

Feedback from Parent Forum, Wednesday 25th February 2015

Summary of key points/issues:

- Parents acknowledge that teaching has improved but there are concerns about the quality of our management of pupil behaviour in some contexts.
- We should be developing a more aspirational 'can do' culture.
- There are concerns that pupils are still flouting the rules on smoking both on-site and in near proximity (Clench Road).
- There is a view that Go4Schools still isn't understood by all, isn't updated frequently enough and that the progress reports it produces are negative and demotivating.
- We need to strengthen our progression activity.
- Aspects of our communication need to be improved, particularly in respect of providing more direct contact addresses for key staff (e.g. tutors), clarifying who is responsible for what, publishing weekly, termly and annual calendars highlighting notable events and becoming more electronic in the way we promote ourselves and communicate (Facebook, online forum etc.). Why do we have 'three websites' (main, Go4Schools and now Show my Homework) – we should have one integrated system. Other aspects, e.g. texting, is excellent.
- There should be more opportunities for outsiders to come in and for our students and staff to get out into primary schools to promote the Academy.
- Children should have access to free drinking water.

Key:

Colour	Aspect	Staff
Blue	QUALITY OF TEACHING	NSY/PHT
Red	BEHAVIOUR AND SAFETY	TBT
Green	ACHIEVEMENT	NSY/PHT
Yellow	SYSTEMS	SRL
Black	WIDER ISSUES	SRL
Purple	PROGRESSION	DTR/SRL
Pink	COMMUNICATION	SRL/SBY

Aspect of the Academy: 'Learning and Behaviour'

Points:

- Teaching has improved, but there is concern when cover teachers are in the class as pupils' behaviour can be worse. Teachers then get frustrated with pupils and a vicious circle begins.
- More able students need more stretching. (X2)

- Students still report that other students are smoking.
- Too much smoking in Clench Road before and after school.
- What are the current arrangements for SEND following the departure of the member of staff responsible for this area?
- Displays could be used more around the school as visual stimuli for the more visual learners.
- Negative points should only be awarded if the student knows what they're for.
- Mixed-ability GCSE groups which have smaller numbers appear to vary in standards of behaviour.
- Behaviour has improved but there is still low-level disruption where students know they can get away with it.
- Make sure the quiet students are heard. The vocal students are very dominant.
- Go4Schools is not up-to-date.
- Go4Schools needs clarification. It appears to be completed as an afterthought. How is it supposed to work?
- Expectations of students' attainment need to be higher.
- Cooking should be included as an enrichment option.
- Supply teachers do not appear to be able to reach the standard expected.
- Rules for going out of school are inconsistent and not checked. (X2)
- More opportunity inside school and outside school for everyone, not just the same pupils every time.
- Students feel like statistics – have lost the qualitative side.
- English still a problem.
- Students pleased with the engaging new languages teacher.
- Staff training is needed in dealing with challenging pupils.

Aspect of the Academy: 'Opportunities and Progression'

Points:

- It is a shame that because there's no VIth Form, the teachers don't feel like they need to encourage students to carry on subjects they're good at. I've noticed they seem to be interested (understandably) in the GCSE outcome, but it would be great if they gave the children some encouragement and idea of continuity.
- The Prefect System is not clear to parents – what/how students are selected and what are the responsibilities/rewards etc.?
- Feedback from last year's Celebration Evening in October was that the same old people got all the prizes – this might be a wasted opportunity to boost others' confidence.

- Enrichment to include eco-type technologies for those who might wish to work in that sector – use enrichment or other extra-curricular opportunities to develop world of work/career information.
- Post-16 information was not too good or relevant. The personal statement work was nothing like what we actually came across. Northgate only require 240 characters. No teachers asked what my child was planning to do post-16. There should be more careers advice and links with local employers like BT.
- I have been disappointed with the amount of sports clubs offered – fully appreciate you don't have the staff.
- Feel that the more 'engaged' staff and form tutors encourage their form pupils to apply for 'Ambassador' etc.
- Stretch pupils who need stretching.

Aspect of the Academy: 'Links with Parents'

Points:

- The Go4Schools pupil progress reports give a negative and demotivating impression on pupil progress for the pupil and the parents.
- The text service for parents is really useful (X3).
- Utilisation of e-mail to parents not paper letters.
- Promotion of access to teachers' e-mail addresses (X2).
- Attended e-mail boxes that are responded to.
- Parents need access to a student advocate – e.g. the Form Tutor.
- The five-minute windows for parents evenings doesn't work – the time slots aren't indicated with, for example, a start/stop bell or buzzer and many teachers don't stick to the five minutes or see parents when they should.
- Year 10 and Year 11 parent's evenings were excellent and at the Year 9 one teachers were really informed and enthusiastic.
- Teachers not available for full time slots at parents evening (4pm-6pm). Teachers saying they were only available until 5pm in terms of slots.
- Are they parents evenings or afternoons – they are in most parents' working hours.
- Show my homework is really good.
- Have an assembly once a term or once or twice a year to which parents could be invited to share the achievements of pupils – e.g. debating competitions, sport etc. Not everyone reads the newsletters – this could include students talking about what they have got out of enrichment opportunities etc.
- Texting to inform parents about letters given to children, events, etc. is excellent and a good way of informing parents – hence they look at the website. Recently, a few

letters have slipped through without a text message being sent, so a reminder to staff would be good.

- Promote events more – give a reminder on the day.
- Encourage parents to bring their friends to events.
- Some parents might feel that they're going to get roped-in to help with things when they're really busy.
- Publish the key dates for the whole school year at the start of the year – including Parent Forum meetings.
- Links are fairly limited. Cannot rely on children to be the conduit for information to parents.
- East Bergholt High School has a weekly timetable of what's going on at the school.
- Newsletters are really limited. They are about a tiny percentage of pupils.
- You need something to make parents feel included.
- What about an online forum?
- Facebook? The school should represent itself and not through a third party.
- Make it clearer to parents who they can contact at school if they have any concerns.

Aspect of the Academy: 'Links with the wider community'

Points:

- This is really good – especially in primary schools.
- Coffee mornings/lunchtime – elderly population to come for lunch maybe?
- How do we get families from Ipswich to come to Holbrook to see what it has to offer? – not just when recruiting Year 7 pupils – for example, Science events hosted at the school.
- The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme is improving links with the community.
- Consider donations from charity days to fund local projects.
- Pensioner lunches etc. – provide the opportunity for the wider community to interact with the students.
- Recognise that it is starting to happen – i.e. singing and the Duke of Edinburgh volunteering scheme.
- It is not felt we're at the heart of the community – there is a loss of contact with other parents compared to primary level.
- Need more timely, frequent and concise promotion of events through texts, adverts, e-mails, the website and newsletters.
- Transport – include current children at schools out of area in plans for transport as well as new starters.
- Has the school contacted local/national companies to ask for sponsorship?

- Pupils to visit catchment primary schools more frequently (e.g. Tattingstone), to encourage Year 6's to want to come to the school and not East Bergholt.

Aspect of the Academy: 'Ideas'

Points:

- All children should have access to free drinking water like they do at primary school.
- Can we have a PE syllabus that encourages activity and doesn't just focus on competitive sport.
- Year 11 students previously had a treat/trip at Xmas time – is this still happening?
- Display students' work/achievements on Dr's surgeries, church rooms and other places on the peninsula.
- Use 'Recreate' to decrease Art material costs through recycling.
- Use Sports Centre more to generate funds.
- Buy a 3-D Printer and use 3D software.
- To make parents more aware of the enrichment opportunities – who comes in to help, what they do and feedback – what the students get out of it.
- Raise expectations/aspirations – develop more of a 'can do' culture.
- Generic e-mail – e.g. subjects, pastoral, behaviour, general concerns etc.
- Encourage more careers – have evenings more regularly.
- What happens in each year? Tell me what to expect.
- Update behaviour points.
- Website should be update regularly and have only one, not three.
- Look forward to the next evening like this!