



St. Olave's Grammar School Parents' Association Form Reps Meeting

**Spring Term - Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 07.00PM – Room 10**

## 1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

Welcome all Form Reps to the second Form Reps meeting for this academic year and welcome back seasoned Form Reps and Mr Budds as we go through another year and post-pandemic. Thank you to all who have taken the time to submit their questions within the requested timeframe.

**Attendees** - Mr David Budds (**Deputy Headteacher**), Neetu Gautam (**7B**), Supriya Shetty (**7B**), Spuritha Moksha (**7C**), Rama Gandham (**7H**), Ritu Agarwal (**7L**), Seema Singh (**8C**), Tara Rao (**8H**), David Ducat (**8L**), Chandrika Ravichandran (**10J**), Fatima Zahra (**10L**), Amina Sajid (**10M**), Cherry Walker (**12O**), Sabrina Fitzpatrick (**12S**), Rachael Peek (**12W**).

**Apologies** – Violet Pierce (**7C**), Shahida Mamanji (**7L**), Claire Marshall (**8B**), Elizabeth Garnham-Jong (**8B and 12R**), Susi Rushton (**8B**), Alyosha (**8C**), Aparna Gupta (**8H**), Tharini Janu (**8L**), Keerthi Devarakonda (**9M**), Kalpana Tanna (**9N**), Jean-Baptiste Jugand (**10K**), Ping (**10L**), Zey Kagan (**10N and 12T**), Sangeeta Mead (**11J**), Victoria Cattermole (**11J**), Arunima Saha (**11L**), Asma Meer (**11M**), Joanna Riolo (**12V**), Mark McBennett (**12W**), Patrice Adams (**12Y**), Charlotte Rutter (**13O**), Marianne Nealon (**13P**), Gifty Nortey (**13Q**).

**Forms that need Form Rep: 11H, 11K, 11N, 12X, 13R, 13S, 13T, 13V, 13W, 13X, 13Y**

## 2 Questions for the school

### 2.1 IPM

**2.1.1 Year 7L** - Why are the boys being given so many IPMs to prepare for, with short notice?

The school asks teaching staff that a week's notice should be provided. Smaller tests like Vocabulary Tests, may be set at shorter notice.

In order to understand the context and look into the specifics of a particular IPM being given to the boys with short notice:

#### Action-

1. Ritu (7L) to provide required details in context to Mr Budds
2. Mr Budds to look into it upon receiving details

**2.1.2 Year 7L** - In addition to IPMs, why are the boys not given the answers and scores for many of the IPMs?

A bit of clarification was needed because the query received for Agenda stated "why are the boys not given answers and scores for many of the IPMs" whereas during the meeting, the query turned out to be "why are the boys not given the questions for many IPMs". Answers and scores should always be given in order to support pupil progress. Question papers are not always kept by pupils after an IPM for security reasons in some subjects.

Ritu (7L) queried about average challenge grades for Year 7; Mr Budds advised that all challenge grades will be aspirational but there may be variations based on individual scenarios.

#### Action-

1. Ritu (7L) to provide required details in context to Mr Budds



2. Mr Budds to reinforce with colleagues that answers should always be shared after IPMs to ensure pupils' access to fullest range of marks

**2.1.3 Year 7L** - How many IPMs take place each term?

**Repeat question from last Agenda** – please read the text below extracted from **Section 2.15 in the minutes of Form Reps Autumn Term Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**

**Year 7 - How often does each subject have an IPM and is there a timetable for them?**

Details of the IPM Scheme are available on school website under [Teaching & Learning - Policies - St. Olave's Grammar School \(saintolaves.net\)](#). There is no published timetable available for IPMs.

Mr Budds advised that the school was currently exploring reforms to the IPM system and Key Stage 3 challenge grades.

## **2.2 ONLINE CLASS and PARENTS EVENING BOOKING**

**2.2.1 Year 8L** - Will the school consider streaming all lessons in Teams so that those children who are unable to be in school for one reason or the other can join in with the lessons. I understand that some grammar schools have that option available?

It is an option that the school has deployed in the past but is not planning to pursue at the moment. The school will continue to teach those attending lessons in person and setting work for those who are unable to attend owing to isolation. Blended learning may work to an extent but the current approach is aiming towards fewer students being absent from lessons and more students being able to attend and access the lessons in person.

Teachers have the option to run simultaneous teaching in class and on Teams but this type of blended learning approach creates challenges for the teachers delivering the lesson, and the school remains very much aware of the enhanced workload challenges faced by teachers since the start of the pandemic.

**2.2.2 Year 8L** - The current system for booking parents evening slots with teachers works on the basis of students booking face to face with teachers when they have their lessons. Some teachers also say they do not want messages from pupils and prefer to only book in person. Could there not be a better system of requesting slots electronically and the teachers can prioritise who they should speak to rather than on a first come first served basis as it is now?

The school trialled an electronic system of booking slots last year. Since we are back in school in terms of usual learning, interaction and communication, the school is reverting to the hard copy practice for bookings in which staff have a booking sheet and pupils discuss available slots directly with staff and take a note of their timetable for the evening in their planners.

Under this system the teachers can readily prioritise whom they would like to speak to (rather than first-come-first served basis) depending on the priority, need and context. Where parents are unable to book a slot and request feedback, they can contact staff who can send an email or make a phone call if need be in order to offer feedback.

In most cases the teachers shouldn't run out of slots considering a KS3 teacher would be teaching 32 students per class on an average (and with 33 available slots on a given evening); the exception would be where the teacher taught more than one class in a given year group in which case they would prioritise the booking of appointments on the basis of need.



Upon concern raised about the gap between the slots, it was advised that the current approach for booking slots is to inculcate independence amongst students, while they manage the scheduling of slots productively and effectively using their planner.

Teachers can and often do request slots of pupils who do not approach them to make an appointment (i.e. if they are concerned that a student whose parents they would wish to speak with is not booking an appointment).

It was pointed out that the Parents Evening for Y10 was conducted remotely which gives more flexibility. Mr Budds advised that the school had adopted a hybrid approach to remote/in-person parents' evenings this year (for instance, the parents of Y7 and Y12 are new to the school and would not have met the teachers at all or the parents of Y8 who would like to discuss GCSE options. Based on this rationale, Parents Evening for Y7, Y8 and Y12 were conducted in person at school this year, with other year groups' Parents' Evenings taking place remotely.

Upon concern raised by Ritu (7L) about no slots in Y7 for Computing for Parents Evening -

**Action:**

1. Ritu to provide requested details to Mr Budds
2. Mr Budds to look into it upon receiving the information

Mr Budds has raised with the teachers concerned and with the Head of Department and Head of Faculty. One teacher teaches one Y7 form Computing and had not yet opened up for appointments with his class. This has now happened. The other teacher teaches one Y7 Maths class and the remaining three Y7 Computing classes. His available slots are therefore very limited and most have gone to his Maths class rather than his Computing classes. He has shared relevant comments where he felt them necessary with the relevant Y7 Maths teacher for these Computing classes. Whilst this staffing allocation was a necessary one for this year and has driven this particular issue, the allocation of teachers to Year 7 classes will be reviewed for the coming academic year.

## 2.3 YEAR 11

- 2.3.1** After having completed the 6<sup>th</sup> form application form, can we assume that each student's choice of A levels will be available in September (as long as entrance criteria are met)?

As relates to Olavians currently in Year 11, yes.

The Sixth Form timetable will be built around the academic aspirations of internal Olavian Year 11 students indicated by their choice of subjects. It will be further informed by anticipated uptake in each subject as relates to the external cohort (i.e. those who join the school in Year 12).

- 2.3.2** Is there an assembly or ceremony to present GCSE certificates, is there a date for this yet, and who will be invited?

St Olave's doesn't formally present GCSE certificates to all students during an assembly or a ceremony. However, the schools Senior Prize Giving evening runs (usually on the Wednesday of 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of September) every year. During this event, prizes for outstanding achievements at GCSE are awarded to a large number of students for formal recognition of their performance. This date is in the school calendar. Later on, in the Autumn term, the physical certificates are collected by the students from the Exams Office.



### 2.3.3 After GCSEs, are there any trips or activities planned for the current Y11?

No trips are planned. Students of Y11 are encouraged to engage in work experience and any bridging work set by departments for Sixth Form subjects. There is also a Sixth Form Introduction Day in which the emphasis would be on activities like presentations, taster lessons and Sixth Form guidance to enable the students to prepare for A-Level study at St Olave's. This would take place after GCSE exams are completed (likely Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June/7<sup>th</sup> July, but still tbc this year – details will be circulated to Y11 pupils and parents when available).

## 2.4 YEAR 12

### 2.4.1 Why have year 12 not had Mock exams this term, as they have in previous years? In the absence of proper GCSEs last year, exam practice and technique is key in their preparation.

Year 12 will have a mock exam for their AS-Level subject on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March. The actual AS-Level examination for the “fourth subject” will take place later on in May or very early June (it will vary from subject to subject and details will be shared with student by the Exams Office). For the three subjects which students are taking through to A-Level study in Year 13, internal examinations will take place in the fortnight after the summer half term break, once the AS-Level exams have finished. Precise details will be shared with Y12 pupils and parents in due course.

After the internal Year 12 exams (which, along with classwork and homework throughout the year, are a key piece of evidence for determining UCAS grades), the Y12 students have an off-timetable UCAS Day (potentially Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June this year – date tbc shortly). This day prepares students to commence work on the university application process.

A query was raised whether St. Olave's uses external or internal papers for the AS-Level mock examination. Mr Budds advised that due to various factors (i.e. security, possibility of leaking of papers in the public domain), the departments often produce their own papers, but some will use secure material from prior year's public examinations whether in whole or in part. For the internal end of year exam papers, the papers will be produced by the school, albeit some questions may come from past papers.

St Olave's agrees that the exam practice and techniques play a key role in pupils' preparation for public examinations (GCSE and A-Level), especially physical preparation like sitting for an exam without a mobile or a watch, adhering to a formal dress code, clear pencil case with the required stationery items, reaching the examination venue on time following the correct procedure and drill etc. Being familiar with these important routines helps to instil a sense of discipline and personal responsibility within the exam cohorts.

## 2.5 PE/GAMES LESSONS

### 2.5.1 Year 7L - Many of the boys in Year 7 enjoy playing basketball and there is quite a bit of interest in having a club for this which the school does not have. What can be done to create a club or a team for this?

Mr Budds have been advised by Mr Kenwood (Director of Sport) that there is a basketball club specifically for Y7 (Monday lunchtime). The details of this club are regularly advertised on the screens within the school. No team has been created currently as we do not have the staffing capacity to run an additional Y7 team above and beyond the main sports which the school runs. A query was raised if Y7 basketball club is supervised by teachers or prefects. Another query was raised if a basketball club is being run for Y8 too.



#### **Action:**

1. Mr Budds to find details on the level of supervision for Y7 basketball team
2. Mr Budds to find out if there is a basketball club for Y8

Mr Kenward has confirmed that a Y8 basketball club runs on Tuesday lunchtime. Both the Y7 and Y8 basketball clubs are run primarily by Sixth Form Sports Prefects, but overseen by staff who work in the Gym and the Sports Hall supervising all lunchtime activities.

## **2.6 HPV Vaccine**

- 2.6.1 Year 8H** - Can you please ask when will the boys be offered the HPV vaccine? The vaccine is routinely recommended for all girls and boys at 11 to 14 years and first dose offered in school year 8 in England.

As per the information from Reception colleagues, HPV has been provided to Y9 and Y10 this week. **Y8 students will receive their first dose of the HPV vaccine on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

## **2.7 Cardiac Risk in the Young – C.R.Y**

- 2.7.1 Year 10L** - A parent asked if there is any plan to have a cardiac screening at school. I remember PA organised it when our boys were year 8 for older boys at school. <https://www.c-r-y.org.uk/> This charity can be invited to do a screening at school, I think. Some countries do this as part of mandatory health checks but UK doesn't do it. Therefore, parents will have to pay. I understand if there is not enough interest at school.

Since this event used to be run by PA, the information was shared by Rachael Peek (12W) highlighting that St. Olave's is on the waiting list and when the slots become available, the organisation would get in touch with St. Olave's PA.

## **3 Any other business**

### **3.1 Bebras Challenge – raised by Neetu Gautam (7B)**

Bebras challenge test was taken by some Y7 pupils in November and February; several pupils expressed a concern to their parents that they were not provided with enough appropriate material to prepare for these competitive challenges. The pattern and type of questions in the actual exam was felt to be very different to the example questions which were provided from the Bebras website as a practice.

All agree that if pupils are participating in a competitive exam they should be provided with appropriate information on how and what material they should use.

#### **Action:**

1. Neetu to provide details requested by Mr Budds to enable follow up
2. Mr Budds to look into the subject upon receiving information

### **3.2 Y10 homework – raised by Fatima Zahra (10L)**

A particular homework was set at 10pm to be handed in the next day. Mr Budds confirmed that all homeworks should be set orally in actual lessons so that pupils can record them in their planners and that all staff are aware of this requirement. This recognises the fact that pupils may not necessarily be able to check on Teams outside of school hours. If teachers wish to confirm the HW set in class via Teams then they may do so, but they are asked to set these at appropriate hours in order to promote a healthy work life balance. Mr Budds has given notices to this effect already in staff briefings this year.



**Action:**

1. Fatima to provide details requested by Mr Budds to enable follow up
2. Mr Budds to look into the subject upon receiving the information

**3.3 Contents of school email for absence due to Covid**

A student was absent due to Covid, then caught Covid again resulting in a long absence from school. The language/content of standard school email for absence was found to be inappropriate by the parent.

**Action:**

1. Mr Budds to discuss the concern around the wording of the letter with the Sixth Form Pastoral Team for their awareness and review. This has been shared with the team who confirm that a separate wording of this letter for COVID-related absence exists. They are checking whether or not the pupil received the correct version of the letter.

**3.4 Bus service from Dartford, Gravesend and Greenhithe area – follow up by Amina Sajid (10M)**

**Action:**

1. **All Form Reps – ASAP** - please post a message in your respective WhatsApp groups/ email list for those parents who would like to discuss and work out a shared travel arrangement like a mini bus or private taxi, based on number of students travelling from the above-mentioned areas to St. Olave's. Please provide Amina's email address ([draminabilal@hotmail.com](mailto:draminabilal@hotmail.com)) for interested parents to discuss the subject.
2. **PA** – to send a Comms to all parents requesting them to contact Amina ([draminabilal@hotmail.com](mailto:draminabilal@hotmail.com)) for the purpose of a shared travel arrangement as mentioned in Action 1.

**3.5 Pastoral Parent Working Party**

**Reminder of the invitation from Mrs Maxwell (Deputy Headteacher, Pastoral)** – Mrs Maxwell would like to set up a small parent working party to review the pastoral provision in school and would be grateful if you have time and the willingness to participate. It will involve a couple of meetings. **If you are interested, please contact Mrs Maxwell on [rmaxwell@saintolaves.net](mailto:rmaxwell@saintolaves.net).** We invest a great deal of time and care to ensure your child is supported and nurtured throughout their time here at St Olave's Grammar School and we hope you have found this update useful.

**Action:**

1. **All Form Reps – Urgent** – please share the message within your WhatsApp groups/ email lists.

**4 Date of next meeting – tbc**

**5 Close – I would like to thank Mr Budds for agreeing to continue attending our Form Reps meeting.**