

**NON VERBATIM MINUTES FOR PARENT VOICE MEETING**  
**Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

**PRESENT:**

**Staff:**

Dr Smith Associate Executive Principal  
Mrs Gill Associate Assistant Principal  
Mrs Allport SEND Director  
Mrs Longmore Assistant Principal  
Mrs Parkin Learning Manager  
Mr Sim Vice Principal

**Parent/Carer**

Pip Otter  
Shirley Gibson  
Deborah White  
Melanie Oldshaw  
Mrs Dixon  
Gail Whittaker  
Maria

**Introductions:**

Introductions were made; welcome, housekeeping and refreshment announcements were made by Mrs Parkin.

**Minutes and matters arising:**

Copies of previous minutes were handed out.

Mr Sim reported that the issue in Science (OAP) had now been sorted.

Mrs Gill stated that this would be the last joint Parent Voice meeting. In future Portland and Valley would have separate meetings but parents would still be welcome at either event. Future dates will be published when known.

**Attendance**

Mrs Gill commented on the recent national events regarding term time holidays. She stated that Outwood will continue to follow current procedures and request the LA to issue fines for holidays taken in term time. However, the LA will put these requests on hold until the policy and procedure is finalised; a letter will follow once arrangements are known.

**Celebrations and Events**

Mrs Longmore reported on OAV's recent success at Rock Challenge. Having previously won the competition OAV are now in the Premier Division which is the top 11 schools in the country (including specialist drama schools) and will go to Grimsby on 2<sup>nd</sup> July to perform. They recently performed a showcase at Magna in April with a stunning performance which they hope to showcase in school. Mrs Gill commented that some parents had asked why OAP didn't take part and she explained that OAP have a different focus; they put on other productions and have an excellent orchestra.

Mrs Parkin also reported on recent success for the KS4 badminton team and athletics team.

Mrs Longmore detailed transition arrangements which include:

- A 5 week transition programme for 65 vulnerable students.
- A 3 day transition event for all students joining Valley in September 2016.
- A parents evening for Year 6 parents.
- Summer school.
- Open mornings for everyone.
- A year 4/5 open day.

Other upcoming events include:

- Year 11 Prom on 6<sup>th</sup> July at Aston Hall.
- Year 11 Prom Breakfast on 7<sup>th</sup> July.
- Alton Towers trip on 25<sup>th</sup> July for all students with 100% attendance.
- Year 8 graduation from KS3 to KS4 on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> July.
- Sports day will take place on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

Mrs Gill confirmed that all these events would also be taking place at OAP (different dates/times).

Parent asked for confirmation if authorised sickness absence affects 100% attendance. Mrs Gill confirmed that it did. Mrs Gill also mentioned that 5 Year 11 students have had 100% attendance throughout their time at OAV – a remarkable achievement.

Parent enquired about attendance at Post 16 and Mrs Gill offered to check.

### **Any Other Business**

Parent asked when students would find out who was going on the Holocaust trip - OAV would find out and report back.

Parent asked about trips for Post 16 students. Staff in attendance were aware of a Year 12/13 Business Studies trip to New York and another Physics trip but would ask Mrs Shea (Head of Post 16) for more information.

Parent queried Praising Stars reports system; reporting on targets, current performance and effort grades doesn't always highlight areas of concern and is sometimes received too late to act on. Dr Smith explained that half termly Praising Stars reports have replaced once yearly reports so is much improved. All parents are welcome to attend parents' evenings and in between can contact Learning Managers for appointments.

Parent queried if information on current subject topics could be sent home or published on the school website so that parents can assist children with homework and learning. Parent asked if homework information could also be published as students don't always tell parents; Mrs Gill explained that homework should be written in students' planners.

Parent complained that they had contacted school for information and Learning Managers had requested information from teachers but it hadn't been forthcoming, the parent hadn't been to parents' evening as they had been told it was full and was only for invited students. Parent complained that some staff weren't available on Parents Evening. Mr Smith explained that some staff were also at Post 16 Parents Evening but that SLT are always on hand to ensure that parents get to see someone. Dr Smith reiterated that parents' evenings are open for all parents and will ensure that communication of that fact is improved. Parent had suggested an electronic booking system for Parents Evenings, Dr Smith explained that there was a worry of deliberate misuse of such systems but Mrs Gill said that she would get the IT department to investigate.

Parent complained that they had difficulty getting through to school and when they did they got answer machines. Mrs Gill explained that the phone system had been amended to ensure that phone calls are filtered through to other extensions when reception was busy, Mrs Parkin explained that Learning Managers listen to all messages left on their answer machines at the end of the day and she ensures hers are all answered before she leaves for the day. Dr Smith explained that teachers, SLT and Learning Managers are working with students during the day and don't return to their offices until after 3.30pm. Mr Smith reminded that students' planners can also be used as a method of communication.

Parent queried using different methods for algebraic equations; student had been told they must use the academy method even though they got the same answer. Dr Smith explained that teachers teach different methods to find one that works and some methods may not work on higher level problems.

Parent queried the use of supply teachers. Dr Smith explained that OAV have 1500 students and 70 teachers. Supply teachers have to be employed to cover absence but if supply staff don't meet academy standards they are

sent away; reputable supply agencies are used and they carry out checks on all staff. Parent queried if supply staff use the consequence system, as behaviour isn't as good and students know they don't have to behave and work the same. Dr Smith explained that supply staff do not use the consequence system as they may not have had the necessary training; they use a lifebelt system where they press a button on their computer and SLT respond. Mrs Gill commented that details of lessons with supply staff are published daily so SLT and Learning Managers know which lessons to visit to ensure they are up to standard. Parent commented that supply staff seems to be an issue in all subjects. Dr Smith explained that when staff leave they have to give a term's notice and then the academy needs to recruit a replacement, for example we have 3 new scientists starting in September but need supply staff to cover until then.

Parent queried mistakes in the consequence system and the wrongful issue of isolation for non-attendance at detentions. Dr Smith explained that registers are taken in detentions and cameras are used to confirm attendance if it is queried. Parent explained that they had queried isolation and that it was found to be incorrect and had been cancelled but was concerned that if others didn't query it a day could be spent in isolation in error. Mrs Longmore explained that if consequences system hadn't been followed correctly it would be cancelled and that students and/or parents do query sanctions.

Parent queried the issue of safety warnings by text stating that students have been made aware when they hadn't. Dr Smith explained that we get an alert and then send a message to staff asking them to inform students in addition to a text to parents, this is a very difficult issue as we need to ensure that the warning is given without scaring students. Police are not happy with us texting parents as it can create 'mob mentality' or could even act as a warning to the alleged perpetrator. Parents complained that text says students have been notified when they hadn't. Mrs Parkin thought that this instance related to a situation which was diffused after the parent text had been sent. Parent requested that a second text should have been sent to confirm this. Dr Smith confirmed that this should have been done.

Dr Smith thanked parents for their attendance, and for voicing their concerns; their comments were very helpful. Parents thanked the school and commented that they thought it was a wonderful school.

Mrs Parkin closed the meeting and said that dates of the next Parent Voice meeting would be published on the school website.