

## **RSBPA Meeting Minutes**

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> Mar. 2024 7.30 - 8:30 pm – Hybrid meeting

### **Attendees at meeting F-to-F:**

HM Dr Evans, Housemaster Mr Lloyd, Mr Sanchez, Rhidian Williams (Chairing the meeting), Xiaoxiao Wang, and other boarding parents.

#### **I. Rhidian inviting Dr Evans for introduction**

#### **II. Dr Evans**

- **His love for boarding community** - boarders having a sense of belonging and ownership exceeding what day boys hoping for; Fond memories with SH boarder friends in his school years and years as SH Housemaster
- **Boarding remaining heart of the School whatever changes there are in the School**

#### **Recent Ofsted inspection**

- **Boarding assessed by two teams – one is Social Care Inspectors** (expecting to see how staff are trained, how staff are cared for, whether routines work for them or not, whether boys can raise concerns though house staff); **the other is whole school inspectors following boys through lessons, looking at how they are doing academically.**
- **Delighted the inspectors having a good understanding how much boarding staff care about the boarders – credit going to Mr Sanchez & Mr Lloyd – how much the two HMs care for the boarders in their charge.**
- **Staff caring for boarders remain heart of what we do for boarding.**
- **His role as head of boarding**
  - **First is to look after the two HMs, listening to them (Mr Sanchez had recent challenging pastoral care cases)**
  - **Helping HMs working with Finance director and other staff on strategic planning for boarding – prioritising and organising jobs they want to be done for boarding**

**Fixing guttering, re-pointing chimneys, and roofing;**

**Foundation who owns the site contributing some money;**

**Rolling cycle of renovations – Pending questions with dorms and rooms having fairly thin partition walls to be fixed – left with our new Operation Manager and HMs;**

**Lesley Wakelin taking the role of boarding governor – police liaison officer for school many years doing PSHE lessons.**

- **Other news**
  - **Visit by Chairman of Boarding School Association after Easter**
  - **New menu after Easter**
  - **New academic year fee structures – to be communicated the following week – expecting 3% increase**
- **Dr Evans Answering parents’ questions**

**Q: Room temperatures in some SH dorms – will it be too warm in summer**

**A:** South House, tall rooms there have had ventilation done in the summer. Some of the south-facing rooms, those in the back of SH, warm up a little more than the north-facing rooms. The north-facing rooms are a little colder in winter than the south-facing rooms. Junior dorms having fairly good room heights, SH is pretty well designed. The same is with EW, with Victorian ventilation engineering in the stairways, although not to be compared with air circulation today. There are some issues with some dorms with big windows, difficult to be insulated. We did consider whether we could replace sash windows with UPVC double glaze windows – maybe a project in the future. Temperatures, both HMs please see if you can adjust if the room is cold in winter. I haven’t experienced the boys in summer find those rooms too hot, but global climate changing, maybe this is something we will look at in the future.

Mr Lloyd added, regarding the cold, we had conversation with Y7 boarders about access to radiators making sure they are turned on – with summer, they can bring small fans, PAT tested, if it is too warm.

**Q: Healthy options at breakfast**

**A:** Mr Sanchez meeting with head chef last week – new menu will start after Easter. Feedback from parents and boys is welcome during the menu updating stage.

**Remind** boys to air their opinions on menu updates during the two weeks before new menu finalising.

Every breakfast has cereal, toast, yogurt and fruit option – boys can select things they want and add what they wish for.

**Q: If the boy gets a snack like grab-n-go at break time, his lunch allowance taken, loses his lunch value**

**A:** Nikki and Karen prepare snacks for every break time. We encourage boys to go back boarding houses for the snack. Some boys still buy some food during break time for something different or something extra. They were told to tell the member of the staff if they want to buy some snack, they need to tell this is not part of their boarding allowance, so they can still have main meal as boarding meal at lunchtime. Monday to Friday, Nikki and Karen have snacks ready for boys to come back for during break time. Most boys come back but not all of them do.

### **III. Housemaster - updates for EW & SH**

- **House captain vote before end of term** – Separate from Prefect, Captain selection in Day school, entirely democratic, only the students in boarding will be voting.
- **Activities**
  - Easter quiz just for boarders 27<sup>th</sup> March
  - Murder Mystery Night – huge success
  - Boarding parents tea afternoon – met Lesley Wakelin, new boarding governor
  - Parents of Y7 attending in September visit to SH and EW with current Y7
- **SH updates**
  - New air hockey table – grateful to RSPA donation
  - Re-adjustment some interiors downstairs, providing more space for staff, myself and Ms Stratford.
- **EW updates**
  - Staffing in EW  
Mr Ginger stepping down from boarding tutor soon  
  
Dr Hu started four weeks ago, contributing hugely to boarding family. He is expert in memory, revision techniques. Boys spend lots of time with him. He teaches science, maths, making great support to boys needing academic help.
  - Recent behavioural challenges in EW  
  
Some parents have received emails, phone calls from Mr Sanchez. The boys kept Mr Sanchez awake midnight. Things are getting better. Thank

you parents for the support. Ups and downs seen last couple of weeks. But things are going in the right direction.

- A new pool table requested

- **Staff changes**

- Mr Ginger leaving soon
- Dr Hu already on board
- Mr McAllister (SH tutor) and Mrs Rajeen McAllister (EW tutor)
- Increasing supervision with Dr Hu joining boarding
- Dr Hu running academic support sessions for individuals who self-identify themselves needing particular extra support, and for exam cohorts giving them exam guidance; alongside are academic prefects helping with Y11s in particular for exam preps

- **Upcoming events**

- Boarding barbecue in June
- Charity - designated boarding charities, boarding charity committee

This Friday Charity Quiz night, hoping to have more boarding parents attendance

- **Boarders' number**

Expecting full houses this September. Y12 number not known, 50 Y12 students expressing interest including internal cohorts.

- **Rules and regulations, expectations on boys**

- Encouraging boys to sign in and out appropriately – process being fundamental to safeguarding

Firm in sanction if the boys don't take seriously, making sure they understand that.

Mobile phone removal sanction – if boys not responding, parents please leave messages on duty mobile.

- Being out of boarding house one evening a week as maximum

School activity being their priority;

Next year activity planning for parents to consider – ideally Friday, weekend, one night a week; trying to combine activities on one single night, to make it easy for us to maintain high standard we want to maintain for boarding – much appreciated.

- **Events & trips**
  - “Come and Dine with ME” – favourite event in boarding
  - Summer trip – Ms Fondu working on it, to confirm later
- **Competitions**
  - House football – Mr Sanchez as referee on recent house football matches – high praise of both juniors and seniors
  - House pool upcoming – Tuesday finals for seniors
  - House splash – Mr Till running swimming club on Thursdays, initiating House Splash contest

#### **IV. Dr Evans on safeguarding**

- **In parents expectations evening delivered start of the year, we always say safety first, then wellbeing, so comes happiness – those things got right, progress follows.**

- Occasions safety compromised:

e.g. Boys not signing out when going out; behaviours in SH juniors, came to light in January

There are times boys get things wrong. Our priority is to keep everyone safe.

We need to help boys journey through the risk management process.

Very rarely we see boys in the school who are malicious, who do things deliberately intent on harm.

- Transparency and openness of telling us what boundary boys are uncomfortable with or behaviours that make them unsafe – this is of paramount importance. - Important to build a culture students can talk about any worries they have.
- Safeguarding team
  - Ms Ayres on maternity leave; Mr McGall and Mr Singh managing safeguarding;
- Recent Friday afternoon tea drop-in for me – opportunity for me having chance to say hello to parents – to hear parents
- Encourage parents to let us know anything you want to pass on – we share the work together – grateful for conversations with us, not just when boys get it wrong, but when you have anxieties, too.

## **V. Volunteer parents needed to lead RSBPA from the new academic year**

- **Rhidian and Xiaoxiao stepping down**
- **Apologies for not doing Charity fund raising – expecting next RSBPA parent leader to plan on fund raising**

## **VI. Further Q & A**

### **Q 1: Y12 exam preparation support:**

**A:** Academic support led by Dr Hu for year group. Individuals within Y12 get specific support at the moment, year group support and academic prefects. For specific concerns of your son, it is best to have a conversation with housemaster. The HM will be in touch with form tutor. – Rhidian added from his own experience, once he missed the parents evening, HM got in touch with form tutor for him, got feedback immediately.

### **Q 2: Will the boys get a copy of the menu once it is refreshed?**

**A:** Will be displayed in the houses, updated on school website, sent to parents.

Remind parents – boys have responsibility to make wise food choices themselves as well as being helped to do so by the staff.

### **Q 3: As boys have end-of-year exam next term, will the boys have more prep time or the same time as now?**

**A:** Still the same, but allowing for those who need extra time. We want to emphasize boys need to balance between revision, being social, active.

Profound difference between Y11 & Y13 exam prep and Y7-8. Y7 and Y8 don't see exams as stressful. Useful to make mistakes at Y7 and Y8. For Y11 & Y13, encourage boys to pick things they are struggling with, and something they are confident, sandwich them during revision to reduce burden.

### **Q 4: A Y7 parent asked about boys dividing into different sets after end-of-year exams?**

**A:** The only subject that have sets is maths. The arrangement of maths sets is gradually more refined. End-of-year exam plays a part in that. Consistent assessment – teacher judgement underpinning that, going into Y8 from Y7, going into Y9 from Y8. From Y9 to Y11 they are adjusted if needed to. So end-of-year exam contributes to sets but only in maths, but the exam being only a small part of the judgement where the student is.

### **Q 5: Y 11 and Y13 boys being in their exams, not coming to boarding after half term. Do their rooms get re-assigned or what happens?**

**A:** Very last day of June, which is the last day of exams, do come back after half term. From end of June, almost all Y11 and Y13 will come back to help out with things at school. There are transition days for Y11 boys to come back to school for sixth form.

After the GCSE exams, we offer work experience week, allowing for Y11 who wish to maintain presence in school, trying in different duties, opportunities we provide as options for Y11 students.

Transition days in July – opportunity for them to know what sixth form is like.

Parent adding, if there is any chance to bring barbecue earlier since Y11 boys can be absent on the event.

It is unlikely as the date is being booked on school calendar avoiding conflicts with other school activities.

**Q 6: After school activities.**

**A:** Each school term, tutors, students are asked for activity list.

Weather is driving factor in activity we can do – More front field activities with improved weather; specific events based on speciality of tutors – Football led by Mr Till, Ms Stratford will organise new rota for the summer – to be updated with parents.

**Q: Can the boys study after prep?**

**A:** It depends on what activities there are on the evening. Houses are always supervised but not specifically direct supervision at revision time. Reiterating seeing no reason for Y7 revise more than one and a half hour.

If the boy needs extra time for revision, we can consider. But if it becomes a habit, we need to talk about organisation of time.

**Rhidian drew the meeting to a close after Q & A.**