

**Deans Community High School**  
**Parent Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**Attendees**

Angela Ritchie (Chair), Pauline Allison (HT), Dawn Flemming (DHT), Gillian Campbell, Lauren Riddell, Patricia Miller, Eddie Carson, Sandra Fannon, Anne Edwards, Caroline Bennett, Lauren McMillan

**Apologies**

Heather Marriot, Janice Ritchie

**Agenda:**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Review of the Minutes from previous Meeting
4. Parental Engagement
5. Head Teacher's update
6. AOCB

**1. AR welcomed all to the meeting.**

**2. Apologies as stated above.**

**3. Review of Previous Minutes**

Previous minutes were accepted

**4. Parental Engagement**

The Parent Council members discussed ways in which to engage parents/carers and encourage them to join the Parent Council.

Suggestions to consider –

- A quick link to up-to-date information about the Parent Council on the School App and Website which is more transparent to parents.
- Design a poster based on the Girfec indicators which reflects what the Parent Councils objectives are.
- A Parent Council sway – an interactive presentation where relevant information can be imported. A link in the school newsletter could take parents/carers to this.

- Renaming and rebranding the Parent Council. The aim of this is to encourage parents/carers who may face specific barriers when thinking of coming to a Parent Council meeting.

AR discussed content available in a Document called Engaging Parents and Families toolkit which outlined the possible challenges parents may face.

The group discussed why parents may have resistance to be in a formal group or may feel that there may be a lack of opportunities for less formal opportunities to listen and share information or may not see themselves as the right kind of person to be involved.

The Parent Council's objective is to present a welcoming ethos for all while promoting an informal atmosphere with the objective to expand our numbers. We look to engage as much as possible with all stakeholders to improve the service we provide for all our young people. It is an opportunity for all stakeholders to engage with and work collaboratively with the school. Members will think of ways of how we can achieve this. We will discuss this in more detail at the next Parent Council meeting. Members can email AR with any suggestions and this will be shared with all before the next meeting.

AR is to speak about the Parent Council at the upcoming Parent Transition Information Evening. There will be further opportunities for the Parent Council to engage with parents/carers from cluster primary schools during organised Transition events throughout the year.

AR attended an event for Deans Community High School parents presented by Evelyn Rodgers and Emma Ward (DYW Developing the Young Workforce and SDS Skills developing Scotland).

Information was given regarding -

- Modern apprenticeships
- College applications
- Work experience
- How students access this information
- Websites to support students and parents

The event was very informative and there were opportunities to ask questions throughout. As some parents were unable to attend, ER and EW kindly suggested making a presentation available to all parents via a Sway.

## **5. Update from Headteacher**

### **1. Staffing**

Sarah Duncan (music) will be leaving Deans after Christmas (date to be confirmed) to take up a Principal Teacher post in Edinburgh.

### **2. VSE**

A two day Validated Self Evaluation (VSE) took place around learning and teaching on Monday 15th and Thursday 18th November. This was a very intense couple of days with every teacher

observed at least once by someone from the VSE team which included the Head of Service (secondary), three Education Officers, a DHT from Bathgate Academy, a PTC from Inveralmond Community High School and our own Senior Management Team. The team also held discussions with a variety of staff and student focus groups. The feedback was very positive, with the team giving the school an overall rating of 'good' for learning and teaching and acknowledging the commitment of everyone within the school to working together to improve their classroom practice and students' experiences. The last VSE we had was in 2019 when learning and teaching was rated as satisfactory.

The HT has received an initial draft report from WLC and the final report will be shared with the Parent Council following its submission to the Education Quality Assurance Committee in January. This will contain details of identified strengths and action points.

## 6. AOCB

- CB commented on the effectiveness of the transition process from P7 to S1 and praised the school. PA will pass this onto Steven Small (DHT) who has responsibility for transition arrangements. CB asked if it would be possible to communicate the information regarding transition for parents who are unable to attend events. PA will speak to SS regarding this.
- EC suggested parents/carers of pupils in P7 cluster schools be invited to Parent Council meetings. It was suggested that we could accommodate this during the transition week in the last term. It was also suggested that we could do this for the current parents in the form of a Parent Council informal information night.
- PM asked about the Duke of Edinburgh award. Students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year had the opportunity to engage in this prior to Covid. There may be an opportunity for this to continue in the future. Staff leading the expeditions have to be trained to a certain level to do this and it is hoped that the school can link into Community Learning Development to see if this can be continued.
- AR asked if there is a Prelim timetable and if it could be shared with parents. Students can access this information on Teams. PA will organise to send this information to parents via a link.
- The AGM will be held at the next Parent Council Meeting.

**Date of next Parent Council Meeting will be on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 at 19:00 via Skype for Business.**