

Hillhead High School Parent Council, AGM 16/09/2019

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 held six formal meetings during the 2018-19 session, interspersed with informal meetings as and when these were required; these meetings were arranged via email. The Parent Council communicated regularly with the Parent Forum, all parents whose children go to Hillhead High School, and organised the 6 formal meetings to which all parents were invited. The Parent Council communicated via our email list, our Twitter and Facebook accounts, the school's text messaging and GroupCall services as well as the school website.

Summary of the work of the Parent Council during the 2018-19 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 leadership team, 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 more generally. The parent council carried out this work through:

- a. Advising the school in regular meetings with the school's senior leadership team about parents' needs when it comes to information provided in and on tracking as well as school reports, and the parent council has had input into improving both sets of documentation of pupils' achievements to make these more user-friendly and targeted
- b. Advising the school on information issues to parents and pupils about the school's curricular structure in the broad general education as well as the senior phase in addition to subject-specific information on the school website and during dedicated information events for parents of different year groups; members of the parent council met with the group of Heads of Departments in the School to discuss these aspects and provide feedback from a parent perspective, i.e. in commenting on the school's handbooks, development of a school calendar containing key information for different year groups
- c. Advising the school on useful information provided during parents evenings alongside expectation management for pupils and parents before exam periods
- d. Supporting the school in the exam preparation provision for pupils in the senior phase, from S4 through to S6, for example in terms of what kind of support works most effectively
- e. Communicating and working together with the school's pupil council and with school committees
- f. Parent council members have been involved in the recruitment of two new Deputy Head teachers, parent council members undertook the relevant recruitment and selection training for this work

2. Supporting pupils' career choices

The parent council supported school career events by recruiting members of the parent council as well as the parent forum to speak to S6 pupils during the induction as well as at careers fairs about careers in the world of work.

The parent council invited Skills Development Scotland to present the My World of Work website to parents – a key tool in helping pupils and parents with career choices. The parent council also fed back on the kind of information parents need to support their children in this, for example in understanding how to use the My World of Work website; in preparing UCAS applications; writing personal statements for these applications.

3. Mindfulness and wellbeing

The parent council has shared with the parent forum a number of initiatives and information packs revolving around pupils' mental health. The parent council has also discussed this topic with the school in relation to pupils' use of social media. The parent council has initiated an information evening for parents on the impact of social media on the young people. (This was to be run by PC Barry Hynds, the Campus Police Officer. Due to time pressures, this was postponed to the 2019-20 session.)

The parent council contacted the Bridge the Gap project to organise mindfulness workshops for parents and pupils at the upcoming Winter Fayre.

4. Pupil attendance and participation

Alongside a member of the parent forum, one member of the parent council was involved in work to improve the communication and regulation around school attendance for pupils and parents. This work went beyond the school and involved participation in GCC-wide meetings. Part of this work focused on helping the school in the way in which it communicates with pupils on attendance.

Another focus was the parent council's work on supporting the school in making the 6th year more meaningful and attractive so that more pupils decide to stay on after their S5 exams.

5. Parent council policies

Following feedback from parents, the parent council has successfully trialled holding parent council meetings with the parent forum on alternating days of the week to allow as much participation as possible. This will be rolled out fully in the 2019-20 session.

Following parent feedback, the parent council has redrafted the parent council constitution to make policies for participation and selection clearer. The constitution, once it has been agreed, will be made available in the most commonly spoken languages of the school community.

6. Participation in school committees

Members of the parent forum alongside parent council members have worked actively with the school's eco committee and are establishing links with the wider community in relation to climate change strikes/activities.

7. Fundraising

A member of the parent council worked in collaboration with the PE department on funding applications to acquire funds for the school; in the first instance for example for PE and school playground equipment.

8. 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. Issued a letter to parents 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

9. 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 schools in relation to the consultation on Notre Dame becoming a mixed-gender school.

10. Plans for parental involvement for 2018-19

- a) Continuing the positive work that has been going on in relation to strengthening of the teaching and learning within the curricular structure at Hillhead High School
- b) Continuing supporting the school in helping youngsters in their career choices and planning
- c) Continuing 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) Continuing the work around attendance management in the school and positive messages around attendance
- f) Continuing the fundraising work with events and funding applications

Membership

Parent Council members in 2018-19 session:

- Elected Chair Person – Sylvia Warnecke
- Vice-chair – Catriona Futter
- Treasurer – Chiara Cipollari

- Chirsty Hamilton
- Tariq Ishaq
- Andrea Fisher
- Jolene Crawford
- Gordana Nesterovic
- Karen Leeson
- Alisdair Downes

Current co-opted members:

- Bernie Mitchell- Hillhead Sports Club
- 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 and Facebook accounts 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
16/09/2019