



**KING EDWARD VI
LORDSWOOD
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

**Headteacher's Question Time
8. 30 a.m. Thursday 13th February 2025**

**In Attendance: Mrs Cooney: Headteacher
Mrs Finucane: Assistant Headteacher – Personal Development
Miss Coggins: Administration Assistant**

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

- 1. Why aren't compasses in maths sets seen as a dangerous weapon if we aren't allowed scissors?**

Mrs Cooney: Scissors which have a larger blade can cause harm. A few years ago there was advice from the police that they could be seen as a weapon and as we didn't want students to get into trouble, a majority of schools followed their guidance and removed from permitted equipment. They can also be seen as a use for self-harm. Compasses are currently less of a problem so at present we don't feel there is a need to ban them. If we were to remove compasses as a permitted item then we would have to do the same for the school badges and earrings as they have a similar pin and this seems extreme for the low level risk that they currently pose. Where they do pose a risk – we currently deal with this on an individual basis.

- 2. How can you focus more in school/ any tips to become the best student? or just the best version of yourself.**

Mrs Cooney: I think firstly you need to make sure you are **ready**, by making sure you're packing your bag, being prepared for the day, having a good breakfast etc. will mean that you are avoiding problems before they start.

The next tip is to be **respectful** - stay out of other people's business, don't get involved in arguments that don't concern you. This will mean that you are less distracted and can focus on your studies.

Finally try your best. Listen every day in class, listen to teachers and be prepared to fail – show **resilience**. Don't be scared to get things wrong, this will help you succeed.

- 3. Why are lip glosses not allowed and if they are, then why are they confiscated?**

Mrs Cooney: Lip gloss is a form of makeup. Lip balm won't be confiscated as it's not the same thing. I will mention this in briefing that we need to notice the difference and not take it off students if they are using Lip balm.

4. Why don't we have the plastic wallet thing in our planners anymore?

Mrs Cooney: We have changed suppliers to try and get best value for money and I don't think it was an automatic addition with this new company. I will ask the person who orders the planners this year to look in to if this is an option.

Are we allowed wear more than one religious item?

The rule is one religious item. However, if you have a legitimate reason to request a second item then you can speak to your head of year and we will work with religious leaders to understand what adaptations we need to make e.g. Several of our Sikh student will wear the Kara (bangle) but will also wear a small necklace containing a symbolic Kirpan in place of carrying a real Kirpan. We appreciate the standard rule will apply to a majority of students but are open to adaptations where needed. We know about the main religions and have tried to ensure our uniform policy supports most of the main religions but there are hundreds of other different religious and cultural beliefs which we might not have full knowledge and understanding of. So where a student makes a request that we don't fully understand then we will work with religious leaders so we can understand and learn more about these beliefs and support them better.

5. How would you deal with a child struggling with a subject?

Mrs Cooney: Students would often speak to teachers and ask for help. If this doesn't help them we encourage them to speak to lead professional of subject or another person in the same department.

Getting involved in curricular activities. Using revision guides. There is also the GCSE Pod which covers every subject, you can watch things on there if you are struggling too. Being proactive to help yourself.

Tutoring isn't always the best option that's why we try to encourage you to utilise what we have in the school first.

Friends are also fantastic resources, helping each other. Don't be too harsh on yourself and learning acceptance that you will not always understand absolutely everything to first time and not to beat yourself up if you are finding something challenging.

6. Why can't we say indoors for break and lunch alot of my peers want this even if it's only in winter as it's very cold

Mrs Cooney: It is all down to supervision, having eye contact with the all students and making sure they are in vision of staff at all times. I know students would like to be inside and others who like being outside and as much as we would like to please everyone – we just can't as we just don't have enough staff and can't afford to employ more. We also know that students getting fresh air helps them to do them better. A few years ago we used to do half of lunchtime inside and the other half outside but it caused too much damage to classrooms and there were lots of arguments between students due to the lack of supervision. At break time there is the option to stay in the canteen.

7. If possible can we have at least 7 people in the prayer room instead of 5 as all the school girls are only allowed 15 mins to pray because of the boys and as it is coming up to Ramadan more people will be wanting to pray.

Mrs Cooney: We discuss this at SLT last week. Just a reminder that we have come a long way – for example we didn't have a prayer room 3 years ago. The problem is there is not enough space and staff needed to man much more than what we currently have. However we realise that demand will be higher during the month of Ramadan so in anticipation for this we have decided to the main prayer room full time for the boys and then the smaller drama room for the girls which will have more space. We have done this as there is a staff member on the North stairs already to monitor the additional space.

Discussion was had about whether 7 could fit in the multifaith reflection room and it was felt by the students at HT question time that 7 would fit comfortably in the current room and this would really reduce the queuing time. We will look into fitting 7 students and will look into getting this extended.

Mrs Cooney thanked the students for attending the Headteacher's Question Time session and for asking such interesting questions.