



Nether Stowe School

Parental Forum

March 29th, 2019

Headteacher's Presentation:

The Headteacher provided a presentation on the following:

- Hannah Riley, Head of Sixth Form, provided an overview of the values and vision of the Sixth Form and the developmental priorities.
- The Headteacher provided an update on plans to improve homework centred around the introduction of 'Knowledge Organisers' and low-stakes testing.
- An update was also provided on the improvements for Teaching and Learning.
- Further information was provided on the time-scale of the build project and how the school has worked hard to mitigate and eliminate any negative impact on provision or students.
- Details are available on the PowerPoint presentation.

Questions

Can more homework be set?

As a school we have recognised there are inconsistencies in the quality and quantity of homework being set. Currently, we expect all departments to set meaningful and regular homework. If this is not the case, please contact the Head of Department so that it can be addressed as soon as possible. The contact details are on the website.

Our long-term plan is to introduce Knowledge Organisers as a way of both developing long-term memory and helping pupils to prepare effectively for the demands of linear GCSE exams. Knowledge Organisers will link in with low-stakes testing in lessons so that pupils see both the relevance and purpose of homework and that it is being assessed on a regular basis.

We are currently developing the strategy and resources. There will be further information sessions in the summer and at the start of the next academic year for parents.

When Knowledge Organisers are introduced, will the testing be based only on what is on the Knowledge Organiser, will it support less able pupils?

When Knowledge Organisers are introduced, they will be the main source of homework. The testing in lessons will be linked to specific sections of the Knowledge Organiser and will not include information from other sources, unless materials have been provided.

Pupils will be provided with Knowledge Organiser homework books and will be coached and supported with the techniques and approaches needed to use Knowledge Organisers effectively.

Can the use of detentions be made more consistent, especially around the non-completion of work where students may have struggled with understanding the work and need more support?

It is incredibly important that we are as consistent as possible with the use of detentions. We have set high expectations for conduct and work. However, we also recognise there can be a number of reasons why a piece of work is not completed or missed. Communication with the class teacher is all

important and we would always strive to ensure that the individual circumstances are taken into account.

Can notifications be changed for compulsory support so that they do not appear as detentions?

Yes: we have met with the software designers this week and the changes are planned to come into effect from Monday 1st April. The way that parents are informed will be via a push-notification through the Insight App. This will help us to communicate more clearly with parents and pupils.

Can children take their books home to revise for tests or assessments?

Naturally, we would always want pupils to have every resource necessary to succeed at school. A pupil's exercise book is one of the most important resources and we encourage access to books as much as possible. Again, if this is not, or has not been the case, please contact the relevant Head of Department.

How are you going to improve the teaching and provision in specific areas of the curriculum where there have been a number of supply teachers?

We share the concerns over the potential impact that temporary and supply members of staff can have on the quality of provision. You will have seen from the news (see the link below) that Nether Stowe is not alone in struggling to find good quality permanent members of staff: it is a national crisis issue.

However, we have worked hard – and proactively – this term to make sure we are sourcing the best young and new staff to work in key departments of the school and are proud to have sourced some excellent teachers.

Moreover, through a consistent focus on teaching and learning, we have been committed to developing the teachers we have so that excellent practice is in all areas of the school. We have seen the positive impact this has had on provision across the school and the impact it will continue to have.

Where parents are concerned, I would urge them to contact the Subject Lead or the Senior Team in order to help provide support.

<https://www.tes.com/school/blog/recruitment-crisis-shortage-subjects>

Are there any plans to re-introduce mentoring and support programmes, such as Top-Lads?

We will pursue a number of strategies to support, coach and mentor pupils. A focus of the rewards policy has been the importance of recognising the students who meet our expectations every lesson, every day. It is often easy to overlook these pupils in favour of those who require more support.

However, we also recognise that proactive support can have a very positive and preventative impact on our pupils and will look to instigate and develop programmes where there has been a proven impact for the target cohort.

Date of the next parental forum to be confirmed