



Minutes for the 96th Meeting of the Merchant Taylors'
Senior Boys' School Parents' Association
Tuesday 18th September @ 7pm in the Ian Robinson Sports Centre

1. Headmaster opened the meeting and welcomed parents.
2. Apologies for absence noted – Caroline Gladwin and Sui Chan.
3. Mazin Karem (Head Boy) and Henry Scott spoke about the G20 Summit in February which was partly supported by the generous donation from the MTBS Parents Association.
4. Dominic Hodkinson made a presentation about his district leadership of a Cub Scout Group and his selection to present the cup Scouts at the Menin Gate and for a trip to Serbia. Dominic asked the parent Group for a contribution towards the cost of these expeditions. This was agreed at £250.00.
5. Minutes of previous meeting.
Caroline Gladwin advised that following the PA sponsorship at the last meeting for their bike ride, they raised over £4,000 for Pancreatic Cancer Research.
6. Chairman's Report on GCSE and A Level Exam Results
Over this summer our pupils performed very well in their public examinations. 20% of all A level grades were at A*. To put this into perspective, the national average for A* was 8%. Therefore this is a tremendous achievement and is a rich reward for the dedication commitment and attitude of pupils and the staff who guided them. Within this, I am pleased to report that all 7 Oxbridge candidates made their offers, as did those students who received offers for the highly competitive courses in medicine and dentistry. In fact, at A*, A*-A and at A*-B, the pupils performed better than they did the previous year. This at a time when courses have returned to linear format with examinations at the end of 2 years which had provoked concern and consternation for many in the teaching profession as to who students would cope.

At GCSE level we also performed slightly better this year than the previous year. Again this was after what Ofqual has called the most significant change in a generation with new courses and even new exam grading being introduced. Thus GCSE are now nearly all scored from 1-9 with 9 being the highest grade and one that is considered very hard to achieve. I am pleased to say that our pupils received 80 such grades. Our 9-8 grading, the old A* was just over 31%, which our 9-7 was at over 52%. Again putting this figure into a national perspective the average for 9-7 is 20%. Of course there were a number of individual stand out performances and I am pleased to say that we awarded 20 Harrison Scholarships his year – very similar to previous years. These are boys who have achieved 9s and 8s in at least 6 subjects.

All in all then, Merchant Taylors' continue to demonstrate high standards. Indeed at A Level, the Times recorded us the 14th best performed all boys' school in the country. The Telegraph places us at 169th of all schools at A level and 182 at GCSE. Clearly our challenge is to seek to move into the top 150 in forthcoming years.

Of course, as you all know. We are not simply an academic school. The highlight of the summer was for many the Rugby Tour. Forty Senior rugby players and four staff spent twenty-four days visiting Singapore, New Zealand, Fiji and Malaysia. In addition to the rugby training and matches they had a fantastic holiday with tourist highlights including visits to the Petronas Towers, Universal Studios, Wellington Botanical Gardens The Lord of the Rings Tour, Batu caves, an elephant sanctuary and Sunway Lagoon water park.

This term we have seen 2 other new staff join the ranks of our teachers. Oliver Harkness comes to Merchant Taylors as Head of Geography from St Bede's High School in Blackburn. While Olivia Darkes-Sutcliffe joins the History and Politics department on a year's maternity cover for Claire Croxton. Olivia was educated just up the road at the girl's school and knows Merchant Taylors' well.

7. Parents' Association Accounts

Jo Hodgkinson took the meeting through the accounts.

8. Events for the Autumn Term – were discussed as on agenda.

- Year 7 Parents' Social Evening – Wednesday 19th September @ 6.30pm in the Williams Hall
- Open Events – Thursday 11th October 5-7pm/Open Morning – Saturday 13th October 9am- 12noon
- Merchant Taylors' Company Joint Schools Concert – **Sunday 11th November @ 2pm in the Birmingham Symphony Hall**
- Speech Day and Prize giving – **Friday 7th December, 2018** in the Philharmonic Hall. Guest speaker – Mr Mark Bereton.

9. Any Other Business.

- Mobile phone policy – parents supported decision.

- Bursaries – ambition to create more bursaries for more access for boys to MTBS. Idea that anyone who is able can come to the school.
- Hall Road sporting facilities – concern about the state of the facilities. HM spoke about the need for a 10 Year Capital Development programme and a longer term Sports Strategy begin developed. Clearly Hall Road would play a part in both of these.
- College Road gate closed on Year 10 Welcome Evening – HM will request this is open going forward.
- Interviews – HM then explained he wanted to ensure that all boys sitting the entrance exam would be interviewed. Asked if parents could help support pupils throughout those days.

10. Date and time of next meeting – Tuesday 22nd January 2019