

## HILLHEAD HIGH SCHOOL – PARENT COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

1. This is the constitution for Hillhead High School Parent Council (see Note 1). See Appendix I for Glossary of Terms.

2. The **objectives** of the Parent Council are:

- To promote partnership between the school, its pupils and all its parents (see **Appendix 1** for all definition).
- To identify and represent the views of parents on the education provided by the school, and other matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils.
- To work in partnership with the school on its key priorities and school improvement plan
- To act as a focus group for the Head Teacher.
- To work in partnership with the school to create a welcoming school which is inclusive for all its parents (see Appendix I).
- To develop and engage in activities which support the education and welfare of the pupils, including fundraising.

3. The **membership** shall be a minimum of five parents of children attending the school, ideally at least one from each year group. The maximum size of the Parent Council is 10.

4. Any parents of a child at the school can volunteer to be a member of the Parent Council. Membership of the Parent Council is by election and is for a period of 3 years. After serving a three year term on the Parent Council, an individual may then put themselves forward for re-election if they wish for one further term of 3 years (total 6 years). Thereafter, they must stand down for a minimum of one year before standing for election again if desired.

**Election to the Parent Council** will be at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held each February (see Point 8). Anyone wishing to stand for election to the Parent Council must give their name to the Chair no less than two weeks before the AGM. At the AGM, those wishing to stand for election can have the opportunity to introduce themselves.

Election will then be by secret ballot run by the Head Teacher irrespective of the number of persons standing for the Parent Council. This is to ensure that each member of the PC has a mandate. Election will be simple majority of the votes of those present, modified if necessary to achieve at least one member from each year group.

New Parent Council members are asked to sign up to the **Code of Conduct** (Appendix II).

If a Parent Council member acts in a way that is considered by other members not to contribute to the objectives of the Parent Council, and to contravene the Code of Conduct, their membership of the Parent Council shall be terminated if the majority of parent members agree. Termination of membership shall be confirmed in writing to the member as stipulated in the Code of Conduct. In addition, the Chair has the power to terminate any Parent Council meeting in the event of disruptive or inappropriate behaviour by anyone present.

5. The Parent Council can **co-opt** others as members to assist it with carrying out its functions. Co-opted members may include staff in the school, and others as appropriate.

The number of parent members on the Parent Council shall always be greater than the number of co-opted members.

Co-opted members shall be invited to serve until the next AGM, after which time the Parent Council shall review the requirements for co-opted membership.

The head teacher and/or her/his representative (s) attend meetings as Advisers to the Parent Council.

6. The **Office Bearers** of the Parent Council will be Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer and such others as may be required, ideally including a Secretary. The office bearers shall be agreed by the Parent Council members at the AGM immediately after Parent Council members are elected and confirmed.

The Parent Council may create **sub-groups** to deal with subjects that it considers important. These sub-groups may be permanent or time restricted as required.

- All sub-groups report to the Parent Council on their activities and ultimately be subject to the Parent Council's authority.
- Size and composition of sub-groups can vary and will depend on what is being considered. Sub-groups may include non-members of the Parent Forum co-opted for a specific purpose if their skills are required.

7. The Parent Council is accountable to the **Parent Forum** for Hillhead High School and shall make a report to it at least once each year on its activities at the **AGM**. If 40 members of the Parent Forum request a special general meeting to discuss issues falling within the Parent Council's remit, the Parent Council shall arrange this. The Parent Council shall give all members of the Forum at least 10 school days' notice of the meeting and, at the same time, give notice of the matters to be discussed at the meeting.

8. The **AGM** shall be held in **February** each year. A notice of the meeting including date, time and place shall be sent to all members of the Parent Forum at least two weeks in advance. The meeting shall include:

- a report on the work of the Parent Council and its committees
- election of the new parent members to fill any vacancies on the Parent Council
- discussion of issues that members of the Parent Forum may wish to raise
- approval of the accounts and appointment of the auditor.

9. The Parent Council shall meet on average twice per school term, depending on term length. Meetings alternate between Monday and Tuesday evenings, and are open to the entire Parent Forum. At least three Parent Council members are required for any meeting to be quorate, of whom at least two shall be parent members.

Should a vote be necessary to make a decision, each parent member at the meeting shall have one vote, with the Chair having a casting vote in the event of a tie.

All formal communications shall be to and from the Chair.

Any two members of the Parent Council can request that an additional meeting be held, and all members of the Parent Council shall be given at least five school days' notice of date, time and place of the meeting.

The Parent Council can make and modify Standing Orders to regulate its business. Creation and modification of Standing Orders shall require a two-thirds majority of those present at a Parent Council meeting.

10. Copies of the **minutes** of all meetings will be published on the school website. Any Parent Forum members without internet access can request a copy from the school office.

11. Members of the public shall be able to attend meetings of the Parent Council as observers. They may be asked for their views on any particular matters but that apart shall have no rights either in addressing the meeting or voting.

If the Parent Council is discussing an item which it considers should be dealt with on a confidential basis, only members of the Parent Council and the headteacher, or his or her representative, can attend for that item.

12. The Parent Council is responsible for ensuring that all **monies** are used in accordance with the objectives of the Parent Council.

The Treasurer shall operate a bank or building society account in the name of the Parent Council for all Parent Council funds. In addition to the Treasurer, a minimum of two additional designated signatories from the Parent Council will be agreed. Two signatories will be required to sign for any withdrawals or amendments.

The Treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all income and expenditure and shall provide a summary of this for each Parent Council meeting and a full account for the AGM. The Parent Council accounts shall be audited by the auditor appointed at the previous AGM.

The Treasurer will ensure that any change to signatories is notified to the bank or building society in a timely manner. The outgoing Treasurer will ensure an orderly handover to the incoming Treasurer ensuring continuity of access to Parent Council funds.

**13. Changes to the Constitution:** The Parent Council may change its constitution after obtaining consent from the members of the Parent Forum. Members of the Parent Forum will be sent a copy of any proposed amendment and given two weeks to respond to the proposals in writing. Changes or additions to the Parent Council constitution must be made at an AGM or Extraordinary General Meeting called for the purpose and must be approved by no less than two thirds of those present.

14. Should the Parent Council cease to exist, any remaining funds shall be passed to the school or successor schools, to be used for the benefit of the pupils.

**Note 1:** Governing legislation is the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.

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## **APPENDIX I: GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **Parent**

- The term parent includes guardian and any person who has parental responsibilities in relation to, or has the care of, a pupil who attends Hillhead High School.

### **Parent Forum**

- All parents in the school.

### **Parent Council**

- A group that is elected to work on behalf of all parents.

### **Chairperson**

- Person who directs the group's activities and guides committee meetings.

### **Vice Chair**

- Assists the chair and takes over their role and responsibilities when they are absent.

### **Treasurer**

- Looks after the group's finances.

## APPENDIX II: CODE OF CONDUCT

This code of conduct is to help members understand their role as a Parent Council (PC) member.

Members should

- Support the ethos and values of the PC and make it a welcoming place for all parents
- Feel like their work makes a difference to the school community
- Treat everyone as an equal and always be respectful towards each other
- Guests should leave meeting with a positive view of the PC and what it is trying to achieve
- Respect and adhere to the decisions of the PC
- Be involved and help out wherever possible
- Work with the utmost integrity especially in dealing with financial matters
- Declare any conflict of interest and avoid situations which could cause improper conduct
- Comply with the demands of external regulatory bodies.

Members should not

- Discuss confidential issues outside of meetings
- Discuss personal issues relating to member's children, at school, at meetings
- Post content on social media that is negative or abusive towards the school or its community
- Discuss issues with the press without prior agreement.

Parent Council Meetings

- Time must be used effectively at the meeting
- Everyone should be given a chance to speak and to be heard, controlled by the Chair
- All speakers should address the Chair
- Members should contribute constructively at meetings
- Each member's contributions should be valued and respected
- No member of the parent forum or PC that attends should leave feeling belittled or unheard
- Decisions will be made in the best interests of the whole school community
- If a vote is needed everyone will get a vote and decisions will be made on a majority basis
- In the event of a tie, the Chair of the meeting will have a casting vote

The PC will ensure that new members will receive a copy of the code of Conduct and all members will be supported with any training and help needed to fulfil their roles.

If a member of the PC acts in a way that is considered to undermine the objectives of the PC, their membership of the PC shall be terminated if the majority of parent members agree. Termination of membership would be confirmed in writing to the member by the Chair.