

PARENT FORUM MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27th April 2016 AT 19.00 IN THE LECTURE THEATRE

PRIORY GOVERNORS PRESENT: Audrey Whyte (AW), Gaydree Wrigley (GW), Penny Leach (PL), Suzy Carpenter (SC), John Griffiths (JG), Sarah Hinks (SHI),

HEADTEACHER: TONY SMITH (TS)

PARENTS: 17

ACTING CLERK: John Griffiths

JG provided the Forum with an overview of recent governor activities and developments impacting Priory School as follows:

- Recent budget announcement regarding required movement of all schools to Academy status by 2022. TS and JG had the night before attended an East Sussex area meeting for all Heads and Chairs in the county (about 300 attendees)

Key takeaways were:

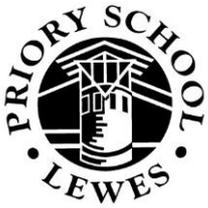
- Clear direction of travel towards academy status, but no need to panic
- Expect a decline in LEA (Local Education Authority) provision and support as transition progresses - LEA support will diminish as Academisation progresses, but timing is uncertain
- Priory as a Co-operative Trust is well positioned - we own the land and employ the staff already
- We are in a kind of half-way house position
- Key principle to JG was retaining accountability and decision making locally - Priory is part of the community and wishes to remain so
- Very early days, lots of work to do and we will report more as things develop
- But the Trust was with hindsight a very good strategic move and the existing partnership with a core group of Lewes Primary schools should serve everyone well

Lewes Co-Op Learning Partnership

- Continuing to develop in small but tangible steps
- Trust has replaced the prior LEA EIP (Education Improvement Partnership) with the focus being more concentrated on Lewes and its needs and a more cohesive grouping of schools
- Planned visit to St. Clere's Trust - 5 years into their journey and hopefully can help guide our Trusts development and progress
- Rodmell and Pells public consultation regarding closure underway - Trust highly supportive, with a focus on the provision of quality education for the potentially impacted students.
- TS currently acting a joint Executive Head via the Trust at Pells school (along with Jo O'Donoghue, South Malling)

Priory budgets

- Priory is running a balanced budget for 2015/16 which is very pleasing given tight funding levels
- First stage planning for 2016/17 is underway, past financial prudence is now paying dividends and again we expect to run a balanced budget



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- Longer term however pressures will become more apparent and certainly on the required 3 year projections Priory is likely to show a deficit if things remain as they are

Meeting was opened up for discussion - the debate was wide and varied and the following are key topics covered:

- Requirement for Priory to convert to an Academy, potential for joining a MAT (Multi-Academy Trusts), local focus, political drives of policy, potential for White paper to not become law, Academy finances, options and decisions, next steps etc
- Freedom from National Curriculum in an Academy, but still held to account by key performance benchmarks – EBAC (English Bacalaureate), Progress 8 etc. Priory must ensure it does not fall foul of performance benchmarks which would trigger potential Ofsted and third party intervention in the School. This will therefore drive curriculum and options choices for students in the future. There is no way around this currently. The school is working to retain the ethos and curriculum breadth within the confines of accountability measures.
- Are there any differences seen in the Priory performance data between summer and winter born? TS advised that there was no apparent differences in this respect or by gender in general at the 5 GCSE, including English & Maths level. However if higher attainment is considered (A/A*) then girls clearly do better. Much depends on what is measured!
- Drugs - sniffer dogs and police searches by station and Mountfield Road. Yes, they happen, not driven by School but with the College across the road it is to be expected. Several Priory students were searched, no drugs were found and parents of those students were made aware by the School

Action Points:

1. Given the drive to Academy status the forum felt that having a more regular set of meetings would be helpful so that Governors and Parents could meet to exchange views etc. It was agreed that three meetings should be scheduled for each academic year and that an additional meeting later this year should be investigated.
2. Could the meetings have a short presentation on key topics - it was suggested that the first could be 'Disruptive Behaviour and strategies used to address it'
3. The Forum was also keen to find out the results of the recent Homework Survey and requested an update at the next Form meeting

Meeting closed:

Next meeting: TBC