



Date: Wednesday 25th June 2025 | 16:30 – 17:30 (at St Michael's)

Attendees: F Corcoran (Principal) J Arda (Assistant Principal)

Francisco Loureiro (Madalena Y7)

Rochelle Clarke (Roniah Y9)

Yinka Olaitan (Olusola Y7)

Benedicte Gercke (Lilly Y9)

Samantha James (Elisabeth Y8)

Wendy Abrams (Henry Y9)

Giulia Canterini (Gaia Y8)

Apologies: Marta & Fernando Ojeda (Joshua Y10 & Ariella Y12), Silvana (Sophia Y7), Emmanuel (Daniel Yr 7), Bryan Hartlin (Sebastian Y7), Philipp Couto-Thiessen (Marlene Y7)

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

1. Minutes and matters arising

- The meeting started with a presentation to parents with Student Notices. The presentation. Homework and Breakfast club has relocated to
- Ms Corcoran to share updates about smartphone policy for the new Year 7 coming into the school. A brick phone is the only choice. The policy is to roll through from Year 7 into Year 8 then into Year 9 in 2026-27. The college has had a decrease in phone-related incidents in the college. It is subject to review should there be an increase in incidents as to what sanctions should apply. Students in the sixth form have also shown responsibility and parents
- AI update – in response to parent/guardians, a webinar on the subject took place on 24th June 2025. Students took part in. We currently have three members of staff piloting the use of AI. A head of department, teacher and member of the support staff are trialling a Google enhanced licence. The Department for Education are investing significant funds into AI with preferred programs. JCQ (Join Qualifications Council) are looking at AI from an examination perspective. One parent commented ultimately, "AI is coming to stay". GCSE Computer Science had their first online examination. A presentation by five Year 10 students at the Southwark Schools Learning Partnership gained great feedback. Please view it [here](#).

2. Updates from the Principal

- Ofsted – took place on 29th and 30th April. St Michael's were rated Outstanding in all five areas and the college had an experienced inspection team with credible practice to inform their judgements. 32% of schools retained previous Outstanding judgements and St Michael's is now one of these schools. Students had a presentation in tutor groups and were given chocolate to celebrate! Ms Corcoran explained the processes involved and presented images along with the inspection feedback. Catholic Social Teaching and the college's Salesian values underpins school life. All survey responses from students, parents and staff were above average. Outcomes in the sixth form are high. Books are prioritised as tools for students to revise while teachers have high levels of subject knowledge. No incidences of bad behaviour were seen by five inspectors over two days. The inspection was an intense experience which stated no areas for improvement. A small celebration will take place with the staff. Parents were very positive about the outcome.
- Staffing consultation and KS3 curriculum change. A letter went out before Easter to parents who completed the survey. A number of responses were given and all of these were shared with parents and answered for transparency. The staff involved created complexity – in the extent to which the college could share information at certain times to respect their privacy. A generous package was given to these staff including double pay in July



instead of August which enabled them to begin a new post in September. Question about if other departments are affected – Ms Corcoran responded that there is some overstaffing and some colleagues leaving may not be replaced in this case. Staff affected felt supported throughout the process – they were given additional time off from work to apply for posts. Year 11 succession planning is in place for students studying GCSE Design Technology (DT) next year.

- A STEM lesson will be introduced in Key Stage 3 taught by staff from the Computing, Maths and Science departments. Computer aided design is a part of the provision and finishes for a student in Year 9 with accreditation. A Trust Lead Practitioner from St Matthew's Academy will be working with the leader of STEM. Robotics, construction, IT, English and Maths skills with creativity and critical thinking skills are to underpin the course.
- Priorities for 2025-26. St Michael's is now planning for the Catholic inspection (due in 2 years). While suspensions and exclusions are below national averages, "Not new but better" is the focus on academic expectations along with pastoral care and attendance.
- St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust update – 8 schools with others joining in future. Ms Corcoran will work 2 days a week with the Trust. A leadership course delivered by St Mary's with Master's accreditation is to support Catholic Leadership (any colleague who is/is not Catholic can participate).
- Question about what can parents do next to help. Ms Corcoran said that St Michael's has Open Days in September and welcomes parent volunteers at the Open Evening. She also said it would be useful for parents to organise old uniform collections – to not necessarily sell, but for children and families to benefit from outgrown items.
- **Action:** Parents to volunteer for Open Evening – Monday 29th September with time slots of 1-2 hours at 09:30 and 17:00.
- **Action:** In the last week of term – a uniform drive by parents for parents. Any uniform outgrown by students to be collected and shared with those who need it.
- A query about college priorities that could be supported by business or other links. St Michael's is in the top quintile of deprivation. As a result we have had partnerships with firms such as JP Morgan. Assistance in the form of finance to sponsor prizes, awards, bursary payments (for sixth form students) or items in kind such as furniture, bedding for pastoral reasons would help. Given that the STEM department is setting up, laptop trolleys would be very useful. The college can accommodate signage on such items to show where funding has come from.
- **Action:** Parents to communicate any links or financial support to Mr Arda.

3. Friends of St Michael's (FOSM) – update on fundraising projects and the Parentkind initiative

- Jack Petchey project - £200-300 supports the gardening club. The Friends of St Michael's has contributed £140 to the launch of an Alumnus project. St Michael's hosted 30 mentors, who are former students, and 30 mentees with ice cream to get acquainted with a view to a long association with the college. The fundraising has helped with book boxes, gardening clubs, a F1 in Schools competition and the Alumnus scheme.
- Thank you to parents volunteering for the Sports Awards.
- Discussion around fundraising and membership. Although the membership of the group is growing, it needs a committed team in the long term to drive projects forward.
- Complexities exist for getting a card reader for card payments and for longstanding financial arrangements.
- Thoughts led to whether it would be better to suggest one large event to galvanise the parent base. The challenges are tricky given the balance between volunteers' time and financial considerations.
- **Action:** Recommendation for a Gala event located in the summer 2026 as a large fundraising recommendation. Mr Arda to raise with the college.
- **Action:** Parents to volunteer for the Parent Showcase 10th July. Mr Arda will send out the regular email.



St Michael's Catholic College
Bermondsey | Southwark

Parent focus group meeting

Minutes to be sent via EduLink