



**KING EDWARD VI
LORDSWOOD
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

**Headteacher's Question Time
9.00 a.m. on Friday 22nd March 2024**

In Attendance: Mrs Cooney: Headteacher
Mrs Finucane: Assistant Headteacher – Personal Development
Mrs Clews: Associate Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion
Mrs Allport: PA to Headteacher & SLT (note taker)

Mrs Cooney welcomed the students to the Headteacher's Question Time and the students asked the following questions:-

- 1. What are you doing in the school to be special needs and autism friendly for students to be confident in who they are and be able to receive the support they need to make them comfortable in a school environment?**

Mrs Clews: Within the school environment we have whole school training sessions regarding autism. We look at how to make classrooms more attractive for autistic students and we receive support from external organisations. Earbuds are available to help with noise control and I go onto regular training courses and make sure that the information gained from the courses is shared with my colleagues. There is a sensory area within the hub space and this area is not allowed to get busy. Teaching Assistants are based there and they are trained in Autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Information is sent to parents and a student profile containing relevant details is available for teachers.

Mrs Cooney: Students sit at different points in the spectrum and different support may be required for each student. All ASD students are deemed as able to cope in a mainstream school. If they attend Lordswood School for Girls and a student needs more specialist provision, then they may be given a place at a special school. Therefore, we do everything we can to support students to remain in classrooms as much as we can. For example, our school is decorated and painted in a neutral colour which makes the school a moderated environment for students.

- 2. Is a one day homework allowed and what is a sanction?**

Mrs Cooney: This is allowed if suitable; the information relating to homework is on the school website. All students should be spending time each evening completing their homework. The homework may need to be finished on that day as you may need to do this in preparation for your lesson the next day. If you don't complete the homework, then sanctions will vary dependent upon the teacher. We are currently working on a formal homework policy. Teachers can give you a detention if you have not completed your homework but some teachers may give you a second chance dependent upon the type of homework that you have been given. With Btec course homework we have to be strict regarding deadlines as teachers have to mark this work immediately and students only have 10 days to complete the work. Sometimes teachers can be flexible, but at certain times they cannot and this is when sanctions are given in order to get the work completed. There are a range of sanctions that can be given, teachers can keep you after school at the end of the lesson for 10 minutes without giving prior notice. Also 30 minutes and one hour detentions can be given.

Officially, based on DfE guidance, we are also allowed to give detentions on a Saturday but we do not do this at Lordswood. Other sanctions that can be given are teachers can give you a negative point or put you into reset for the day.

3. Will the school be getting a lift?

Mrs Cooney: I have been working on getting funding approved for the installation of a lift in school for the last three years. A lift will be installed over the summer holidays as it will take over five weeks to be put in place. Plans have been submitted to the local authority to check that we are meeting health & safety requirements. It will be in the space where the north staircase is located. It will be restricted for use by the people who need to use it and they will be provided with a special key fob.

4. What happens when you have to go to isolation?

Mrs Cooney: Your parents will be told before or after you go into isolation depending upon the reason why you are being put into isolation. Sometimes students have built up negative points or lates and therefore it will be a pre-planned isolation and parents will receive a letter to advise them in advance. If it is a planned isolation then you will also be given a detention too. If the reason for isolation is because of your behaviour, isolation might be given on the same day. You will be given work to complete in isolation and you will lose your break time and lunchtime. We will look at the reasons why you have been put into isolation and what caused this to happen, i.e. a number of negatives awarded due to having no pen, and a strategy will be put in place to make sure that you always have the items you need during your school lessons.

5. Why are pearl/white earrings not allowed in the school dress code?

Mrs Cooney: The type of earrings allowed to be worn in school has always been gold or silver studs. If you were allowed to wear small diamonds then these will just get larger and larger so it is about having a line drawn somewhere and this has always been the line drawn in school.

6. Is it possible for there to be before school clubs, e.g. maths club before school?

Mrs Cooney: I would love this to happen but all of the clubs arranged in school are completely voluntary as teachers do not get paid to do these but they like to help and spend time with students. It is the equivalent as if your parent is working overtime and not getting paid for it. We have to be appreciative that teachers are giving up their time for free so we cannot ask them to do this. Most teachers find they can do an after school club more easily than a club before school as most teachers have child care commitments. If a teacher wanted to do this, we couldn't do this before 8.00 am as there has to be a first aider and a DSL on site and some staff do not start work until 8.15 am. The Maths and English departments are working on a year 11 extra-curricular club during registration time and they may start looking at arranging a similar provision for year 10's later on in the year.

7. Why can't other years hang with each other (siblings wise)

Mrs Cooney: This is in place due to various reasons. Logistically we need to have an even spread of people around school to supervise students effectively and it also encourages you not to just hang around with your siblings and allows you to make friends with other people in your year group. Sometimes more negative behaviour occurs if students are allowed to mix with siblings, e.g. siblings might get involved in friendship issues which isn't helpful in teaching students to become resilient and resolve their own issues.

8. Can you provide insights into the school's approach to preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the modern world?

Mrs Cooney: Everything we do in school is to try and prepare you for later life. Getting a good education and qualifications allows you to get the job that you want and is preparing you for the world of work:-

'Ready' – learning how to be organised and to arrive on time. Some things you may not want to do but you have to do. This is why we sanction people who are late arriving at school and who do not have good attendance. If you are late at work three times you get disciplined and may lose your bonus so we train you to make sure you are always on time.

'Respectfulness' – learning how to talk to others, learning how to resolve your differences and learning how to mix with people that you don't really like or wouldn't choose as friends.

'Resilience' – we make you do things that are hard because in life there will be challenges, bereavements, tests, failures. It took four attempts for me to pass my driving test and I stopped taking lessons after the first failure instead of persevering with the lessons straight away. We try to give you strategies that you can use to overcome challenges and be able to continue.

9. How do you manage pastoral care?

Mrs Cooney: We are teaching students how to self-regulate and to look after themselves and how to respond to challenges in life. Our approach is that we have people to support you when you need it. Form teachers and review tutors are your school parents who look after you while you are in school and monitor you on a daily basis. There are four Achievement Co-ordinators who look after safeguarding issues within their groups which may also affect student attendance and behaviour and this is why they have an oversight over every area:

Mrs Peniket for years 6 and 7 students who obtains information that we need to be aware of from primary schools before the students start school at Lordswood.

Miss Briggs for years 8 and 9 students

Mrs Siviter for years 10 and 11 students

Mrs Waraich for years 12 and 13 students

If there is anything more serious happening where there is a social worker or police involvement then Mr McDonald is our Family Support Worker and he will work with you and your family. Ms McKenzie will look at behavioural issues and Mrs Uffindall will work with students who may be having a difficult time in school for various other reasons and the Pastoral team is overseen by Mrs Betty.

Mrs Cooney thanked the students for attending the Headteacher's Question Time and for asking such interesting questions and these will be discussed at the Senior Leadership Team meeting.