



Date: Thursday 5th December 2024 | 16:45 – 17:45 (at St Michael's)

Attendees:

F Corcoran (Principal)	J Arda (Assistant Principal)
Krystle Houston (Ariella Y7)	Jennifer Gonzalez (Joshua Y10)
Evelyn Omagbemi (Xavier Y7)	Philipp Couto-Thiessen (Marlene Y7)
Yinka Olaitan (Olusola Y7)	Wendy Abrams (Henry Y9)
Angela McShane (Susan Y7)	Bryan Hartlin (Sebastian Y7)
Vincent Ojeh (Evans Y10)	Vikki Gray (Thia Y8)
Samantha James (Elisabeth Y7)	Giulia Mastroianni (Gaia Y8)
Martha & Fernando Pabon (Joshua Y10 and Ariella Y12)	

Apologies: Benedicte Gercke (Lilly Y9), Francisco Loueiro (Madalena Y7), Donna Springle (Donella Y10), Edubor Nosa.

A reminder that the Parent Focus Group looks at matters arising that are College wide. Any individual issues related to a child should be addressed via their Leader of Learning.

1. Minutes and matters arising

- Thank you to volunteers for the September Open Day/Evening events spoke to prospective parents. St Michael's having our parents involved which is unique compared to other schools.
- The college is taking steps to train colleagues on the use of AI by upgrading the Assembly Hall. It is an example of the developments in joining a Trust and an audit of our staff is underway with a view to January training.
- A Parent's Guide to Reports video was shared with the end of year reports as well as learning resources.
- The website is being constantly updated with relevant learning content from our staff. This is an ongoing process as these documents are being updated. Recommendations for reading lists have been updated for the sixth form as available from [here](#).
- Ms Cumber is responsible for the Reading for Pleasure initiative, which focuses on promoting reading as an enrichment activity across the whole school. She will organise and promote school-wide reading events and a ['Reading for Pleasure' portal](#). The college has an existing library that she is looking to develop with links to external libraries. She is looking to introduce some elements to involve parents in future.

2. Updates from the Principal

- Ms Corcoran shared a summary of events at the college. Results at GCSE and A' level are strong along with CTEC results.
- Autumn term for the school is busy – open evening events and students settle into routines. The college has made a positive start given time after the pandemic.
- For Year 7, there have been over 600 applications for 155 places. 110 places are available in the sixth form with over 600 visitors for the sixth form open evening. The college is oversubscribed and thriving despite falling rolls/numbers of children in Southwark.
- Joining St Benedict's in April 2024. The rationale for the Trust is to share practice and expertise across schools. Bonus Pastor, our partner school. St Matthew's in Blackheath] and St Paul's in Greenwich are joining as secondary schools. Geography, MFL and History heads of department are sharing practice across the schools while Ms Corcoran is working across schools and supporting the new Principal at Bonus Pastor.
- In the Jubilee Year for the church and via our Chaplaincy teams, across the Trust Catholic Life will be celebrated.
- With more schools coming on board, the funding opportunities are increased with a larger Trust and maintaining Catholic education.



- The college is fully staffed with subject specialists and continues to recruit high quality staff. Trust-wide opportunities provide pathways to retain teachers. 'Every lesson counts' is the focus for this academic year – with an emphasis on 'Not new but better' as teachers research their subject and improve their delivery.
- Our pastoral offer includes our Leaders of Learning, Chaplaincy team. Sixth formers lead the chaplaincy work, diversity and inclusion ambassadors, sports leaders. The pastoral offer helps students to have a sense of belonging and chances to be leaders.
- Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health Education (CPSHE) – music, videos and artwork from Africa has been a focus. CPSHE is carefully planned with specific topics such as South American history as well as wider topics such as rule of law and online safety.
- The Chaplaincy team replaced the Faith in Action programme to credit students more e.g. with a Young Salesian award and events are being fundraised. Hampers for pensioners and fundraising events are important to the Catholic life of the school. A form group Mass on Fridays is well established along with Christmas services at Dockhead. Charity work is inspired by the students with donations to the Southwark food banks linked with the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.
- The college still is waiting for Ofsted inspection and is preparing accordingly.
- Visitors have come from South Korea. Salesian friends from Florence with a reciprocal trip planned. A Japanese professor and Dutch colleagues have visited with enthusiastic students leading our tours.
- A key aspect of the behaviour policy is a focus upon the attendance policy. There are compliance matters that the college must enforce where attendance dips while celebrating regular attenders. Children with an ongoing attendance issue such as a medical need have procedures which are taken into consideration.
- For students with Special Educational Needs (SEND), the college is struggling with provision. Years ago, there were 14 students with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP). The college now has 35 students with EHCPs. For 2025-26, there were 39 applications with EHCPs with each one being reviewed carefully. 100% of students with EHCPs were retained by the college.
- Other matters such as housing issues and funding are where the college has intervened in the interests of supporting families.
- Phone policies have been effective. There has been a considerable reduction in incidents that previously led to hours of workload for staff to manage incidents. While fewer significant events have still occurred online, this is far less compared to previous years. No smartphones as a policy has been supported by virtually all parents. Collective action with a group of schools has strengthened the message of students keeping phones out of sight. Parents have requested more information and have been supported with their children. A letter has gone home about safety in the area clarifying that phones should not be out in public to reduce opportunistic thefts.
- Question about the use of the phone for access from Google Classroom to print work out – instead the homework club is available at 7.30-8.30am and 3.30-4.30pm.
- Question about £740m capital enhancement in terms for SEND and if this could contribute into housing. Social housing for families has significantly reduced in Southwark and the college continues to support families to gain better provision.
- The college has limitations to space and funding is challenging to provide for SEND students. The money for a student with an EHCP does not fund half of a teaching assistant's salary.
- While challenging some external decisions, the Southwark headteachers work very strongly together with the same vision of ensuring the best for students.

3. Parent information follow up

- Events and information for parents in 2024-25 have been added to the [college calendar link](#). Suggestion that parents value get a balance with the communication to manage the volume of messages.



- **Action:** Parents to receive a periodic reminder on EduLink with updates to the college calendar.
- From a parent survey before the holidays – videos were most popular as a choice compared to workshops as they could reach more parents.
- The first 'A Parent's Guide to' reports video was shared from a parent's perspective. About half of parents attending have seen the videos (though we have Year 7 new parents who have just joined) and said it was clear and helpful to read the reports.
- **Action:** Resending the video for 'A Parent's Guide' to student reports when students receive their results in January.
- Further videos are in development such helping parents to have clarity about the college behaviour system. This includes the Alternative Provision Base (APB) – one of the largest spaces in the college with large windows, which is used as a timeout for students who need to be withdrawn from mainstream lessons. They maintain their learning with work provided including 'live' lessons that allow a student to listen to the class teacher.
- The college has had a significant reduction in exclusions in which the APB plays an important role.
- Curriculum evenings are recorded at the beginning of the year. These are accessible with slides sent out as well as the recording.
- The student notices are very positively received and illustrates the extensive enrichment provision for pupils.
- **Action:** Notices to be put on Instagram to further publicise student events.

4. Friends of St Michael's (FOSM) & bids for funding

- The group has raised £1019.57 (which needs to be spent!) and there is now a process in place for staff to bid for funding to support small-scale projects in the school.
- Parents raised money for a Faith in Action event on 8th July. £150 was raised for Mariana who in China working with underprivileged children.
- The group has examined banking arrangements with difficulty as fees reduce the profitability of the group. Alternatives are still being sought.
- Parents considered bids from the following projects submitted by staff and students as presented by Mr Arda. A link to the bids is [here](#).
 - i) Battersea Spanish trip for Year 9 students £265
 - ii) F1 in Schools Club £2505.80 target with £140 for specified items
 - iii) Gardening project for students £100
 - iv) Funding towards Year Group Reading Boxes £700
 - v) Support towards a school gym £500
- The above requires up to £4070.80. £1019.57 is the amount fundraised by Friends of St Michael's to date.
- **Action:** Mr Arda to send the presentation to parents to decide upon projects to fund.
- **Action:** Friends of St Michael's to decide on which projects they would like to fund and a matrix of how they would like to assign funding.
- Upcoming event – Pantomime on Wednesday 18th December. Event opens at 4.30pm and refreshments are sold within a 45 mins window as the event has no interval, which helps premises staff to finish on time.

Minutes to be sent via EduLink