

## **Hillhead High School Parent Council, AGM 17/09/2018**

### **Chair's Report**

The Parent Council is a group of parents who represent parent views and work in partnership with school staff and the local authority to achieve the best for all pupils. Having a Parent Council allows the collective view of parents to be represented on matters such as the quality and standards of education at the school and other matters of interest. The Parent Council has 6 formal meetings per year, interspersed with informal meetings as and when required and these are arranged via email. In addition, the Parent Council communicated regularly with the Parent Forum, all parents whose children go to Hillhead High School, and organises meetings to which all parents are invited. The Parent Council communicates via our email list, our Twitter and Facebook accounts, the school's text messaging service as well as the school website.

### **Summary of the work of the Parent Council during the 2017-18 session**

#### **1. Supporting the further strengthening of the teaching and learning within the curricular structure at Hillhead High School**

In collaboration with the school's senior management team, the parent council continued its work around the further development of and communication with parents about the specific curricular structure at the school.

The highlight in this area was the visit of the HMI / Education Scotland school inspectors in January 2018, which led to excellent results for the school, which were even reported on a national level. The parents council supported the pre-inspection survey among parents, parent council members took part in consultation workshops and the parent council chair was invited to a one-to-one discussion with the inspectors, who in their report praised the work of the parent council at Hillhead High School, as it enables parents to get involved in matters of teaching and learning in order to support a holistic approach to supporting the young people during their school career.

The Parent Council continued its work in supporting the school in even more effective communication with parents about the curricular structure, its rationale and most importantly points at which parents and pupils' input and decisions are vital for pupils' success in exams and at school in more general terms, through:

- a. Advising the school about parent needs when it comes to information provided on the school website which
- b. enabling better communication channels through more effective use of social media, i.e. the school's Twitter account, the various Departments' website blogs, the Parent Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts
- c. communicating and working together with the school's pupil council
- d. supporting the school in producing information tailored to parents' and pupils' needs about the curricular structure

The work the Parent Council has done in this area was officially recognised the HMI inspection in January 2018.

#### **2. Celebrating successes**

The fundraising for replenishing the Charlie Hepburn bequest sparked a discussion among the parent forum about the way in which the school celebrates successes of its pupils. The parent

council held fruitful discussions around the issues of what the school ought to celebrate as a success, in particular going beyond academic achievement. This happened in an attempt to achieve a stronger element of equity in this area, which we hope will lead to a strengthening of the sense of community and identity pupils and parents feel with the school.

Another area of discussion was how successes are celebrated and communicated, as parents felt that many successes of youngsters are not publicised enough among pupils and parents thus do not have the impact they might have in the community. Parents were very grateful that some pupil representatives attended our meetings and shared their impactful initiatives with us. For example, we learned of the very high number of completions in the Duke of Edinburgh awards which make the school leading nationally, from Mukadass Javaid, nominee for the Young Scots Award, how her initiative to encourage girls to play basketball in their headscarfs helped break barriers and undermined stereotypes in the Hillhead High community.

Parents also discussed school award trips and their popularity with the school and as a result the school changed some of the award trips in the last session, offering alternatives to the Blackpool trip.

The parent council led on parents making cakes twice in this session and serving them to all staff as a gesture to thank all staff for their enormous continued efforts in helping to make the school and the pupils' learning a success. Parents also wanted to express their pride in the outstanding school inspection results.

### **3. School activities**

The PC supported a range of activities and events including for example:

- a. Providing careers advice and support at career fairs, inviting careers advisers to a Parent Council meeting, passing on invitations to a range of public workshops and events, i.e. the Maker Faire or the Worldskills Competition, to pupils in making career choices and parents to help their youngsters in this choice.
- b. Attending induction events, i.e. parents ran workshops or presented during the S6 induction organised by Mr Neil to help make the S6 year even more meaningful and effective for pupils.
- c. Supporting the work of the school library by a parent who regularly mans the library and helps pupils using the facility.
- d. Supporting greater choice of study options in S6: Parents organised a collaboration with the Open University which allows S6 pupils to study a Level 1 Open University module free of charge.
- e. Strengthening of the pupil voice, following the best practice example of Mr Gemmill's consultation of the Hillhead High School PE kit, parents have discussed with the school other areas where the input of the young people can promote equity and positive change in the school.

### **4. Fundraising**

The PC continued with the focus on fundraising, however, parents agreed that the range of activities we raise funds for goes beyond replenishing the Charlie Hepburn bequest fund (a prize giving fund unique to Hillhead High School, dating back to the 1960s). A sub-group of volunteers

came together and planned two fundraising events, a very successful quiz night in November and a fundraising Ceilidh in January, which both raised around £600.00.

Our local Mosque agreed to fund a number of awards for the annual prize-giving for at least two years.

In addition, parents have started working on a range of funding applications to various institutions to acquire funds for the school, for example for PE and school playground equipment. For example, the Parent Council made a successful application to the Common Weal Fund for a £900 grant for the school rugby club. The funds were used to fund rugby kits for the school's rugby team as part of the school's effort in developing a School of Rugby.

## **5. Promoting pupil equity**

The Parent Council has run/supported equity initiatives:

- a. Made a call for donations of clothing and helped sort the donations
- b. Took part in promoted the 'Cost of school clothing' survey in order to raise awareness and gain support from the Scottish Government for school clothing
- c. Started to collaborate with community institutions, such as local religious communities, to secure more clothing donations for school pupils

## **6. Engagement with other Parent Councils / National Parent Forum**

Members of the Parent Council have attended events organised by the National Parent Forum as well as Glasgow City Council.

The Parent Council has also continued the communication with schools in our local area, for example Notre Dame primary and high school in view of their impending consultation on becoming a mixed-gender school.

## **7. Plans for parental involvement for 2018-19**

- a) PC stated that its work in the coming year ought to focus again on the support of the educational work going on at the school, including the further refining of the shape of the curricular structure and the school's communication about this. As a result the meetings of the dedicated focus groups will continue. A new initiative will be the collaboration of the Languages department, the Scottish National Centre for Languages and the Parent Council on a ground-breaking parent-school-links project around languages and cultures in the school community.
- b) As a second, and continuing, initiative for parent involvement, the PC would like to continue to support the school in helping youngsters in their career choices and planning.
- c) In a third initiative, parents would like to continue the discussions with the school about celebrating successes in its many facets. This is one way in which we will continue supporting the school in relation to pupil equity initiatives.
- d) As part of strengthening the school community and sense of identity with the school, we will continue the discussions around how absences are dealt with, encouraging more investigation into reasons for absences and ways in which this can be tackled through positive initiatives starting in school classrooms and clubs.

f) PC will continue the fundraising work that commenced in the 2017-18 session, with another quiz night, funding applications and other initiatives for some of which we are planning to involve pupils as well.

### **Membership**

The Constitution states that the PC shall have a maximum of 10 members and a minimum of 5. It is also able to co-opt members of staff and other relevant persons provided there are more parents than co-opted people. In the previous session the PC had 5 members and 4 co-opted members.

Parent Council members in 2017-18 session:

- Elected Chair Person – Sylvia Warnecke
- Treasurer – Chiara Cipollari
- Chirsty Hamilton
- Catriona Futter
- Tariq Ishaq

### **Current co-opted members:**

- Bernie Mitchell- Hillhead Sports Club
- Elaine Cuthbertson – Staff
- Nicola Kerr – Staff
- John Gemmill – Staff

The Parent Council needs new members to keep it vibrant, particularly parents whose children are at the start of their secondary schooling and have a long association ahead of them. Everyone on the Parent Council brings something different and something useful to make it work, so please don't think you have nothing to offer. If you are interested in becoming a member, please join us.

All parents and carers are welcome to attend Parent Council meetings. Updates from the Parent Council and minutes of all meetings are available on the school website

<http://www.hillheadhigh.glasgow.sch.uk>

We will continue to use our Twitter account the school newsletter to keep you informed. Parents who have provided us with their email address will receive communications by this method. Please let us know if you would like to be added to the email distribution list.

Sylvia Warnecke

Chair Person  
17/09/2018