

## **Minutes of Parents' Forum Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2010.**

**Chair:** Dave Wood-Griffiths

**Minute Takers:** Sarah Shortt.

**Speakers:** Mr Whiteford.

### **Buildings Update.**

Mr Whiteford began by advising parents that all schools are in a difficult financial position at the moment and Local Authorities like West Berkshire could be expected to cut as much as 25% off of their budgets over the next three years.

However he continued with an update on the building works to be carried out in the future. He informed parents that plans are in progress for the design of the new Technology Block and that it is hoped that the new building will be completed by around May 2012.

The school will be closed over the summer holidays to allow the following work to take place: A contractor has been appointed and the school will be completely re-roofed with new flat roofs, which will be guaranteed for 30 years. A parent questioned to use of flat roofs but Mr Whiteford explained that other options rather than flat roofs would have required major structural work to the rest of the buildings. As part of the process there will be new cladding in places as well and many of the roof lights will be re-opened providing natural light to corridors upstairs. This project should be completed around November, depending on delays due to poor weather conditions. All the other toilet blocks in the school will also be refurbished over the summer break.

An area of the school will be converted into a Learning Support Unit – the Inclusion Centre, with four classrooms providing specialist staff and support for some of the more challenging students. This area will have CCTV and a 'swipe card' system.

Mr Whiteford reported that conditions in the school are cleaner and much improved and that further general painting and decorating will also continue over the summer.

There are plans to refurbish and extend the Bungalow to house the Nursery and we are applying for an Early Years Foundation Stage grant of £28K for these works.

### **Curriculum.**

Mr Whiteford confirmed that both teaching and behaviour are improving and that many of the more challenging students are benefiting from an altered curriculum,

### **OFSTED.**

The latest Ofsted Monitoring Visit took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> July. The results can be viewed via a link on the homepage of the school website or directly on the Ofsted website

[http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu\\_reports/download/\(id\)/123355/\(as\)/110100\\_346402.pdf](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_reports/download/(id)/123355/(as)/110100_346402.pdf)

The headlines of the report show that the Inspector judged progress to be good. Particular mention was made that underachieving Year 11 students had been accurately identified and that good intervention strategies had been put in place. It was also noted that systems for tracking and monitoring students' progress are now very robust.

### **Staff Retention and student numbers.**

Mr Wood-Griffiths asked about staff retention for the next academic year. Mr Whiteford advised that nine staff are leaving, mostly temporary staff whose contracts have come to an end. The school is fully staffed from September 2010, with fully qualified staff. There are two new PE teachers starting and one NQT in Technology.

There are 174 students starting in Year 7 in September. Mr Whiteford explained that the expectation by 2015 is that schools will retain 80% of their Year 11 students into Sixth Form.

**Parents' Forums 2010/11.**

In this new academic year the school wishes to introduce Parent Focus Groups alongside the larger Parents' Forums. Parents will be invited to join small groups focussing on particular subjects, and asked for their views and suggestions. The first of these groups will look at Extended Learning in detail. The Parents' Forum meetings, which are open to all parents and carers, will still continue, alternating with the Focus Groups. The first Parents Forum will be held in the winter term, probably after the next Ofsted Monitoring Visit. Details of when the first Focus Group meetings will be held will be available soon.

This and other information about the school will also be available on the website, please check it regularly for news and events etc. If you have any concerns or issues you wish to raise there are various ways of contacting the school. You can communicate with your child's tutor using their student planner. Alternatively e-mail contact details are on the website for individual teachers or your child's Guidance Manager. You can also contact the school using e-mail at [Myvoice@denefield.org.uk](mailto:Myvoice@denefield.org.uk)

Finally we would like to thank parents and carers for their continued support of the school this year, particularly those of you who have attended various school events as parent representatives. Feedback from prospective and new parents to this had shown how much they appreciate being able to talk to other parents.