 27<sup>th</sup> January The Academy is piloting a change to lunchtimes up to February half term. Currently there are 4 lunches and lesson 3 is always disrupted by a lunch in the middle. The Academy is now trying 2 lunch times (12.15 and 1.35pm) of 40 minutes each. Thus 2 colleges will have lunch then start lesson 3 and the other 2 will have lesson 3 and then lunch. Lunch 2 will also have break at 10.30. There are enough tables - if it is raining students can also use the wintergarden and/or lecture theatre. On the first day, one lunch had both colleges in same time, the other lunch split the colleges (one ate, the other waited then vice versa). At the end of the trial, students will be consulted and a decision made as to whether to make it a permanent change.

- **Principal Faye McGill - Da Vinci**

Reiterated importance of consistent Teaching and Learning across The Leigh. All teachers will be observed once during each module, Principals will keep records in line with Ofsted criteria, e.g. meeting the needs of all students, quality of marking etc. As of Module 2, 84% teachers were judged 'Good' or 'Outstanding' - a rise of 4% from Module 1.

The Trust currently runs 'Outstanding' and 'Improving' Teacher programmes. 2 Leigh staff members have gone through the 'Outstanding' programme and are mentoring colleagues. Professional development is helping to address retention of staff, promotes sharing successful teaching techniques and better quality training across The Academy.

The Academy is developing an iLearning team looking at mobile devices-a pilot group of 12 teachers are trialing/testing 3 devices (mini iPad, Nexus, Windows devices).

- **Questions to Principals**

Q Since Jane Rowland has left who is taking on role of Ofsted?

A Simon Beamish receives information and Inspectors advice.

Q What is the plan with Principals - Chaucer in particular?

A Mrs Collins is currently 'Acting Principal' but the aim is not to move on.

There hasn't been enough of a window to advertise roles after Simon Beamish became CEO. The situation will be reviewed at Easter to then firm up roles.

Q Science and English Chaucer – two teachers have left since September.  
A These were before Christmas and staff are pulling together as team.

Q Do you take student attainment when observing teachers?

A Yes, can look at module results and reference back to teacher, smarter use of data. Introduction of performance related pay -1<sup>st</sup> one linked to attainment so there is accountability of staff. 20% at least of staff are outstanding.

Q French lesson disrupted.

A Email Principal. Students do not have to take a language when choosing options.

Q Year 8 Guided Choices document has only 12 pages online.

A Mrs Collins to check and amend.

Q Recent email John Grafik re half term activities. Only this email received, nothing online.

A This is covered in update section.

Q Can younger students use library?

A Yes, passes are being given out. Students to see Mrs Pickersgill in the morning to obtain a pass.

Q Post 16 - is there any CV training as Connexions no longer exist ?

A Year 11 have a meeting then 1:1 to discuss their pathways, e.g. Post 16, college, apprenticeships etc. Will do workshops for CVs etc. Looking at careers convention for Year 10.

Q What options are open to students if they don't know what they want to do when leaving school?

A There is a careers area in the library. All years to have CV training built in to the tutor time programme (a life skill). UCAS specific sessions are run by the DoL of Post 16.

Principals leave 8pm

- **Minutes of previous meeting** – agreed.
- **Updates from previous meeting**
  - John Grafik unable to make meeting. MH met JG, very keen to take things forward. Parent pay should be in by February half term. He is Business manager for York Road and The Leigh.

- Car parking issues, some monies available to address. Issues as people from industrial area park in top car park. Proposals being gathered are possible plans to barrier right turn (as enter car park) into 1<sup>st</sup> car park except for disabled. Remove the 'no entry' on the left to allow 2 lanes enter top car park with drop off point by Goals. JG also liaising with Dartford Football ground car park for extra space. Cars backed up in school at school leaving time. No teacher seems to monitor situation. Teachers have no control of traffic outside school.
- Regarding school facilities in school holidays-email JG if you have any connections with outside companies offering entertainment services for students to use. Currently has an animation workshop and comedian workshop in February half term. Fee payable. Let JG know any ideas you have.
- Parent fund - JG given role to take forward - where is money going? Could some places on the half term activities be subsidised for under privileged children?
- Looking at Food Technology and Textiles areas. Analysis shows Textiles too small while FT area too large and not fully used.
- K Brewer is now main link with parent forum. Need ideas to increase membership. E.g. can minutes be emailed to all parents not just parent forum? Or text alert to look at web?
- Uniform supply doesn't work as the shop is only open at particular times. However one parent contacted and a time agreed, parent looked at item and bought. If other parents need items, contact school. The shop needs new clothes rail.
- Governors - the setup is for two parent/governors only.
- **Other items**
  - Feedback requested on new proposed website and newsletter.
  - Feedback requested re lunchtime changes to MH
  - The main I.T. software update to take place in summer holidays 2014. There is a budget for I.T. system for all academies, ideally this would support all makes tablets.

Meeting ended 8:35.pm

Next meeting Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2014 Board Room.