

MINUTES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING – 20/05/10

Period Three

Library

Agenda Items

1. Minutes from Last Meeting:

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the last meeting (04/05/10). No issues were raised for discussion.

2. School Curriculum:

GCSEs

- a) Range: Generally agreed that it was large enough. Some students voiced that would have liked; Law and Sociology as options.
- b) Number of subjects: Many found that the number of subjects was manageable and appropriate. As an aside, some students felt that it should not compulsory to take a language at GCSE; however it was discussed that as we are a language college, students should be encouraged to take a language. The topic of obtaining university offers with/without a language at GCSE was also discussed; deeming that many universities look for a language at GCSE as a prerequisite. Students also felt that Spanish at GCSE should not have to be taken alongside another subject as it limits their choices for other subjects. An issue was raised as to the practicalities of this seeing that Spanish is not a subject available from year 7.

This was then expanded into a further discussion in which many students felt Spanish should be available from year 7. However, students were told that presently this arrangement was not feasible due to prioritisation of resources. A comment was made that at the end of year 7 students could be allowed to choose two subjects from German, French and Spanish to continue through year 8 and 9. Essentially, it was deemed that many felt that there was insufficient access to Spanish as a language during years 7, 8 and 9 resulting in a lack of confidence when selecting languages for GCSE.

- c) Within the curriculum – do we place enough emphasis on wellbeing?

Students felt that many teachers gave ample support during teaching and excellent preparation when it came to exams.

The topic of Citizenship and P.D was also discussed. Here students felt that very little was gained from these lessons and that there was a lack of opportunity for debate. Many felt that during P.D and some citizenship lessons that form tutor led sessions were not as formal as would have been experienced by another member of staff.

There was little enthusiasm for having citizenship as a short course GCSE (*many feeling that students would not treat the subject seriously*); however this view could be altered if there were greater opportunity for debate and 'real

discussion' in future citizenship and P.D programmes.

d) What makes you feel valued in school?

Some students felt that asking for help occasionally 'backfired'. Consequently a few students felt that more understanding from struggling teachers was needed. Many felt that 'Shine Week' during the 2009 summer term made them feel involved and valued within the school. There was a huge enthusiasm for this style of event to take place again; with many students advocating for it annually.

Year 7 & 8

a) What aspects of lessons do you most enjoy?

Students felt that group work was a good aspect to lessons. Many felt that lessons which had structures activities and enthusiastic teachers were the best.

b) What changes would you like to see?

Students felt that lessons taught in sub-groups would be very beneficial, with work appropriate to ability. It was said that some subjects such as mathematics currently carry this out very effectively; meaning that all students in a single class feel that work was neither overstretching nor under-demanding.

3. New school minibus

Ideas for fundraising were as follows:

- A sponsored bike ride
- A school summer fete
- A 'mini Shine Week'
- Competition for designs on the school bus
- School discos

4. A.O.B.

Some students felt there was not enough provision of sport within the curriculum. The boys in particular (years 7,8 & 9) felt that there had not been enough organized matches against other schools. They also felt that there should be sports tour for boys similar to that of the Derbyshire Hockey and Netball tours.

Students in year 7 and 8 felt that the current splitting of forms into year 8 was not a pleasing system as they felt that they could be/ were split away from their friends.

They proposed that students could be able to select a friend at the end of year 7 to guarantee that they are placed in the same form.

Students advocated for water to be permitted in lessons, i.e. it to be permissible to have a water bottle on the desk during the hot weather.

Discussion items for next meeting:

- Fundraising ideas for school minibus after discussions in form groups.
- Sport activities/tours for boys.