

Parent Council appraisal of Educations Scotland's report on its visit to the school during 17 - 18 March 2016

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to provide Hermitage Academy Parent Council's view on the letter published by Education Scotland on 10 May, outlining the findings from their school visit during 17-18 March 2016.

The Parent Council is pleased to see that progress made by the school has been recognised by Education Scotland. However, we also agree with Education Scotland that "the school continues to need additional support from Argyll and Bute Council to make the necessary improvements".

We think that Education Scotland have correctly identified some of the key developments necessary to ensure that the school fully meets the needs of all pupils. These reflect issues which parents have raised with the Parent Council as being problematic. For example, many parents remain concerned about inclusion in the timetable of the short daily i-time period, which means that Mathematics and English get one period less per week than other subject during the critical S4 year. Concerns have also been raised with us about the process by which the appropriate SQA presentation levels will be determined for each pupil during the lead-up to national exam presentations in S4 and S5.

We will be doing our best to work with the school to ensure that parent's views on these issues are taken into account in the actions which must follow the Education Scotland report. To this end, we very much need parents to engage in this process and let us know their views through our Facebook site, by e-mail, in writing, or by attending Parent Council meetings.

Most importantly, Education Scotland note that "the school community now needs a clear and shared understanding of the future direction for the school". From the Parent Council perspective, this means that the school should be setting itself attainment targets which are at least equal to, and preferably higher than, the expectations for a school of our size and socio-economic catchment as published on the Education Scotland Parentzone website. Nothing less should be good enough. The most recent Parentzone data show that the school is currently some way below these expectations for many important indicators, and we will not be relaxing our efforts on your behalf to encourage the school and Argyll & Bute Council to raise standards at Hermitage Academy to a high level.

Yours sincerely,



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