

Drummond Community High School
Parent Council Meeting
5th September 2022 18:30-20:00
Minutes

Attended by:

Rachel Robertson (Head Teacher)	Sabrina D'Elprdio
Michael Paley (Pupil Support Leader)	Oksana Oliinyk
Jennifer Longstaff (Chair)	Christine Tong
Denise Padgett (Treasurer)	Lucy Gray
Sarah Burton (Vice-Chair)	Nicola Clark-Tonberg
Rachel Blythe (Vice Chair)	Sandra Bagnall
Anne Hay (Secretary)	Victoriia Tarasenko
Rebecca Bowmaker-Mees (Head of School)	Coran Dong
Haifa Arif (Head of School)	Claire Ritchie
Eva Dixon (Head of House)	Jessica Fok
Rachel Barlow (Head of House)	Joel Fok
Rose Overton (Head of House)	Peter Millington
Saniya Bibi (Head of House)	Catherine Logie
Rob Noronha	

Apologies:

Deirdre Henderson	Marie Hernandez
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1. Welcome

Jennifer Longstaff (JL) Chair welcomes attendees to the meeting and introduces school staff in attendance; Rachel Robertson (RR) Headteacher and Michael Paley (ML) Pupil Support Leader. She then introduces the current Parent Council office bearers JL, Denise Padgett (DP) Treasurer, Sarah Burton (SBU) Vice-Chair, Rachel Blythe (RBL) Vice-Chair and Anne Hay (AH) Secretary.

2. Heads of School and Heads of Houses

Opportunity for the students to share their vision for 2022-23

JL introduces Heads of School Rebecca Bowmaker-Mees (RBM) and Haifa Arif (HA). Their vision for DCHS for session 2022/23 is for young pupils to have their voices heard and to focus on inclusion so that everyone has a voice.

JL then introduces Heads of House. Eva Dixon (ED) Head of Annandale House wants to see more assemblies and inter-house competitions within school to create stronger identities of houses. Rachel Barlow (RBA) Head of Bellevue House wants all pupils to have the tools and equipment they need to succeed in school and in life. As part of this, she wants all pupils to have the study skills they need to be successful. Rose Overton (RO) and Saniya Bibi (SBI) Heads of Claremont House recognise that as the school roll has grown, there is more of a sense of community. They also want pupils' voices to be heard and want to encourage pupils to try new experiences, even though they may be scared to do so. Additionally, they want to overcome racism and misogyny within school and the wider community.

3. Head Teachers update & 10 parent/carer questions

- Nat5 Modern Studies: there seemed to be a huge drop in the percentages awarded compared to the prelims, which also seems to be the case at other schools; was markedly different to other social subjects. I'm wondering when there are anomalies like this whether there is any follow up with the SQA to investigate the cause?

The statement above is not reflective of the SQA results analysis that we hold in school, whereby 82% of Drummond CHS N5 Modern Studies candidates obtained a final grade that was in line with or better than the estimate grades that we submitted to SQA; I am not at liberty to comment on the results of other schools.

If any parent or carer has any concerns over their child's attainment they should please contact their child's Pupil Support Leader to discuss individual cases in more detail.

On any occasion when we do have reason to query issues with SQA, we can either raise issues via the City of Edinburgh Council Lead Teachers for each subject area or via our own SQA Coordinator (Mrs Sloan, DHT). We do not have reason to query the N5 Modern Studies results at this time.

- What were the 2022 exam statistics for the school?

This is provisional information at this early stage, should have definite figures by November's meeting.

The 2017-2022 data will be subject to change - this is especially the case for the S4 measures 5@3+ and 5@4+. The figures below do not include qualifications such as NPA awards, Foundation Apprenticeships etc.

The figures are accurate as of August for each year given. For the S4 measures 5@3+ and 5@4+, figures are also given in brackets – these are taken from Insight and show the change compared to the initial figures.

They are included for illustrative purposes.

The SCQF level key reflects the SQA qualifications available under Curriculum for Excellence. Note that figures for SCQF Level 5 and above refer to grades A-C only; D awards are not included, nor are ungraded Level 5 courses.

It is important to note the different assessment arrangements which were in place due to the Covid-19 pandemic: in 2020, SQA required schools to use teacher judgement to “infer” attainment; whereas in 2021, the Alternative Certification Model was adopted, which required “demonstrated” attainment based on assessments delivered by staff in school. Both of these models replaced the formal SQA examination diet. This formal diet was reinstated in 2022, although changes were made to course content and/or assessments, as a means to take into account the difficulties young people continued to face due to the ongoing pandemic. Comparing attainment patterns over the last three-year period is therefore something which must be done with great care.

Percentage of the S4 roll attaining awards at SCQF levels

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
By the end of S4						
5@3+	58 (65)	72 (73)	79 (88)	76 (86)	72 (83)	79
5@4+	49 (53)	62 (65)	59 (64)	69 (83)	68 (77)	70
5@5+	21	20	16	46	43	37
By the end of S5						
1@6+	49	60	50	47	63	55
3@6+	27	22	20	19	42	32
5@6+	9	8	7	12	24	17
By the end of S6						
1@6+	60	62	68	68	53	64
3@6+	30	35	35	33	33	46
5@6+	8	22	19	20	22	31
1@7+	9	19	11	12	14	24

SCQF Key:

Level 7: Advanced Higher A-C;

Level 6: Higher at A-C;

Level 5: National 5 at A-C;

Level 4: National 4 pass;

Level 3: National 3 pass.

- What is the current roll at Drummond? How will this year's roll impact the safe moving around the school & cues at lunchtime?

Our roll is 524 as at 5th September 2022, expected to rise again by the date of the school census (14 September). This is a significant increase from last year and we anticipate an increased staffing budget to support this. The roll is expected to increase further and there is currently a waiting list for pupils to join S2 & S3.

We have retained a one-way system in the English and Maths departments to support the safe movement of pupils through the corridor. The corridors in other areas of the school are wide enough to avoid bottlenecks.

We operate 3 queues at lunchtime in the dining hall to support rapid service and have ordered more seating to provide indoor dining options to pupils.

- My new S1 is worried about a friend who gets free school meals & has said she has just been getting a slice of pizza or a small baked potato + is hungry. Do you know if there's a problem with free school meals or perhaps, she isn't signed up for the right thing? Can the parent council ask & if info can be sent out to parents/children?

Every S1-S6 who is in receipt of free meals is given a budget each day to cover a drink and main meal.

Options include soup, sandwiches, paninis, pizza, baked potatoes and main meals; an example menu is shown here: <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/22281/amey-menu>

Our catering team has been impacted by ill health in recent weeks, with our main cook absent from work; this resulted in a short-term reduction in the menu options. We have discussed with Amey (our catering provider) the need to provide a full service in the event of staff absence going forward.

The queues are supervised by a member of staff or a senior prefect to ensure that there is no 'skipping'; it is unlikely that classes are let out late, but inevitably the queue forms on a first-to-arrive basis.

Our website has been updated over the last 2 weeks and the process is ongoing – we will include information about lunches in 'Information for Parents' in due course. <https://drummondhigh.org/student-zone/school-lunches/>

- Is there any storage within classrooms for winter coats? Some students don't like bringing one on wet/cold days as they must carry it with them all day.

We do not have lockers in school. Pupils can hang jackets on the backs of chairs in classrooms or on coat hooks in Science, HFT, CDT etc. RBA raises the point that she is concerned that pupils have to bring lunch, water, a tablet, books and gym kit to school so have many items to carry around all day. RO agrees that this is an issue for pupils. SBA makes the point that one of her children attends another Edinburgh High School which has lockers and pupils don't use them. It is agreed that there is not enough space in the school for the safe provision of lockers. CL makes the point that her children won't wear a coat to school because they don't want to carry it around all day. NCT agrees and states her son only takes a light jacket to school that he can carry in his bag. MP stated that pupils had been asked if they wanted lockers and most didn't. However, this can be taken back to Pupil Council to check this is still the case.

- S2 residential trip – what will happen during those days to the students who are not going?

We will have 46 young people remaining in school while the Outward Bound trip takes place. They will be following their normal school timetable. Teachers will adapt classroom activities to take account of smaller class sizes during the week and will ensure that those who miss lessons while they are away and have everything that they need to make progress when they return.

- Vaping in school grounds – what is the school's position on this? Reports from young people that it's happening in the school toilets & the vapes are being bought from the local shops during break times. *There are also reports that children are eating in the toilets – hygiene reminder needed?

Please refer to information in the August Headteacher Bulletin (copy below). This has also been shared with pupils in S1-6 via the daily pupil bulletin.

Vaping

We are very concerned to report that there is an increase in vaping amongst S1-6 pupils. The law in Scotland makes it illegal for anyone under 18 to buy e-cigarettes or vapes. Please note that vaping is banned in the school building and grounds. If any pupil is caught vaping, the vape will be confiscated by a member of staff and the incident will be reported to the House Team. Parents and carers will be contacted and asked to collect the vape from school.

We encourage you to discuss this matter with your child; to support this discussion, you may find the following websites useful:

<https://young.scot/get-informed/national/smoking-and-the-law>

<https://www.ashscotland.org.uk/what-we-do/children-young-people-and-tobacco/young-people-and-vaping/>

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/nhs-services/helplines/quit-your-way-Scotland>

If pupils or parents and carers are able to inform us of the shops that are selling vapes to school pupils, we will share this information with our School Link Police Officer, PC Lowe. We can also ask PC Lowe to be present at the local shops at break times on the days that she is at Drummond CHS.

We will issue a reminder to pupils via the daily pupil bulletin that all food should be consumed in the dining area. MP raises the point that before vaping became popular smoking was not a major issue at Drummond.

- Could we arrange to get Food Hygiene certificates for the children, to help their volunteering & career prospects.

We will discuss this with our Health and Wellbeing Faculty as part of our consideration of wider achievement opportunities in the senior phase. The delivery of qualifications such as these is of course staffing dependent, but we are keen to look at curricular pathways that offer parity of esteem to all learners and maximise opportunities to support Developing the Young Workforce.

- Access to play & quality plan resources for the students – what would Amey allow? What would students like?

This question can be taken to the Learner Participation reps, via our Pupil Leadership Team, at our first meeting of the session (September). We would then have to liaise with Amey regarding installation of resources and ensure compliance with City of Edinburgh Council policy for altering any play environment (eg the playground).

- Recently I found a letter from 4 October 2018 from Broughton PS, which told me about an activity “STEM at Drummond Community High School” for primary 6 & primary 7 pupils. I wonder what activities there will be for cluster primaries in 2022/2023, & if they will be similar to “STEM at Drummond Community High School” (p6 and p7) & “Breakfast at Drummond” (used to be a Primary 5 activity)?

We employed Mrs Beth McRae just after Easter 2022, as our Learning Community Transition Teacher. Mrs McRae works across Drummond CHS, Abbeyhill PS, Broughton PS and Leith Walk PS.

Mrs McRae was working with P7s up to the summer and is now supporting them at Drummond in S1 (since August).

We are currently in discussion with the Primary 7 teachers and Headteachers regarding the following:

1. Cluster event for all P7s in Holyrood Park
2. National Poetry Day
3. Classroom visits in English and Maths prior to the 3-day visit in June

4. PC Update

- Minutes & Matters arising from May

Minutes from the May 2022 meeting are agreed by AH and DP. There are no matters arising.

- Wider PC updates

There have been no recent locality meetings. JL makes the point that Connect is working to get a parent rep on all council committees.

RBL makes a point that funding Active School activities is still an issue, especially in primary schools.

- Promoting the school

RR wants to develop the local learning community and foster closer links between DCHS, cluster primaries and early years providers.

5. Open Day Feedback

Recent Open Day was attended by 65 families, many current S2 pupils. Feedback from families was mainly positive. Most families wanted to visit specific departments of the school relating to subjects that their children were interested in. Some families had to leave early to collect young children from after-school care. A short survey will be issued by the school to collect feedback.

6. Treasurer update

DP provided figures of the current bank account balance as £3581.95. £1000.00 of this is from Tesco Bags of Help which will be used to fund equipment for young people taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Expedition. Additionally, £1000.00 is set aside for Drummond Decides. The school holds £144.50.

7. Fundraising

- Saturday café

SBU explains that prior to the Covid pandemic a number of parents and pupils ran a community cafe in school to provide a volunteering opportunity for all pupils. Several parents are interested in starting this up again. RR advised this would be dependent on community lets becoming available. This would require consultation with Amey.

8. Cost of living

Linking back to the cafe, this would be any opportunity to provide a school uniform/clothing bank for families and parents to support other families to apply for a young persons' National Entitlement Card to allow young people to access free bus travel. Several parents and pupils commented that the application process for cards is extremely complicated.

9. ASN Mainstream Locality Group Meeting

JL has volunteered to be the rep on the ASN committee. The group focuses on ASN children and young people in mainstream schools. RBL wants to build links with parents of children with ASN.

10. AOB

- Parent Council meetings going forward – shall our winter meetings in November and January be held online?

It is agreed future meetings during the 2022/23 session will take place in person.

- Growing and Cooking Project

JL advises RBL has been nominated for the Scottish Parent Awards, Community Parent Award, for her work on this project.

Broughton Primary School is taking part in the Harvest Festival at RBGE from 12-4pm on Sunday 11th September. The primary school and its parent council are entering a box of produce into the Harvest Festival Produce Show - playground vegetables, berries, fruit, herbs, edible flowers and jam.

- **Big Life Journals**

JL nominated the school for some free journals, 300 were received. After discussion it was agreed that the 300 journals that the school received will be given to all S2 and S4 classes after their Humanutopia workshop days. The remaining copies will be shared between the Wellbeing Hub, School Counsellor and Pupil Support Leaders for distribution to pupils as needed.

<https://biglifejournal.com/collections/ages-11/products/big-life-journal-teen-edition> for more information.

- **Equalities – May’s CEC led meeting was cancelled.**

Future PC Meetings

Tuesday 1st November 22

Monday 6th March 23

Wednesday 18th January 23

Tuesday 9th May 23 = AGM followed by PC meeting