

Parent Forum Meeting 29th April 2015

(Number of attendees: 41)

Feedback from discussion session

Topic 1: 'Trips and Activities'

Ten key principles:

1. There should be a **trips policy**.
2. There should be a comprehensive **calendar** of all trips.
3. Trips should be **sensibly priced and affordable**.
4. There should be an educational trip of some kind for **each Year Group every term**.
5. There should be a **variety** of trips in the overall programme.
6. As far as possible, trips should cover **a number of curriculum areas**.
7. As far as possible, trips should make good use of **local facilities/attractions**.
8. Every child should have the opportunity to go on an **overseas trip** during their first three years at the Academy.
9. All children who want to go on an advertised trip **should be able to**.
10. There should be **'specialist' trips** for students with particular interests, abilities or aptitudes.

Detailed feedback from the discussion groups

- What has happened to Kingswood in Year 8?
- There should be an educational trip for each Year Group every term. These should include theatre trips, museums, Cambridge Festival of Science etc.
- There should be better local day trips.
- If the school runs trips then everyone who wants to go should be able to go – Paris trip, for example.
- During Activities Week not every child wants to go to a theme park. Is an alternative offered on that day?
- Ask the children for ideas for Activities Week.
- Make better use of the local ski slope if a ski trip isn't viable.
- Run day trips to France – even primary schools do this.
- What has happened to Kingswood?
- The Geography field trip for Year 10 should be something exciting.
- There is a general lack of school trips.
- Did the Year 9 Science trip to Cambridge get cancelled?
- Trips should be open to more pupils.
- It is unfair to cancel trip like New York and Skiing.
- Every child should get a chance to go on one overseas trip during their first three years.
- What happened to the German Exchange? No-one went to Germany.

- Year 7 trips shouldn't happen until the end of the year.
- Year 8 Kingswood?
- Residential trips are a bit of a jolly.
- We agree with fun trips – pressure release.
- There should be a big trip – a residential – every other year.
- Year 6 already have lots of trips in primary.
- Cover a variety of curriculum trips in one trip.
- Paris trip – first come first served – only 50 children are allowed to go and many are disappointed.
- Perhaps a cross-curricular week – e.g. go to London to see a variety of museums.
- Why is there a limit on places for a large trip – e.g. Paris?
- Do other adults (e.g. parents) go to ensure all can go?
- Letters meant to go home but not going home – one trip said there would be a letter on the website about it but there wasn't.
- Could specific children be picked out to go on a 'medical interest trip' or a 'science special' rather than all?
- Could achievements out of school be logged so teachers are aware of them – also include in an achievement folder or online record?
- There should be a calendar of trips.
- If lots of children are out of school on work experience and GCSEs could trips go then?
- Praise Mrs Reynolds for Year 9 trip to Paris, but should it be Year 10?
- Year 9 – 4 days in Paris – cost £430 – is oversubscribed – it should be available to everybody. Some parents can't afford it – is there funding to support them?
- Look at affordable trips not £1,000 to New York.
- Consider savings schemes – maybe 'Holbrook Academy Enrichment Stamps'.
- Residential trips might be 1 night away for Year 7, 2 nights for Year 8 and 3 nights for Year 9.
- Need to set a programme of trips so parents can plan for it – structured for the year.
- Activities week can be used instead of a trip – perhaps Alton Towers for those who don't go away.
- German exchange was fab – you should do this again.
- Pleasurewood Hills is not suitable, not educational, not all children like rollercoasters.
- Go on local trips to Alton Water, Rendlesham Forest, Jimmy's Farm, Foxborrow Farm etc.
- The Year to trip to KG is really good but don't limit the numbers – it is good value but communication about whether they were going was bad.
- Kingswood – what happened? What could Year 8 do instead?
- Paris – not fair to just lucky dip – also includes a theme park.
- More little trips – theatre, museums, artists in residence, themed days in activity week, go to London! Go to Cambridge, have a policy on trips to include costs, experiences, regularity of, mix of etc.
- A variety of trips helps children and parents cope with expectations – e.g. I will go to Paris – vary trips – e.g. Kentwell Hall to dress up – Duxford – and consult parents.

Topic 2: 'School uniform'

Six key principles:

1. The Academy uniform should be **different** to what children wore in primary school.
2. Uniform should be **good quality and affordable**.
3. Uniform should be **unisex**.
4. There should be a **distinctive change** in uniform as children enter KS4.
5. **Non-uniform days** should not be allowed.
6. Uniform rules should be **consistently enforced** by all staff.

Detailed feedback from the discussion groups

- Wearing a blazer would ensure a child wears a coat!
- There should be rules about taking jumpers off and blazer off together or not.
- A shirt plus a tie is preferred.
- Sweatshirts and polo shirts are too 'primary-schoolish'.
- The cost of a blazer would be a concern.
- The children need to be smarter.
- We like a jumper and a shirt.
- The black jumpers are good quality - we need the same for younger children.
- In Year 8 the majority are happy with the uniform, although the quality of the sweatshirts is poor.
- In Year 10 we prefer a smart jumper, shirt and tie but no blazer – the shirt could be short sleeved.
- Uniform needs to be affordable and good quality.
- Skirts are getting too short – ban skirts!
- Good to differentiate KS4 – black tie and jumper for both years.
- All should wear shirts, ties and jumpers.
- Trousers should be worn by boys and girls.
- Polo shirts should have logos on.
- Year 11 should be allowed to wear suits – their choice of suit – they can use it for Sixth Form College, interviews etc.
- Older boys are in adult sizes and would make blazers more expensive.
- The current uniform looks very much like a primary school uniform.
- If there is one, can it be enforced! It is really hard for parents to police children leaving the house.
- Wearing sweatshirts is the same as being in primary school – a change might make them prouder about themselves and more likely to keep the uniform rules.
- Non-uniform days create issues with children competing – poorer children feel awful.
- Uniform should be unisex.
- It is really difficult to police uniform whatever it is.

- Older children should wear black jumpers and ties – prefects should have the cost of their uniform funded for that year.
- Prefects should wear blazers and ties.
- Everyone wants a V-neck jumper – a different colour for Year 11. All should wear shirt and tie.
- Could have a uniform exchange for second hand uniform

END