

**DCHS Parent Council Meeting [hybrid]
 Tuesday 10 March 2026 from 6.30pm
 Parent Council Meeting
 MINUTES**

Next meeting (including the AGM) will be Wednesday 13 May, 6.30-8pm

Attending

[The meeting was online. Note that not all attendees were there for the whole meeting]

Rachel Robertson(Head teacher)
 Councillor Jack Caldwell (local representative)

Simon Preston (Parent Council Chair)	Savas Ozener
Abi Bremner (Secretary)	Ann Pratt
Jenni Longstaff (Social Media)	Lizzie Harper
Graham Hatton (Fundraising)	Rogério Schelgel
Naomi Sandilands	Mutaz Mustafa Abbas
Laragh Quinney	Val and Ian Owens

Apologies

Cllr. McNeese-Mechan

AGENDA ITEM	COMMENTS
1. Approval of the minutes from the January meeting	<p>Rachel Robertson had still to approve the minutes, this was why they were not yet on the website. Rachel would discuss some alterations with Abi (Parent Council Secretary) later.</p> <p>ACTION: Rachel R to discuss with Abi.</p>
2. Action points to be taken forward	<p>Action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding request for prom – No funding request had been received from senior pupils in relation to prom. • Parent Council accounts – last year’s accounts needed to be audited before the AGM in May. This was still outstanding. <p>ACTION: Rachel Blythe (Treasurer) intended to have this done by the end of the month.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of learning – An overview for parents of what children would be learning for each subject had been provided for S1s. Rachel R hoped to have a similar overview for S2s by June and S3s by August. Rachel R had asked parents to provide feedback on this resource. She hadn't seen any but would check with the school office. • New house points system – the Parent Council had heard about the new house points system from a senior pupil at the last meeting. Teachers could give tokens to pupils for good behaviour, which were placed in a box representing each house. Rachel R reported that this was now fully operational, with one house clearly ahead. It appeared to be catching the attention of pupils.
<p>3. Introductions</p>	<p>Due to the number of attendees, only parent council office bearers introduced themselves.</p>
<p>4. Update from pupil heads of school</p>	<p>There were no pupil heads of school present at the meeting.</p>
<p>5. Head teacher's update and questions from parents/carers</p>	<p>Rachel Robertson provided an update to the parent council. This is provided as Annexe A to these minutes.</p> <p>The key points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing – the school librarian had retired. Recruitment for this post was done centrally by the council, with no clear timetable yet. In the meantime, access to the library was restricted. S6 prefects were supervising access for S6s and S5s with study periods. Other pupils could access the library to borrow books via their English teacher. • There were also science and maths absences. Teaching schedules had been re-arranged to ensure classes had weekly contact with a subject specialist (rather than only a supply teacher). • Depute head teacher – the school has recruited a third depute head, expected to start after Easter. This would increase the leadership capacity in the school. A letter to parents about this would be issued soon. • Attainment – Rachel R reported that the latest statistics showed that 98% of Drummond school leavers this year had gone on to “positive destinations” (employment, training or further education). This put Drummond above the local and Scottish averages, as well as well ahead of its “virtual comparator” (a statistical model comparison school based on national averages for pupils with a similar profile to Drummond's – eg. gender, additional needs, socio-economic background). Rachel R thanked those involved in supporting school leavers (such as the careers adviser and youth worker).

Follow up questions:

- A parent asked if there was any reason for the delay in recruiting a librarian – there were no adverts on the council recruitment website. Rachel R explained that she had been in touch with the relevant team but had not been given a clear timescale. Councillor Caldwell couldn't offer any further explanation and would follow up with Council directly, although without naming the school as he thought the matter was best dealt with by the school.
- Rachel Robertson also provided written answers to questions sent in in advance from parents. These are also available at Annexe A. Highlights were:
- **Duke of Edinburgh award** – there were no teachers at Drummond who were able to support pupils to do Duke of Edinburgh awards. The school was therefore working with the council's Bangholm Outdoor Centre to deliver this. Parents had been shocked at the costs of trips this year, but the school had worked with Bangholm to reduce this. For Silver, the cost had been reduced from £400 to £236. For Bronze the cost has been reduced to £195. A parent thanked Rachel R for her work on this. There would be additional support from the school and from the Parent Council (£195) to support pupils who would otherwise be excluded financially from participating.
- **Leavers' ceremony** – school leavers were usually invited to attend the school prize giving ceremony in June to receive leavers' certificates. The school had noticed a decline in the number of pupils attending so was this year proposing to invite parents of school leavers to the leavers' assembly which was held on the day before exam leave (just after the Easter holidays) at 9am. A parent had expressed concern that this was a significant change to how this milestone was celebrated, which had not been consulted on. Another parent emphasised that the timings excluded lots of working parents.
ACTION: Rachel Robertson to review the decision after it is known how many parents plan to attend at the new time.

Follow up questions:

- A parent asked what the new deadlines were for responding to Duke of Edinburgh trip options. The deadline for acceptance had been emailed to affected parents. Another parent stated that the deadlines for making payments remained the same.
- A parent asked about funding provision to support pupils to participate in Duke of Edinburgh. They were concerned that funding should come from the council rather than the school for this so that there wasn't an adverse impact on other pupils because the school budget to support these types of activities had been depleted. Rachel R confirmed

	<p>that the money to support the reduced overall cost had come from Drummond. Money to support pupils who would otherwise be financially excluded was coming from the school and from the Parent Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A parent asked about plans for the 100th anniversary celebration this year. Alumni had been in touch asking for this information. Rachel R reported that there was a school working group looking at how to celebrate but plans had not yet been finalised. She stated that a definitive date (which would be after the summer holidays) would be publicised after the Easter break.
<p>6. Chair's update</p>	<p>Simon provided an update, which appears in full at Annexe B to these minutes.</p> <p>There was a discussion around support for pupils to participate in Duke of Edinburgh awards. The main points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A view from one parent that what was being offered by Bangholm Outdoor Centre was expensive, even in comparison to private providers. The council was therefore failing to meet any accessibility needs with what was on offer. • In terms of funding, Rachel R noted that bigger schools can access economies of scale and provide more support to teachers who volunteer (for instance, covering some of their classes). Drummond is too small to do this. Rachel R also noted that support for pupils who might otherwise be financially excluded is available for a range of school activities – and is dependent on need in the specific situation rather than having a set budget. • One parent noted that more support may be available from Bangholm but there really needed to be someone available at Drummond to co-ordinate with (but not necessarily taking responsible for full delivery). <p>Other points from the chair's update were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile phones in schools – a council consultation on this had recently closed and received a high number of responses. • Branded school uniform – the council had recently banned schools from promoting branded uniform items. This had an adverse impact on Drummond in that some things (ties in S1, blazers in S6) were provided with the aim of inclusion. With the help of Councillor Caldwell, an amendment had been proposed creating an exception for universal provision for a year group. The amendment had been accepted and would be decided on at the next council Education Committee meeting. • Recruitment training – it was important for parents to be involved in school recruitment to senior posts. To take part,

	<p>parents had to complete council-organised training. There were new dates available and parents were encouraged to sign up. Dates are Wednesday 25 March, Wednesday 6 May and Wednesday 3 June (all 6-7pm). Any interested parents should get in touch with Simon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships for learning – the school was reviewing its policy on pupil behaviour. A survey had been issued to parents, who were encouraged to respond. There would also be a focus group for parents who preferred to provide input in person [now set for Fri 27 March at 9am]. Feedback would also be sought from pupils. • Toilets and changing facilities – the parent council had recently gathered parent responses to a council survey on this issue (because of recent developments in the law in this area). Many parents reported that their children had not noticed any change, but some expressed concern around access and stigma. • Rachel R noted that the school has blocks of boys’ and girls’ toilets on each floor as well as inclusive toilets. One inclusive toilet was locked because it contained equipment for wheelchair users and one (beside the welfare area) was kept for pupils who are sick. However, the others are always available. • Funding requests – Simon reported on two funding requests to the parent council. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Eco club had requested funding to provide reusable bottles to pupils and for an “adopt a plant” scheme (where it appeared they were looking for donations of plant cuttings). The parent council had agreed it was happy to support these and Simon was chasing up additional information from the applicants. ○ Duke of Edinburgh – in order to make the request sustainable, the parent council had offered £500 to be distributed on the same basis as the school’s funding for pupils who may be financially excluded from participation. Only £195 had been needed. • Tracking report guidance – Simon and other parents had worked to develop better guidance for S1-3 parents on this process. The council was reviewing this with a view to distributing it to all schools. The group of parents were now moving on to consider guidance for S4-S6 parents. • AGM – the next meeting would be the AGM. Simon was planning to stand down, as was Jenni (social media). Parents were invited to volunteer for these roles.
<p>7. Treasurer’s update</p>	<p>Rachel Blythe (treasurer) was unable to attend. Simon provided an update.</p> <p>The balance at the start of the year had been £2,827. There had been a number of funding requests. But, because money had come in from the winter raffle (£1,081) and the council grant to</p>

	<p>the parent council (£800), the money in the account had actually increased. The current balance (provisional) was £3,597.</p>
<p>8. Fundraising update</p>	<p>Graham (Fundraising) provided an update. The parent council had a decent amount of money, thanks in part to the success of the winter raffle. The fundraising group had introduced a streamlined application process, which had resulted in more applications (including from pupils). But there was still a need to encourage more applications – particularly targeting teachers and pupils.</p> <p>There was a discussion about how best to encourage applications and allocate funding. The main points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All departments could be asked at the beginning of the year to put forward proposals so that funding was spread more evenly between pupils/classes. • Funding had recently been provided for some high cost trips (theatre trip for Higher drama classes; modern studies conference). There was a tension between supporting these opportunities and allocating a standard (smaller) amount of funding to each department/class. • Knowing that a specific amount of money was needed – or that specific projects were to be funded – would help provide motivation for fundraising efforts. It was noted that other parent councils were raising in the region of £10,000 per year. • Local businesses could be approached to sponsor specific projects, if details were known in advance. • There may be a bit of a blurred line between what the school should be paying for and what the parent council funds. This may mean teachers are unclear about when it is appropriate to approach the parent council. • Pupils at Drummond appeared to have fewer trips, due to the school’s policy of minimising the cost of the school day. This may create a chicken and egg situation, where teachers may not be prepared to investigate trip options until they knew funding was available. • There was the potential for pupils (potentially supported by the parent council) to do their own fundraising for specific activities – eg. Duke of Edinburgh award participants. <p>ACTION: Graham would create a poster with a QR code which could be put up around school to target pupils (and accepted the risk that some input may not be genuine).</p> <p>ACTION: Graham would produce guidance for teachers on what types of activities could be the subject of funding requests.</p>

	Simon noted that there were WhatsApp groups for the parent council generally and for fundraising. Any parents who would like to be added to these should get in touch.
9. Any other comments or questions?	<p>Notice boards in front of the school – a parent noted that these were looking a bit run down and asked who controlled them. Rachel R stated that these were controlled by the school. She agreed that they could be better used – the pupil leadership team (made up heads of school and other senior pupils) had had a role in maintaining them, but this had fallen away.</p> <p>It was noted that work had been commissioned to update the notice boards and provide new branding for the school more generally. Rachel R reported that this work had been paused until there was money available in the school budget to cover it.</p>

Dates for future parent council meetings are as follows:

- Wednesday 13 May 2026 (including AGM)

ANNEXE A

Headteacher's Update and responses to parent questions

1. Staffing Update

Ms Wallace has retired from her post as school librarian with the CEC Lifelong Learning and Development team.

We have recently advertised posts in Mathematics and Business/Computing for August 2026 and recruitment is currently underway. We will provide a further update in due course.

Information about the appointment of our third Depute Head Teacher will be shared with families week beginning 16 March.

2. Positive destinations

We are delighted to report that the positive destinations data for session 2024/25 (published in February 2026) is the highest for the last 5 years with 97.98% (97/99) young people moving into a positive destination on leaving school. We are grateful for the support of our 16+ partners in ensuring this high rate of success.

3. Questions from parents and carers

• Request for Update re. Duke of Edinburgh's Award Funding

We were not aware of the associated costs for completing Bronze and Silver expeditions at the time of engagement with Bangholm Outdoor Centre and have since held discussions with CEC Outdoor Learning colleagues about the need to provide upfront information if we continue to outsource the Duke of Edinburgh's Award next session. Our colleagues at Bangholm have given assurance that they understand and will act on this.

We have been working with our Outdoor Learning colleagues to consider available funding to reduce costs for Drummond CHS pupils participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award with the Bangholm DoE group this session. We are pleased to advise that the cost per person for taking part in Silver expeditions has been reduced to £236 and for Bronze expeditions has been reduced to £195.

Although funds are limited, the school (supported by the Parent Council) is able to provide some additional financial assistance to ensure that the remaining cost is not a barrier for our pupils. We would like to be able to assist everyone with trips and fees however this is not possible and we have criteria to allow us to allocate funds as fairly as possible. Parents have been asked to contact me by 10 March to apply for additional funding. It has been agreed with the Parent Council that funding made available by the Parent Council should be applied to families who meet the same criteria as the school uses to allocate pupil equity funding.

- **My child has benefited from having a school library and a lovely librarian. Following her retirement, I would like to know if the librarian will be replaced, and when please.**

Recruitment of a school librarian is the responsibility of the CEC Lifelong Learning and Development team; we are awaiting an update on this which will be shared with the community as soon as we can. In the meantime, we have a team of responsible S6 Prefects who are managing the library as a study space for seniors and our English teachers continue to have access to the stock of books for their classes.

Mrs Tindall (Curriculum Leader Languages and Literacy) took a lead on World Book Day last week and book tokens continued to be distributed via tutor teachers.

- **Concern raised by a parent regarding changes made to the School Leavers ceremony for 2026 and lack of consultation with the wider school community**

In recent years, the number of pupils attending our Celebration of Achievement event to receive a Leavers certificate (as opposed to also being subject prize-winners) has fallen. We are trying a different approach this year to recognise our school leavers. Every year, we hold an assembly for pupils on their last day; this year we have invited their parents and carers to join us (during the school day) for this assembly, followed by refreshments for pupils and their parents and carers. The date for responses is 20th March and we will reflect on all feedback received at that time.

ANNEXE B

Chair's Update

Mobile phones consultation

SP reported that the Council's consultation on mobile phones in schools has now closed. Engagement across the city was reported to be very high. The outcome of the consultation is expected to be considered by councillors in the near future.

School uniform policy

Simon wrote to local councillors regarding the impact of new guidance on branded school uniform items. Councillor Caldwell subsequently proposed an amendment to the Children, Education and Families Committee allowing exemptions where branded items are fully funded by the school and issued universally to a year group. If approved, this would allow Drummond to continue issuing free S1 ties and S6 blazers. The amendment will be considered at the March committee meeting.

Recruitment and selection training

Simon highlighted recruitment and selection training offered by the Council for parents who may sit on interview panels for senior roles in schools. Rachel Blythe had attended a recent session and two further parents had signed up for future sessions.

Parent focus group – relationships and behaviour

The school will soon issue a survey to parents and carers on relationships and behaviour. The Parent Council has been asked to support a parent focus group to accompany the survey. Abi Bremner has agreed to facilitate the discussion, with school administration staff taking notes. The school will also gather feedback from pupils during school time.

Toilets and changing facilities consultation

SP reported on feedback gathered by the Parent Council following recent policy changes to toilets and changing facilities. A survey circulated to parents received 14 responses. Many parents reported little noticeable change, but some concerns were raised around accessibility, cleanliness and the availability of gender-neutral and accessible facilities. The Parent Council's summary response has been submitted to the Council. Parents were also encouraged to respond individually to the national consultation, which remains open until 24 March.

Eco Club proposals

Two proposals were received from the Eco Club: a water bottle bank to encourage reusable bottles and an adopt-a-plant scheme for registration classes. The Parent Council responded positively but requested further information, which is awaited.

Pupil tracking guidance

SP reported progress on pupil tracking guidance. Parent Council representatives have worked with the Council to develop guidance for the Broad General Education (BGE) phase [S1-3], which is currently being reviewed by the senior leadership team before being issued to schools. Work has also begun on guidance for the Senior Phase [S4-6].

Looking ahead to the AGM

Simon noted that this was the last meeting before the Parent Council AGM in May,

when postholders will be elected. Several current postholders intend to step down and parents and carers were encouraged to consider becoming involved.