

Hillhead High School Parent Council Annual General Meeting Chair's Report for year February 2021 to January 2022

The Parent Council is a group of parents who **represent the views of all parents and carers of pupils at Hillhead High School (the Parent Forum)** 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 the Parent Forum to be represented on matters such as the quality and standards of education at the school and other matters of interest.

The Parent Council was grateful for the support of Mrs McAlaney the Head Teacher and several Hillhead High School teaching staff who attended meetings and gave reports and input.

The Covid-19 pandemic has continued to have a considerable impact on school life including times of closure of the school buildings during this past year. Large scale meetings have not been possible throughout this entire time, so main Parent Council meetings have continued to be hosted online.

The Parent Council held five formal meetings on Zoom throughout this year. These were very well attended, and it was agreed at one of these meetings to pursue a hybrid mix of Parent Council meetings in future – ie some in person once this is allowed, and some online as this enables those with childcare issues to attend more easily.

The Parent Council met informally as required between these meetings, sometimes in smaller groups with members of the Senior Leadership Team at school as Covid restrictions allowed.

Summary of issues that the Parent Council was consulted on, informed of and participated in from February 2021 to present:

1. Communication with staff and input into school recovery and improvement plan.

Communicating with staff and passing on concerns and feedback from the Parent Forum continued to be a primary focus for the Parent Council. This included matters around school recovery and support for families and staff especially during periods of learning from home; Parents' Evenings, tracking reports and communication with parents on curricular structure and options; evidence gathering and SQA plans for exams; use of ipads; mask wearing and Covid testing.

A small thank you gift plus a personal card were given to each staff member at Christmas, organized by the Parent Council.

2. Communication with the Parent Forum.

Throughout the past year, the Parent Council communicated regularly with the Parent Forum via our MailChimp Mailing list, our Twitter and Facebook accounts, the school's text messaging and GroupCall services as well as the school website.

Newsletters were sent out regularly with updates on school and Parent Council activities, details of meetings, sharing surveys, information and support. A 'mythbuster' infographic was produced to try

and answer questions or concerns about the Parent Council that might prevent parents coming along to meetings. A social media policy is also being developed.

If you are not on this mailing list but would like to join, you are very welcome! Please email <mailto:hillheadhighparentcouncil@gmail.com>

3. School activities:

These include –

- Having a stall at an Eco Fayre held in conjunction with the Woodlands Community Gardens.
- Presenting the role of the Parent Council to prospective new S1 parents at two online events for current Primary 7 parents.
- Working on promoting pupil equity with second hand uniform collections and support from local organisations.
- Facilitating support from the Parent Forum (and more widely) for Ahmed, an S6 pupil who is campaigning for better access to further education by changing residency requirements for refugee and asylum seeker status pupils.
- Support for the school in tackling fake social media accounts, and the importance of sticking to the school mobile phone policy.
- Growing the Parent Council newsletter mailing list especially with new S1 parents.
- Contributing to a Developing the Young Workforce project within the English department on use of English in a wide variety of jobs and careers.

4. Subgroups – improving collaboration

The following subgroups have been created by staff and the Parent Council have been involved in each of these. In addition, input from parents has been sought and there are members of the Parent Forum participating in each of these subgroups:

- Cost of the School Day – improving equity, support and access for everyone and looking at ways to reduce the costs of education to families.
- Developing the Young Workforce – developing skills for work and introducing more holistic and leadership learning throughout all school years.
- Celebrating School Values – implementing the school values of kindness, ambition, resilience, integrity and respect into all areas of school life.
- Improving the School Grounds – this includes looking at supplying further outdoor seating and a new bike shed, as well as issues around care of the grounds, litter, planting etc.

5. Fundraising

Due to ongoing Covid restrictions, in person large scale fundraising events such as the Parent Council have run before were not possible. However, the Parent Council have registered with EasyFundraising and a fundraising subgroup has been created to develop fundraising opportunities further during the next academic year. Find out more here

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/hillheadhighpc/?q=hillhead&cat=cause-autosuggest>

There are PC funds available, and further fundraising is planned for this coming year, to provide outdoor seating and hopefully a bike shed for the school.

6. PACE – Parents and Carers Action on Climate Emergency

PACE continue to be very active, and have developed great links with the school, and the Eco Committee. An Eco Policy is being created that will underpin all activities of the Parent Council and plans for more collaborative working are being developed.

During COP26, PACE members attended a Birds2BHeard event in school and supported a wide range of learning for sustainability events that were running in school. This included art workshops facilitated by a member of the Parent Forum that was set up via the Parent Council.

If you would like to find out more about PACE or get involved, please email <mailto:hillheadhighparentcouncil@gmail.com>

7. Engagement with other Parent Councils and national groups

During the year, various Parent Council members attended online events run by the Glasgow City Parents Group and Connect (a membership organization for parent groups nationwide). These included a number of events about school recovery and the impact of the pandemic, safe social media use, fundraising, surveys on well-being and exams.

There are some excellent information videos on a whole range of subjects relevant to parents on the GCPC YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/c/GlasgowCityParentsGroup/videos>

Plans for parental involvement for 2022-2023

- Continuing to implement lessons learned from school building closures and online teaching and learning, pupil surveys and the school recovery plan.
- Continuing to work with the school on their priorities of learning and teaching, equity and equality.
- Subgroups: Further develop collaborative working between parents and staff and implement ideas developed within these groups.
- PACE: develop action plan for change, underpinned by the Eco Policy.
- Support school on the Rights Respecting Schools work.
- Consider ways to improve equality and diversity in representation on Parent council, perhaps liaising with the S6 Equalities and Diversity committee. Continuing to improve communication and understanding of what the Parent Council do and create more collaborative working.
- Fundraising event with a quiz night planned for May 2022 and promoting EasyFundraising plus other fundraising initiatives like Go Fund Me for specific priorities.

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 8 members plus one co-opted parent, and one co-opted member. Due to a number of staff changes, no staff members were co-opted onto the PC but were freely available to join PC meetings and their contribution is much appreciated.

The Finance subgroup consists of Alasdair Downes and Bernie Mitchell.

Parent Council members in 2020-2021 session:

- Catriona Futter – Chair, elected 2020
- Jerome Boue – Secretary
- Chirsty Hamilton - Treasurer until June 2021 then stood down from PC
- Andrea Fisher -
- Annabel Wright – standing down January 2022
- Karen Leeson – Additional Support Needs rep.
- Alasdair Downes – Treasurer from June 2021
- Astrid Azurdia – elected 2021
- Sandra Huettenbuegel – co-opted June 2021
- 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

31 January 2022