

## *Student Council Review 2018/19*

### **Attendance**

#### **Meeting breakdown (1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> year)**

First meeting with new council – 93%

Second meeting – 70%

Third meeting – 50%

Fourth meeting – 73%

Final meeting – 40%

#### **Year group breakdown (average over every meeting)**

1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> year – 66%

4<sup>th</sup> year – 60%

5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> year – 66%

#### **Number of students never attending**

1

#### **Number of students attending once**

4

### **Analysis**

The first meeting saw a high attendance with only 3 students not making the meeting. There was a good atmosphere however students were advised of what was expected of them as a council member.

The second meeting saw a decline in students attending and for many of these students this was expected. There were very few apologies so students were reminded that if they cannot make a meeting - they should make chair, vice-chair or Mr Parsons aware when possible.

The third meeting had a poor attendance and due to this on the invitation to the fourth meeting students were reminded the importance of attending the meetings. Mrs Allison was also expected at the next meeting, so this was used to encourage students to attend.

There was a 23% increase in students attending and this is likely due to Mrs Allison attending. This was the first time a member of SMT attending a council meeting this year. It was agreed after the meeting that a member of SMT would try and make it along to each meeting.

The final meeting had a very low attendance however this was largely a lack of senior students at the meeting. The meeting was at a busy time for these students – finishing assessments and courses so it was vital that they never missed class time.

May 2019

One student didn't attend any meetings and it may be appropriate to explore ways to support students in attending future meetings where this is the case.

There were a number of students who only attended once. All only attended the first meeting. Each of these students were not expected to attend again and their position in the council should be discussed with SMT.

### **Engagement**

At the first meeting each senior student was assigned a role. These varied from senior staff liaison to newsletter designers and board monitors. Each senior student (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> year) was buddied up with a junior student (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> year). It was hoped that this would allow younger students to develop confidence speaking to staff and other students in a supported environment. The roles were expected to rotate in December however both Kieran and Stephanie decided that not enough senior students were on board and lacked the willingness to work with the junior students.

Each student was given a notebook and encouraged to take notes on items discussed in the council and also so that when they liaised with staff or other council members this could be recorded for later reference. There was also the offer of a prize for whoever has the most comprehensive notebook which would be decided in the new year.

A glow group was also set up with all council members and Mr Parsons. This was set up as a safe and efficient environment for both senior students and junior students to liaise. It was hoped people would use it to update each other on what actions they have been carrying out. It was used for chair and vice-chair to keep people up to date. Newsletter and minutes were also uploaded for students to familiarise themselves with before meetings.

The use of carousel activities were introduced into the council meetings this year. It was hoped that having the 40-person council split down into much smaller groups would allow people, who would be less confident to speak up in front of the whole group, to voice their opinions and ideas.

### **Actions & Achievements**

The council had a busy year and collected a wealth of information from school students.

It was raised that 4<sup>th</sup> year students have most likely more belongings to carry than 5<sup>th</sup> years yet they didn't not have access to lockers. Two 4<sup>th</sup> year students liaised with Mrs Allison with this issue. Mrs Allison was happy to report later in the year that in the new academic year 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> year students would have access to lockers. This was well received from students.

The student council also raised the issue of litter in our school "street". 3 junior students took on the responsibility of launching an anti-litter campaign within the school. They worked on a presentation and delivered this very maturely in year assemblies in March. They will be working towards the rest of their initiatives in the new academic year.

Students had raised a question to why some schools do more National 5 exams in 4<sup>th</sup> year than our school. This was raised with SMT and a focus group within the council agreed to share questions with SMT that could be asked to students and they also came up with points to be considered. This sparked the beginning of a whole school consultation into the issue.

During a carousel activity revolved around the school values raised an issue that got many students involved in conversation. This was to the religious observance assemblies. Many students asked “why, when we are a non-denominational school do, we only have Christian assemblies”. Many also said that they do not enjoy them. SMT agreed to explore the possibility of having various religions discussed in assemblies particularly at key points in each religion.

#### **Chair Person Kieran Rhodes**

Attendance - 100%

“I have really enjoyed being chairperson this year and I am excited to carry on this role next year. It has been a pleasure working with students and staff throughout the school and working towards a common goal of improving the ethos within the school. I had been a member since 3<sup>rd</sup> year and I knew that it had went through two years of low productivity. I had good experience in leadership and team work and thought that I could build it back up and therefore put my name forward for chairperson. Stephanie put her name forward for vice-chair and no one had any objections so that was the final decision. Me ad Steph discussed many things we thought that we could do going forward. I had raised the idea of having roles, using carousel activities and Stephanie thought that notebooks would be a useful idea. We decided to implement these immediately in the hope that this would help improve productivity and improve the moral. In order to improve the overall school engagement, I introduced the idea of a newsletter which was reader friendly. The first one I designed, and it was very basic. Another student who had taken graphic communication offered to designed new one and a did a fantastic job and carried this on all year. The board within the lunch hall was also refurbished and given a fresh look. Overall, I think it has been a successful year there have been a good number of changes or proposed changes due to the council. I have seen a massive increase in confidence within the group and everyone has excelled. I was disappointed that a few abused their position and hope to change the system slightly due to this. However, I am looking forward to another great year.”

#### **Vice – Chairperson Stephanie Aitken**

Attendance - 80%

“I think this year’s student council was one of the best organised in recent years (largely thanks to Kieran) I also think having teams with students from different year groups helped to build relationships within the council. Perhaps for next year student council representatives should speak at their house’s house assembly in order to gain ideas from the audience about what the council should tackle.”

#### **Teacher Lead – Mr Parsons**

“ The Student Council has gone from strength to strength this year and it is great to see the pupils elected to the council showing the commitment needed to improve our school. Kieran and Stephanie have been very organized and were quick to distribute roles and responsibilities to every member of the council. For the most part these responsibilities were followed through, but it has been highlighted that this is something that can be improved. The council are increasingly more accountable of the actions taken between meetings and are eager to create working groups that focus on different aspects of the school. Going forward, a new Vice Chair will be elected in June as well as new S1 representatives in September. Well done all, but there is plenty more to be done.”

### **Headteacher – Mrs Allison**

*“There has been a marked difference in how the Student Council has been led this session and on the impact the Council have had on the school. Having Council members actively seek out engagement with SMT has enabled consultation and decisions on change to take place far more quickly and strengthened relationships between students and senior staff. Perhaps the biggest and most welcome change has been the Council members considering the curriculum, which they are at the centre of, and examining how it can be changed to better suit the needs of all students. That this has led to major changes being made does, I feel, emphasise the power that the Student Council have within Deans Community High School, and the difference that strong leadership can have. It has been a privilege to work with Kieran, Stephanie and the rest of the Student Council in bringing about improvements at Deans for all learners. I look forward to seeing just how much more we can achieve together next session.”*

### **2019-20 Projection**

*It is hoped that the new year will be as fantastic as last year.*

### **Carrying**

- *Monthly newsletter*
- *Notebooks*
- *Glow group (possibly change to Teams)*
- *Carousel & focus group activities*
- *SMT attendance at meetings*

### **Introducing**

*Many ideas are to be discussed with Mr Parsons and Mrs Allison before the new year.*

- *Develop the anti-litter campaign and continue/ begin the initiatives discussed*
- *Discuss with Mrs Allison the possibility of having a twitter page and having it linked with our section on the DCHS website*
- *Rewriting the section on the school website and handbook for student council.*
- *Having a whole council photo along with chair and vice-chair photos with blurb on section on the school website.*
- *Speak with Mrs Allison and seek her opinion on offering places on the council to people who missed out on votes to take the position of members who have not engaged with the group at all.*
- *Elect a new vice chairperson*
- *Organise 1<sup>st</sup> year student council elections and remove the male female ration as this is not necessary*
- *Develop a whole school survey to collate information to form the basis of the years' work*