

Parent Council Minutes

Thursday 27th January 2022

6:00pm – 7:30pm

Present: J Ramsdale, S Hall, S Kenyon, C Ward, S Siviter, G Wilton, J Bickerstaff, D Smith

Item 1 - Parent Consultation - Peer on peer abuse and online safety (Mrs Hall - Deputy Headteacher and DSL)

Mrs Hall outlined issues relating to peer-on-peer abuse / online safety that have been prevalent at PGHS. Features of the school's current provision were outlined. A summary of the recently published Children's Commissioner Report, 'Things I Wish My Parents Would Have Known...' was shared with parents.

A request has been made for parents to help form a group that can work with other stakeholders across the school community to explore new approaches to improve school provision further.

Parents responded with several points including:

The challenge of balancing trust with the scope for abuse

The challenge of surveillance; intrusiveness breeds resentment and greater efforts on the part of young people to go online covertly. This challenge grows with the age of the young person.

Issues around what can be accessed online via social media apps like Instagram, which undoubtedly fuel body dysmorphia amongst girls particularly (amongst several other negative effects on emotional health and wellbeing).

The issue of reluctance to 'grass' or 'snitch' via reporting systems like Impero Confide (this is the system for reporting online safety concerns including peer on peer abuse that is used by PGHS).

Recommendations for future development of provision in this area from the parents:

1. Send out regular, brief, firm messages to parents that encourage them to take active steps and are very specific e.g. *'Please consider imposing screen-free time on your daughter at least one hour before bed. This will improve her sleep and strengthen her emotional health and wellbeing. Thank you for your support.'*

2. Consider holding annual events in school to promote healthy relationships with social media and mobile technology e.g. 'One Day Off' – every student commits to handing their phone over to a parent on a given day.
3. Follow incidents that occur in school with context-specific advice that will have an impact.
4. Refresh the expectations regularly and beyond Year 7 (A Cattnach's weekly bulletin approach was highlighted here as a model to take forward into other year groups with other Heads of Year delivering year / age specific messages.

Item 2 - Parent Consultation - Emotional Health and Wellbeing Support (Mr Ramsdale, Senior Mental Health Lead)

Mr Ramsdale outlined features of current provision for promoting good EHWB in school. Specific reference to recent developments including the appointment of professional counsellors, expansion of the MHFA team and the streamlining of the process by which students are identified and supported at different levels.

Mr Ramsdale shared the new EHWB Self-Help Guides and explained how these would be used. These were well-received and it was suggested that these could / should be shared more widely as a pre-emptive measure. Mr Ramsdale explained that the topics covered e.g. sleep routines and diet are also covered in Life Skills lessons.

Recommendations for future development of provision in this area from the parents:

1. Provide regular, brief advice messages to parents that will help to promote their daughters' EHWB (as outlined in Item 1).
2. Reduce the causes of anxiety in school. Reference here to lockers, toilets, the one-way system, bags not allowed in Science and Music (the issues this can create for some students at lesson change overs who are now caught between trying to be organised and being marked Late). Extensive concerns raised over the anxiety-fuelling nature of Class Charts and the fear of the getting 'reds' and negatives. Mention here of some staff setting HW but not using Class Charts which creates further anxiety. Mr Ramsdale promised to explore all these issues further with SLT and to raise some of the points with staff. Students are concerned that they'll have 'reds forever' and Mr Ramsdale pointed out that there are ways of 'wiping the slate clean' with Class Charts that would be explored before the next meeting.

3. Mr Ramsdale will explore the inclusion of EHWB self-help strategies that can be taught through Life Skills e.g., relaxation techniques with the coordinator of Life Skills, Mrs Cahill.

Item 3 - Update - Careers Provision at PGHS (*deferred until next the meeting*)

AOB – Quick survey on virtual parents' evenings = 3 for, 3 against.

The meeting closed at 7:45pm

J Ramsdale, 31st January 2022