

Minutes - Parent Council Meeting, 11 June 2018, 6.30 p.m., Hillhead High School

Parent Council Member: Sylvia Warnecke (Chair), Catriona Futter; Bernie Mitchell, Chirsty Hamilton; Chiara Cipollari (deputy chair)

Teaching Staff: Karen McAlaney (head Teacher); Steven Neil; John Gemmill; Nicola Kerr; Elaine Cuthbertson

Parent forum: Gordana Nesterovic; Rowena Nicholson; Khalida Akoub; Andrea Fisher; Yuhai He; Claire MacLavery; Karen Leeson; Zarina Shafiq

Apologies: Tariq Ishaq.

Topic	To do
<p style="text-align: center;">1 – Previous minutes</p> <p>Minutes agreed. No matters arising.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">2 – Head Teacher's report</p> <p>Please see reports attached. Mr Neil reported on a very successful S6 induction week, considered to be better than last year's. A similar format was followed, with more personalised presentations. Explored Values, Mindfulness, yoga, Teach Mindset, Challenges, OU, SDS, Tree of Knowledge, Intriguing Futures, input from previous S6 captains, work experience and life skills presentations. Evaluation of this year's will inform content of next year's. Nominations for S6 leadership team of 6 prefects, 2 captains and 2 vice captains; will oversee 10 committees running throughout S6. HT reported an observed benefit already from the induction week, with increased engagement of pupils, proactivity and responsibility, plus increased numbers staying on for S6.</p> <p>Health week – feedback from last year is to involve more pupils in sports day. For this year, will be S2 alone but plans for next year to include athletics in PE curriculum for S1-3, to allow for selection and qualification process for sports day.</p> <p>Huge thanks expressed from PC to Karen and all the staff for their hard work through this year, especially with the inspection.</p> <p>Bernie asked about an S6 common room. This is a regular request, and currently there is no available space. Attempts are being made to create study and social spaces for S6.</p>	<p>See HT report for next steps.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3 – School Uniform</p> <p>A letter will go out about uniform before the end of term. The aim is to keep it simple to keep costs down. The bursary for parents requiring financial support has been increased to £100, plus there are resources and uniforms available in school for those in need. Question was asked re changing out of PE kit at the end of the day – ideally yes; this is out to consultation via Pupil Voice at present.</p> <p>There are no official school shorts – dark blue or black are acceptable.</p>	

<p>4- Pathways on leaving school</p> <p>Bernie asked about information given to pupils on subject choices, exam levels and pathways available on leaving school. Options are offered for modern apprenticeships, college, university, or straight into work. Information evenings and pathways events are organised to disseminate info to pupils and parents on choices, timescales etc. College partnerships include with the OU in S4 and S6. SLT are always open to options and outside agencies who can share info on jobs and course options. An information evening is planned for next session. Pastoral care are well informed re UCAS and options, and always available for support.</p>	<p>Follow up on information evening for senior pupils.</p>
<p>5 - Staffing</p> <p>2 New Chemistry teachers have been appointed. HHS will be fully staffed from August 2018.</p>	
<p>6 – Use of IT in teaching</p> <p>Concern was raised about reports from some classes of an excessive reliance on Powerpoint presentations, with pupils left to copy down by rote without additional teaching; or to copy down the Powerpoint whilst the teacher is speaking, causing a conflict of interest. Further discussion about the importance of teaching beyond just copying by rote, and teaching problem solving skills especially in science.</p> <p>Information will be available on English writing skills on website from next week. Websites on all subjects being updated with current information on subjects, choices, etc.</p>	<p>Option of Powerpoint presentations being available on GLOW for revision purposes?</p> <p>Karen will investigate further, and seek feedback from pupils on teaching methods.</p>
<p>7 – Attendance at school and role of GCC</p> <p>Feedback on the confusion of required attendance during recent S4 exams.</p> <p>Concern was expressed about the overall approach to attendance, and the lack of effective repercussions from the school if pupils have continued issues with non-attendance. This has led to parents feeling helpless to know how to improve things for their child, and then very distressed to receive from GCC a summons letter to an attendance hearing. Concern was expressed at the tone of the letter, and the lack of empathy for parents who may already be in a very difficult situation. From the HT – the letter is from the Attendance Council, and HHS has no influence over this. The attendance officer at HHS has unfortunately been off ill, and therefore there has been less than ideal support for pupils struggling with attendance, and their families. The summons letter is a legal requirement that is triggered if attendance falls below a certain level. Support for families of pupils with attendance issues is available, and should be tailored to each individual.</p>	<p>SLT will address this for next year, and ensure information on expectations of attendance is much clearer.</p> <p>Karen to discuss situation with Attendance Officer, and ensure information on attendance processes and policy is available on the website.</p> <p>PC to look at writing to GCC to ask for the summons letter from Attendance Council to be reworded to be more empathetic and less frightening.</p>
<p>Date of next meeting: 27 August 2018, 6.30 p.m., Chinese Hub at Hillhead High School. This will include the ABM.</p> <p>The minutes are posted also on the PC website.</p>	<p>Please get in touch with the parent council chair in the meantime with any questions/comments you might have by email s.warnecke@open.ac.uk</p>