

18th October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Parent Forum – 14th October 2024 - You said...We did

We held our latest Parent Forum this week on Monday evening. It was the largest turnout we have ever had, and I was very grateful for the time that parents gave and for the questions that they asked. I have included many of the questions that were asked during the evening and some initial responses. You can find a full list of parent forum meetings along with copies of slides on this link: <https://www.elycollege.com/page/?title=Parent+Forum&pid=351>

Can you explain the rationale behind not enabling Year 11 to have study leave at mocks and final exams?	We have always encouraged the students to remain with us as long as possible into the final exams. We can effectively use the time to support with revision and wellbeing and if students have a lesson which they have already completed exams for, we can use this time to support revision activities.
Younger children are not encouraged to wear seatbelts on the school buses – can you please support parents in making sure this happens?	I have raised this with the relevant bus company and asked them to remind students to wear them. I have also flagged this with the Local Authority so that they are aware when they run their spot-checks.
Can you clarify what is the expectation for Year 7 homework – it has seemed to be very sporadic so far this term.	Homework for Year 7 has always been a ‘gentle’ approach for the first half term – this half term we have had considerable disruption with the move to Bromcom, the resulting disruption to Teams, the deactivation of Edulink and the resetting of all passwords. After October half term Year 7 will have homework on: Sparx Maths, Sparx Reader and languages. We will gradually add to this over the year.
Can you provide some overview of all the different Apps the students are expected to use for homework?	We have created a new page on the website called: Online resources to support learning This has instructions on how to log in and some pointers on how to use the Apps effectively.
Occasionally the tone of letters emphasises the negative, use of behaviour points. Can you consider this tone in future letters and how do we find out how you promote House points and celebration?	We will ensure that the tone of letters reflects the correct balance of positive versus behaviour related themes. We have created a rewards section on our website to set out the range of rewards that students can achieve during their time in the college. This page can be found at the following location: https://www.elycollege.com/page/?title=Rewards&pid=376
Food technology – providing ingredients for one child often involves small amounts which are difficult to transport –	We are looking into this, but it is proving to be quite complex and will take some time. We need to forecast what a reasonable charge for parents would be to avoid overcharging, we need to consider what happens when parents are unable or unwilling to pay. Since COVID, we have moved to being a cashless Trust so anything we do will need to be set up in advance

could parents pay a set cost for the term ahead and the college buy ingredients in bulk?	<p>on WisePay and then we will have need a plan for students who have been absent from food lessons for a period of time for any reason and would these parents be reimbursed.</p> <p>We will continue to review this and seek guidance from other schools in the Trust on this or a suitable method.</p>
Can staff show more awareness of students using a staff or disabled toilet – it might be the closest one and they have a disability which means they need to use it.	<p>We are sorry if any child has been challenged for using a staff or disabled toilet with genuine reason. We understand that if that toilet is the closest to the classroom and a child has a medical need that this use is completely permitted. We will encourage staff to be curious and confirm correct use rather than challenge a student for using these facilities.</p>
We have had issues in contacting the House office, the SSA on the website is incorrect and calls are not always answered.	<p>You may be aware that we carried out a review of our communications procedures last year. With the move to Bromcom well underway we will be releasing details of changes in how we communicate with parents after half term. We have been looking for the benefits and time saving measures of Bromcom to finalise our plans.</p> <p>This move to Bromcom has also caused disruption to the House offices as these staff are the main points of contact for parents and therefore need detailed training on the new system – this has resulted in House staff being unavailable during parts of the day. We are confident that this will improve greatly after the half term.</p>
Active learning for languages – doesn't support the use of accents on the keyboard.	<p>We have investigated this and there should be a pop-up box that enables students to type in special characters. If this is not possible students have been encouraged to leave a comment in the feedback box and the end of each task.</p>
Tassomai science tasks in Year 7/8. Students are seeing tasks and questions that have not covered yet – this can be demotivational. Can this be corrected?	<p>We have reviewed the setting of Tassomai tasks and trimmed down the content so that students should only see the topics that they are working on that year. It will mean, particularly at the start of the year, that students might see some content that they have not been taught yet as students would quickly complete all the questions on one topic very quickly – but this should ease off as we move through the term.</p>
Year 10 Iceland trip – huge shame that this is not going ahead due to costs. Is there any chance of a similar visit instead?	<p>We were very disappointed to not be able to run this trip due to escalating costs. However, we are reviewing the options for a similar trip to be run in early 2026 which would be accessible for students in the current Year 10. We will update parents when the relevant travel operators release their trip offer for that year.</p>

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours faithfully



Simon Warburton

Principal