

Frances Mary Buss Foundation
Camden School for Girls
Parent/Governors Meeting
held on Wednesday 16 March 2022
at 6:00pm in Main Hall

Governors attending: Amena Amer, Flora Cornish, Julia Gibson, Tanvi Gokhale, Manuela Grayson, Kateryna Law, Vaushali Londhe, Janet Pope (Chair), Esther Windsor

Staff attending: Duska Cutler (clerk to the governors)

Chair of Governors began meeting with formal introductions of all attendees starting with governors and moving to parents. She provided overview of the school's priorities, the recently updated School Improvement Plan and the current financial situation. The governing body holds regular meetings and detailed discussions on all the above and more.

Headteacher echoed the Chair's welcome, and confirmed the school's strategic priorities including some overarching themes, all building on the school's excellence. The themes included consistency, alignment, recovery post pandemic and finance with some challenging financial constraints. Some aspects the school can control, other it cannot - however there is never complacency as staff consistently seek ways in which to increase income in the school.

Questions from the floor:

- *What is the school's policy on arranging cover in the 6th form?* Cover arrangements are in line with all 6th forms - 6th form lessons as a general rule do not get covered for short term absence but instead work is set for students to complete in the teacher's absence. It is impossible to find subject experts at short notice. Contingencies are in place - there are two teachers per subject, so in a week students are unlikely to not be taught. Teachers step in voluntarily when available to help out and these arrangements are typical of other A level providers.
- *When and how are Year 10s provided with information on subject choices for 6th form - it is hard to make decisions last minute.* In the summer term, Year 10s start to hear about A levels in assemblies. Parents also receive information about the school sixth form. Early in Year 11 students attend a 6th form conference in house and have an opportunity to experience a 6th form lesson.
- *I would like to see a support network for students feeling anxious about disruptive behaviours in class.* Any instances of disruptive behaviour are dealt with promptly and proportionately. The school's learning environment and ethos is a calm and purposeful one. There are systems in place to deal with general anxieties via the pastoral teams, learning mentors and in more serious cases the mental health protocols are followed.
- *How can we support the installation of HEPA filters in each classroom at an investment of <£340 per classroom?* With the number of filters required to cover the school the cost would be significant and not available within the school's budget. They are a costly luxury not available to most state schools. The qualifying factors to receive free government funded filters were difficult to meet - only available to a small number of schools. Ventilation however is very important and there is a school Ventilation Policy

in place; all rooms have CO2 monitors; doors and windows are kept open as much as possible.

- *Is there a cyber-bullying policy?* This is included in the Bullying Policy - available on the website. If you have a specific concern please approach the school directly.
- *Can we hear about Mental Health support across school? What measures are in place?*
 - There has been an increase in reported cases over the course of the last few years
 - CSG has open culture, ongoing pastoral support and teachers' open door policy
 - Appointed Mental Health lead within school
 - Tavistock centre has Mental Health Support Team in place running sessions for students from year 7 upon referral
 - A team of school counsellors including two sixth form counsellors and a educational psychologist in the main school
 - Mental health first aid team within school who deal with acute anxiety attacks on site
 - Mental health drive in PSHE curriculum across all year groups
 - Teachers trained to signpost students to specialists according to need
 - Greater attention to wellbeing in general across entire spectrum of needs
 - Will approach CAMHS and feedback suggestion to record and share online adolescent mental health presentations post event as reported to be very helpful
- *Could students get help with post Covid conflict? With friendships, negotiations and kindness?* There is a new initiative in 6th form, 2 working groups (SRE and wellbeing), bringing their peers' issues for discussion in the hope of building a preventative framework. In main school the head girl team is up and running and in full swing. Headteacher focus groups regularly take place with kindness and modelling good behaviours recently discussed.
- *Can more students have sessions with a learning mentor as they are really beneficial?* Unfortunately there are only 2 learning mentors, so if students are not assigned a mentor please encourage them to come forward to talk, or ask a friend to talk on their behalf with consent - the school will listen and not make the issue bigger.
- *Are there exam/assessment weeks and if so can dates be shared with parents?* High stakes exam timetables are shared as are other important test dates. Otherwise there are no regimented test weeks and teachers have flexibility as to when is the most appropriate time to assess students. School aims to minimise anxiety for students.
- *As a new parent who attended their first parents' evening recently, I would be interested in hearing about my daughter's concerns and achievements in advance of the evening. Can assessment results be more visible, as communication seems to be much less regular than at primary school?* This is a part of the primary to secondary transition - the level of contact is significantly reduced. However, CSG teachers are all accessible, please contact them directly with any queries. Students are assessed at important points in their learning and it takes year 7s some time to warm up to the school's atmosphere and learning expectations. If there are serious concerns parents would be advised ahead of parents' evening.

Thank you to all governors, parents and staff who attended the meeting.