

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the new academic year! As the Bellahouston Parent Council, we wanted to introduce ourselves to new parents and carers, and provide some information on the work of the Parent Council, and to let us know how we can work together.

Next meeting – 16th September

We are starting the year hosting a **Q&A with Mr Mochan, on 16th September from 6 – 7**. This is for all parents and carers, and we hope lots of you will be able to attend, as this will be a great opportunity to ask any question you may have about any aspect of the school experience at Bellahouston. Refreshments and biscuits will be available.

Immediately following the Q&A, we will be holding the annual general meeting for the Parent Council, which will run from 7 – 8. At the AGM, we will elect new office bearers and parent council members. We will elect a chair, a secretary and a treasurer, as well as parent council members. Descriptions of these roles are attached to the end of this letter, but the current office bearers are also more than happy to talk about it. You don't need any particular experience, just enthusiasm! We are also keen to have some members who have some capacity to support fundraising on behalf of the school, as this would be of huge value, and is something that we didn't make as much progress on as we'd have liked last year.

If you'd like to attend the Q&A and/or AGM, please do scan this QR code to RSVP and to let us know of any questions you'd like to raise. On the same form, you can also sign up to be added to the Parent Council mailing list.



The Parent Council – what we do

Our priorities are to:

- share views on behalf of parents and carers about the School's policies and plans
- raise particular issues and concerns on behalf of parents and carers
- fundraise for school priorities
- consider how we and other parents can use our skills to support the school
- advocate or lobby on behalf of the school where appropriate

We meet approximately once a term. The dates for this year will be agreed following the AGM on 16 September. All are welcome to attend the meetings. Please notify us

on bellahoustonparentcouncil@gmail.com if you plan to join a meeting, and if you require an interpreter. All parents and carers are welcome to join any meeting, and you do not need to be a member of the parent council to come along.

At the meetings, we hear updates from the School on thematic policies and plans; we hear an update from the Headteacher and there is a short opportunity to ask questions about those updates; and we use the remaining time to take forward Parent Council planning (e.g. for events, for fundraising).

The Parent Council meetings are not the same as a Parents Evening, and they are not an opportunity to ask questions or to discuss issues about individual children. If you have any questions about your child, please contact Mr Mochan, the headteacher, directly on headteacher@bellahoustonacademy.glasgow.sch.uk.

We look forward to hearing from you and to working together to support the School and our young people.

Vanessa Redmond, Chair
On Behalf of the Bellahouston Parent Council

Parent Council Office Bearers (information taken from Education Scotland)

The Chairperson

The Parent Council should always be chaired by a member of the school's parent forum for that school. The success of a meeting can depend upon how it is chaired but the Chairperson should ensure things get done but not be the person who does everything. There are two basic jobs the Chairperson should do: a) Guide the Parent Council to achieve its aims; b) Chair the Parent Council meetings.

Some of the duties of the Chairperson include:

- liaising with the Secretary/Clerk on the agenda and meeting arrangements;
- communicating with the Headteacher to ensure a good working relationship between the Parent Council and the setting or school;
- allocating a time slot for the Headteacher at the beginning or end of Parent Council meetings;
- ensuring that all statutory responsibilities are undertaken e.g. to share the Constitution, Annual General Meeting Minutes and Annual Accounts with the local authority;
- welcoming members and introducing guests;
- ensuring fair discussion and that everyone gets a chance to have their say;
- leading the Parent Council to consider inclusion and equality, so the voices of as many parents and carers are heard as possible;
- stopping anyone taking over or dominating discussions; · getting through the agenda on time;
- summing up issues, points and decisions;
- ensuring decisions are carried out;
- working with the Treasurer to ensure that proper financial accounts are prepared for meetings, including the Annual General Meeting.

The Secretary

The Secretary plays an important role in supporting communication amongst Parent Council members themselves and between the parent forum and the Parent Council. It is important that the Parent Council agrees how members of the parent forum can get in touch with the Secretary and that these arrangements are well publicised so that all parents know how to make contact.

Some of the duties of the Secretary are to:

- make arrangements for meetings and prepare an agenda in consultation with the Chairperson;
 - send a notice of the meeting, venue and agenda to all Parent Council members so that they will receive them in good time for the meeting. Agendas should be sent out for all meetings even if they are held at the same time and place each month;
 - it is recommended that the days and times of Parent Council meetings are varied to allow for participation of parents who may have different work patterns;
 - you may wish to consider holding online meetings and/or in-person meetings, or a combination;
 - keep a record of everyone attending the meeting and any apologies for absence;
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- let Parent Council members know about all correspondence received and report any action taken since the last meeting;
 - take a minute (or note) of meetings, record decisions and actions to be taken and by whom
 - ensure the draft Minutes are shared with the wider parent forum as soon as possible after the meeting, or after they have been approved at the next meeting;

The Treasurer

Every Parent Council that intends to raise money should make sure a Treasurer is appointed to handle the money coming in and going out of the group. The Treasurer is responsible, along with all members of the Parent Council, for the proper handling of the finances of the Parent Council.

The tasks of the Treasurer include:

- having a clear and accurate book-keeping system that records any money received and how the money is spent;
- maintaining the bank account. It is good financial practice to require two out of three of the office bearers' signatures on cheques to allow any money to be withdrawn or spent. A similar system should also be set up to sign off online payments and/or invoices;
- advising on the amount of money available for the group's work and warning of excess expenditure.