



Cotham Co-operative Academy Forum
 Tuesday 20 February 2018, 6.00pm
 Library

Minutes

Attendees:

Parent/Carer Reps: Jo Eades (JE), Henrietta Wilson, Rachel Dottay, Flora Waite-Taylor, Sas Bonser, Kate Gorst.

Staff Reps: Louise Arnold (LA)

Community Reps:

Student Reps:

Alumni Reps: Jeremy Birch (JBi)

School Governors: Gareth Edmunds (GE), David Winter (DW)

Also present: Leanne Sowersby (LS, Clerk), Jo Butler (JBU, Headteacher), Eileen Quirke (Assistant Head)

Apologies: Penny Beeston (PE), Dave Brockington, Abbie Allender

	Action
<p>1 Welcome to all and apologies – DW has offered to Chair the meeting in the absence of anyone else willing to do so. Everyone introduced themselves.</p>	
<p>There has been some discussion about changing the set-up of the Forum and the constituencies and consultation mechanisms.</p> <p>Staff - There is now a Joint Staff and Governors Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Governing Body. This is attended by Union and Coop staff reps.</p> <p>Students - There is a school council up and running. EQ gave a summary of the way this is running. Each tutor group has a representative on a House Council, which sends representatives to the School Council. Each House has a particular area that they are working on. The School Council will be running their own meeting in the Council House. Elections will run around Christmas each year to avoid the busy time in September and to maintain stability. This is more cohesive and holistic approach.</p> <p>Q – Will the School Council send reps to the Forum? The Student Council will meet every term. It would be useful providing that the reps are given a voice and the meetings are at a time that is appropriate for them and cover topics that are relevant and of interest to them. It may be more appropriate for staff supporting them to feed back</p> <p>There are students who are student governors who want to observe governor meetings.</p> <p>It has been very interesting to hear from students and to have that feedback.</p> <p>Parents – the parents’ constituency are to re-form at the parents’ engagement group. The idea is that the group would meet with someone from the Senior Leadership team where issues can be raised. This group can attend / send reps to the Forum meetings.</p>	

Alumni reps could perhaps attend the parent engagement group.

Discussion

This sounds more streamlined and could make communication more effective.

JBU gave some ideas about how she feels the parent engagement group could work. Would be useful for a parent to chair that group and work with the lead member of SLT. Need to be clear that these meetings would not be a place to discuss individual gripes / issues with individual children.

Parents are keen for the engagement groups to be an opportunity for parents to help support the school as well as engage with the school. School can get information in a structured way and give information back in a clear way.

Clarity about the role and purpose of the group will be useful and will enable the group to be purposeful. There will be more fluidity in the engagement group membership, but people would be nominated to report back to the more formal forum meetings.

Clarified that the Articles state that the Academy shall have a Forum although it does not specify a number of meetings.

Concern expressed about engagement becoming, 'siloes' if the only communication between the different constituencies is through SLT. That is where the value of having continued forum meetings is – it will allow that cross-constituency communication to continue.

This will allow both more direct communication with the school / senior leadership, as well as discussion across the constituencies before making recommendations to the school.

There may also be times when engagement groups meet without SLT – in order to clarify issues / fact find etc.

Date of next meeting – Agreed to be 5 June, 6pm.

Discussion around the engagement of alumni and community constituencies. This has been left open – these groups may want to consider how they would like to be engaged outside of forum meetings.

Need to make sure that the needs and requirements of each group are specifically addressed, especially if groups are mixed / meeting together.

Discussion around support and administration of the forum. It is important for everyone to understand the pressures and constraints.

There are parents who want to be more involved and don't feel that they know how to be. This could be an opportunity to publicise more the opportunities for this. Discussion around the ways to do this.

Would be good if School Council, JSGC and Parent Engagement group have met before the next Forum meeting on 5 June and are able to feedback on how this is working.

LA fed back some of the work being done by the student reps from Sigma House on the environment, with the aim of increasing the amount of recycling. LA has brought a Co-Fund application for installation of water fountains for re-filling water bottles.

JBi gave an overview of the Co-Fund. The use of the fund is designed to provide evidence of clear benefits to facilitate raising further funds.

JBU gave some further history about the fund. The fund originated as an enrichment fund, which parents paid regular voluntary subscriptions into. This was closed down by the previous Headteacher and the money passed to the forum, which has become the Co-Fund.

<p>A parent had started work on a funding strategy. Work on this has stalled, but JBU is keen for this to be progressed and would welcome support with this from parents. JBU is also very keen to investigate the options for parents to support the school as volunteers.</p> <p>The parent engagement group can look at this. There is also a discussion to be had around what is, and is not a core cost.</p> <p>Discussion around the bid for water fountains and fundraising. It would be useful for school to be informed when applications are received and paid out. A report on who has been successful and not successful would be important – as this money sits in the school budget and the school are ultimately responsible for it.</p> <p>Members thanked JBi for his work on the Co-Fund</p> <p>DW asked JBi to report to the forum about the Co-Fund. Information could be published in the newsletter.</p> <p>Further discussion around fundraising and possibilities for this.</p> <p>If the forum decides to change the rules of the Co-Fund, they can do that.</p> <p>Parent Engagement group to look at working on fundraising for the water fountain bid.</p> <p>JBi asked for volunteers to be on the Co-Fund board.</p>	<p>JBi</p> <p>Parent reps</p>
<p>Discussion around possible ways that parents could be involved in the school, potentially as volunteers for activities such as reading with students or as scribes for students who needs additional support in exams. EQ feels that this could be useful. This is something that the parent engagement group can discuss.</p> <p>Discussion around the possibility of reusing books. These could be added to the second hand uniform sales. Pupil Premium children will be allocated books. Discussion around the difficulties of supporting children with SEND who arrive at the school without an EHCP.</p>	
<p>Diversity of Engagement Groups</p> <p>There is a variety of things happening in school that could be used to develop the diversity of the group.</p> <p>Discussion around whether there should be social events organised by parents. There have been events in the past.</p>	
<p>Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5 June 2018, 6pm</p>	