



## Parent Forum 22nd January 2024

### 1. Reports

Parents were invited in groups to discuss the strength and weaknesses of our school reporting format, by comparing it to report formats from other schools.

You said	We did
Presentation is too busy, making it hard to see the key information quickly	<i>We are in the process of further developing our reports to take into account the views of our parents.</i>
Confusingly, numerical grading runs the opposite way to GCSE grades. At GCSE, a higher number is better (1-9) but in the reports a lower number is better (1-4).	<i>The 'assessment' expert group is researching the best way to report on attainment as this needs to be clearly thought through so that it motivates and encourages all students.</i>
A form tutor comment would make the report more personalised to the individual child.	<i>We will be changing the numerical grading as parents suggested and this will be communicated home and altered for September 2024.</i>
The colours are confusing as there are different scales for the NGRT tests and the progress descriptors.	<i>We will look into ways form tutor comments can be shared. Pastoral comments on reports are not as common as in previous years due to the impact on workload. Instead, we are thinking of ways to have increased parent events through a parent calendar for 2024-25 and greater opportunities for face-to-face meetings with staff.</i>
It is unclear whereabouts in the progress descriptor their child is. Could be below average but very close to expected.	
It is unclear what their child's attainment is, in relation to the nationally expected standard.	

### 2. Reading

Ms Paradine gave a presentation on the school reading strategy. Parents were invited to give feedback and suggestions.

You said	We did
Lists of common prefixes and suffixes (with their meanings) would help parents reinforce the school's approach.	These will be added to the website before the Easter holiday to support home learning.
Parents would like to be given our 3 questions (what does it mean? how do you know? where is your mind going?) so they can reinforce our vocabulary strategy at home.	The three questions will also be added to our website before the Easter holiday. The questions and the prefixes and suffixes will be found by following the reading tab on our website. <a href="https://www.westhoughton-high.org/reading/">https://www.westhoughton-high.org/reading/</a>



### ***3. Managing Challenging Situations in School: Snow***

The Head explained the need for balanced judgements that reflect the needs of children, their education, student travel and staff travel.

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
The 7am message delaying the start of school was timely and allowed parents rushing out to work to receive it and act.	We will continue to make decisions early and get messages out around 7am.
One parent reported that their child got a late mark, having been delayed by snow.	The late mark does legally have to stand, but no sanction has been (or would be) issued in these circumstances.

### ***3. Managing Challenging Situations in School: First Aid***

The Head outlined the difficulties staff face, when some students contact home by phone to say they feel ill, and that First Aid are 'ignoring' them. This naturally distresses parents, who can be reassured that staff are caring and well-trained. However, our First Aid service is just that, not a replacement doctors surgery for ongoing ailments.

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
Parents are supportive of our approach in First Aid, encouraging students to stay in school if they possibly can. After all, parents have also decided they are well enough to send them to school.	First Aid staff will encourage students to stay in school as long as possible, particularly if attendance is poor. They always contact home promptly when needed.

### ***3. Managing Challenging Situations in School: Vaping***

The Head outlined the difficulties posed by a national trend towards young people vaping. They are vaping commercially available liquids, disposable vapes and vape liquid supplied by acquaintances, where the content is unknown. We have even encountered situations with students before school vaping on the park, and arriving at school intoxicated and needing medical care.

<b>You said</b>	<b>We did</b>
Most parents in the room would welcome a letter home outline in the vape concerns and raising awareness of how naive students are about what is in vape liquid.	Mr Coe has written to parents in March 2024, and has used social media and the local press, to raise awareness of the issue.

Please email [whsoffice@westhoughton-high.org](mailto:whsoffice@westhoughton-high.org) to suggest items for future agendas.