

Hillhead High School Parent Council Annual General Meeting

Monday 15 February 2021

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.

Throughout the past year, the Parent Council communicated regularly with the Parent Forum (all parents/carers whose children go to Hillhead High School) via our MailChimp Mailing list, our Twitter and Facebook accounts, the school's text messaging and GroupCall services as well as the school website. The Parent Council was grateful for the support of several Hillhead High School teaching staff who attended meetings and gave reports and input.

This has been the most extraordinary year, dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, school building closures and the impact of the associated restrictions on education. Since the last AGM in February 2020, all plans to hold in person Parent Council meetings in the Chinese Hub at Hillhead High School (HHS), where we normally meet, had to be suspended.

In a rapidly changing environment with many unknowns and two lockdown periods of school building closures (we remain currently in the second of these lockdowns), **the role of the Parent Council** became primarily one of **communication and support** – communicating with staff at HHS and passing on questions, concerns and feedback from parents, providing information via newsletters and social media to families at home, and providing support and encouragement to staff.

The Parent Council held **two formal meetings** on Zoom in the first term of the 2020/2021 session, one in September and one in November. These were very well attended and provided an opportunity for parents to hear all that was going on at school to support our children, and to ask questions.

There were also several meetings of the Parent Council with senior staff at HHS between April 2020 and January 2021, all by Zoom and arranged by email.

Summary of issues that the Parent Council was consulted on, informed of and participated in from February 2020 to present:

1. School building closures and plans for learning from home; support for families, expectations around home learning and what parents need; importance of connection with teachers. Issues and ideas around well-being, for pupils and their families. Regular communication with Head Teacher and input into weekly school newsletter – importance of keeping all communication centralised in one place. Clear difference between lockdown of April – June 2020 and lockdown of January 2021 to present: iPads now being utilized very successfully, clear implementation of lessons learned and survey results, clear structure for school day, more connection with staff.

2. School recovery plan.
3. Impact of the pandemic and school building closures on SQA exams.
4. Helping access and source face masks for use in school.
5. Tracking reports – updated forms and process.
6. iPad roll out and support for families using technology at home.
7. Duke of Edinburgh provision, availability and rationale for who is selected and how to communicate this as part of Wider Achievement options.
8. PACE activities – litter around school, single use plastic, water fountains.
9. Support for S6 Operation Donation at Christmas.
10. Christmas thank you gift of cakes and cards for staff.
11. Financial donation to Pastoral Care for support at Christmas where required.
12. A number of Parent Council members also attended a variety of online events organized by the Glasgow City Parents Group and Connect, a membership organization for parent groups Scotland wide. Lots of input and discussion about hosting online meetings, support for families, home learning and what was needed for school return.

At the AGM in February 2020, there were a number of plans and ideas that were highlighted that we had hoped to discuss further in the coming year. The pandemic put all of that on hold. However, we know that schools will eventually return to normal, and we will be able to resume school life that is not dominated by the pandemic. The following are some of the issues that have been raised in the past and that we can revisit in the future, although there at present is no timescale for that given the continuing uncertainties we are living with. We recognise that our school and our world have changed, and thus the discussions around some of these issues may reflect that.

Plans for parental involvement for 2021-2022 – some of the themes that were planned for this academic year and were put on hold due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Implementing lessons learned from school building closures and online teaching and learning; how to include more and varied teaching methods using iPads.
- 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.
- Continuing supporting the school in helping youngsters in their career choices and planning, especially looking at communication around pathways and development of timelines.
- Consider ways to improve equality and diversity in representation on Parent council, perhaps liaising with the S6 Equalities and Diversity committee.
- School campus officer – possibility of an information evening covering digital and internet safety, app updates and awareness of apps for parents, social media use etc. Possibly in conjunction with Karen Campbell from The Wheel Trust.
- Looking at school trips – rationale, proactive approach, key learning objectives.
- Languages taught in HHS – choice, rationale, options.
- Continuing the fundraising work with events and funding applications

Parent Council members in 2020-2021 session:

- Chair – Catriona Futter
- Treasurer – Chirsty Hamilton
- Secretary – Jerome Boue
- Tariq Ishaq
- Andrea Fisher
- Kate Temple
- Annabel Wright
- Karen Leeson
- Alasdair Downes
- Bernie Mitchell (co-opted)

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 come along to the main meetings and make yourself known. There are always ways to get involved and we would be delighted to get to know you.

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 Mailchimp mailing list, and our Twitter and Facebook accounts to keep you informed.

Please let us know if you would like to be added to the mailing list by emailing hillheadhighparentcouncil@gmail.com

Catriona Futter

Chair, Hillhead High School Parent Council

February 15, 2021