**Mount Lourdes Grammar School**

**Student Council Bulletin – January 2016**

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This is the January bulletin produced by the Student Council Bulletin Committee. At the last Student Council meeting in December 2015 the following areas were addressed and discussed with the help of Mrs Cullen and Mrs McKeever.

* Water Vending Machine
* Microwave in Canteen
* School Uniform
* Careers Information
* School Clubs

**Water Vending Machine**

The first area for discussion that was brought up by the Year 8 representatives (Aoife Keaney and Chantelle Boyd) was the possibility of installing a water vending machine. At the meeting Aoife and Chantelle pointed out that junior student’s do not have access to bottled water throughout the school day. They felt that bottled water was a better quality than the fountain water. They also pointed out that water helps with concentration and that it would encourage the consumption of more water and less fizzy drinks. Mrs McKeever agreed that these were valid arguments and suggested that the students contact Mrs Colton the school administrator to discuss the installation of the machine.

On 15th January 2016 Aoife and Chantelle, along with Mrs Cullen held a meeting with Mrs Colton. They discussed the reasons for having the machine, costs and location. Aoife and Chantelle also carried out an audit of Key Stage 3 students about their opinions for a water vending machine and presented this to Mrs Colton. The audit indicated that the majority of students would use the machine and felt it would mean they would take less fizzy drinks. Mrs Colton contacted a number of suppliers and in February the water vending machine was installed along the Modern Languages corridor – outside the Sick Bay.

**Microwave in Canteen**

Another area discussed at the student council meeting was the possibility of having access to a microwave in the school canteen. This issue was raised by Year 9 representatives Lauren Jones and Anisa Akram. It was felt that a microwave would be useful for heating rolls, melting cheese or heating scones at lunchtime. Mrs McKeever explained that there had been a microwave previously in the canteen and suggested that Lauren and Anisa arrange a meeting with the canteen manager to discuss whether it could be reinstated.

Lauren, Anisa and Mrs Cullen held a meeting with the Canteen Manager on 13th January 2016. They requested a microwave in the canteen for students to heat food purchased in the canteen. Mrs Mc Pike (Canteen Manager) explained that there used to be to be a microwave in the canteen but during a recent health and safety audit it had to be taken away. Given the present layout of the canteen there is no location near an electric socket where the microwave could safely be placed. Mrs Cullen said that there are plans for a new canteen and that the students request would be kept in mind during this project.

**School** **Uniform**

Year 10 and Year 12 representatives raised issues relating to the school uniform. Year 10 representatives wanted to know could the Mount Lourdes hoody be worn under the school blazer. Mrs McKeever explained that the hoody was part of the school sports uniform and therefore not part of the school uniform. The hoody is to be worn going and coming from sporting events.

Year 12 representatives sought clarification on whether Year 13 and Year 14 students can wear straight skirts with the uniform. Mrs McKeever clarified that yes in Year 13 and 14 students can wear the straight skirts.

Year 12 representatives also consulted with Mrs McGinnity and Mr Devine (Vice Principals) whether scarfs could be worn during the school day in the cold weather. Following these discussions by Riona McBrien and Maria Guiterrez it was agreed that the school scarf can be worn in school during the cold weather but not during class time. The reason for this is health and safety as the scarf could be a safety hazard particularly during practical classes like science, home economics, technology etc. The student council agreed this was a reasonable argument.

**Careers Information**

Another area discussed at the meeting was additional careers information to assist students making subject / careers choices at transition stages. Suggestions included a specific information session on completing the UCAS application, a Year 12 Careers event and additional information for Year 10 students on GCSE subject choices.

Mrs McKeever commended the representatives on their impressive suggestions and said that a meeting should be arranged with the Head of Careers and the teacher i/c of work experience to discuss these areas further.

On the 19th January 2016 Year 11 and Year 14 representatives from the student council had a meeting with Mrs McCarron, Head of Careers, Mr McGovern, Teacher i/c of work experience, Mrs Cullen and Mrs McKeever.

Year 11 representatives Kiera Monsanto and Holly Lavery felt that students would benefit from more advice when choosing GCSE subjects in Year 10 such as specific course content outlines. Mrs McKeever explained that in addition to the Year 10 subject choices booklet she would arrange for Heads of Departments to plan / outline specific information that would be given via subject teachers prior to GCSE subject choices.

Year 14 representatives reflected on their experience of completing UCAS and CAO applications. In addition to the careers classes, talks and information on Fronter, Mrs McCarron noted that other information sessions would be looked at to support the application process.

Representatives also wondered whether Year 12 students could get more advice about choosing AS subjects – perhaps a careers fair. This was deemed very interesting by all staff present. The idea was discussed further by the School Leadership Team.

A Year 12 Careers Event will take on Friday 18th March. Year 12 student and their parents will have the opportunity to meet Heads of Department and discuss AS / A2 subject choices.

**School Clubs**

Year 13 representatives asked could they set up clubs / societies for younger students. Mrs McKeever commended their initiative and said she would welcome clubs / societies in addition to those that are currently part of the schools extra-curricular programme. Mrs McKeever advised that students should approach relevant teachers and put plans in place to establish their group.