



Hermitage Academy Parent Council
Monday, 2nd May 2022
Zoom 7pm

Attending

HAPC:		Year Rep	
Stella Kinloch	SK	S1	X
Kathleen Daly	KD	S1	A
Laura Watt	LW	S1	A
Miles Stratton	MS	S2	A
Andrew Tennant	AT	S2	X
Angela Bakker	AB	S2	X
Rob Taylor	RT	S3	A
Philip Hartley	PH	S3	X
Claire Walker	CW	S4	X
Nanette Clark	NC	S5	A
Elizabeth Lambert	EL	S5	X
Lisa Johnstone	KD	S6	X
Donna Hicks	DH	S6	A
Lucy Sage	LS	S&D rep	X

Agenda Item	Actions/Notes
Welcome AT	Welcomed everyone to the meeting
Minutes from meeting	N/A
Finance	PH attached
The finances are healthy.	Stella proposed the money could be used for the tech required to facilitate hybrid meetings.
Head Teachers report	DM attached
<p>Mr Turnbull's retirement after 47 years was highlighted for the community to be able to properly thank him for his service. Including to his many years of DofE expeditions. The first Bronze group of the new Hermitage DofE group will do their expeditions this Summer. The Helensburgh Community DofE group has passed on equipment and a closing balance which will fund the expeditions for this year and next.</p> <p>The change in timetable has given the school the opportunity to refresh routines with young people in a number of areas including uniform. A change in ventilation requirements means that Young people no longer have to wear outdoor jackets. The focus in summer term will be on supporting families with any items of uniform they may require, with the addition of all black footwear from the new session in August.</p> <p>Please find the full HT Report as an appendix.</p>	The school is assisting families who struggle to fund uniforms.
School Holiday Dates	Agreed no change
Insight Data	This will be shared with the Parent Council at the working group meeting.

<p>Staffing</p> <p>It has been difficult to recruit Home Ecc teachers nationally. In the absence of a teacher the BGE years have been using the time for Maths and Language instead.</p>	<p>The school are developing more links with Argyll college. and local companies to offer more skills based courses.</p>
<p>School/Parent Communication /Google Guardian/ SIP /New website EL</p> <p>SIP - HA are conducting the second round review of the School Improvement plan. These responses will be shared with parents/pupils when the report is complete. The website is now live and suggestions are welcome from parents on how to improve it. What information do they want available on the website? https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScDy0Rwg8VxN2jl_1uPnvL2hSYXiiU3-6ujLgzuJLNt5cC5ng/viewform The 16+ Hub has a growing wealth of resources on careers, apprenticeships etc. The transition pages are being updated for the new S1's The Landing Page has been updated to attract potential staff with our latest Gold awards for IIF and RRS.</p>	<p>The Parent Council asked that under Pupil Voice a section should be added to explain to Pupils how they could submit ideas or views to the Pupil Council.</p>
<p>Pupil Support -parent group update</p> <p>An ASN consultation meeting included Louise Lawson, Alison Currie plus Hermitage Primary. During this meeting A&B stated the aim to become a preferred location for those with ASN.</p> <p>Feedback from parents however still finds that there are long assessment times across the local authority. With no support for those without an assessment.</p> <p>It was shared that ASN reps had seen an improvement in the flow of communication as part of the extended transition from P7 to S1 this year. This had previously been identified as an area for improvement.</p>	<p>The ASN reps would like an A&B group to be set up for the reps equivalent to the PC one. Stella will ask R Mckay if this is possible.</p>
<p>Transition Plans</p> <p>With the change of mitigation guidance P7 can have the full transition experience in school. 9-10 June.</p> <p>Leavers Breakfast 1st June, Ball 7th June For those staying on at school they have been discussing option choices. There may be merit in going for breadth rather than depth and instead of taking Advance Highers they don't require it might be better to pick up more life skills.</p>	<p>There has been an online information evening for P7 parents. The PC and PTA will take part in the presentations for the in person session on 8th June.</p>
<p>Celebrating achievements working group update</p> <p>Volunteers are being recruited for a working group and parents will be asked for their input.</p>	<p>This working group is due to meet after Easter</p>
<p>PTA</p> <p>Carboot Sale booked for Sat May 7th Information will go out on the Hermitage Academy PTA Facebook page. https://www.facebook.com/groups/1056083984441661</p>	<p>Relaunch of the 100 club coming soon.</p>
<p>Next Meeting TBA Monday 7pm - Zoom</p>	



Parent Council Meeting – Monday 2nd May 2022

Head Teacher Update

Investors in Young People Gold Award

We were delighted last term to share the news that as a school we have been awarded Investors in Young People Accreditation at Gold level. As the first school in the country to be recognised in this way we are extremely proud of the achievement and I am delighted that the hard work of developing our young staff members across the school has been highlighted so positively. A huge thanks to Mrs Harvey for her leadership of the accreditation process and to all the staff, young people and partners involved.

Rights Respecting School Gold Award

In the school newsletter last week, we were delighted to highlight that Hermitage Academy has been awarded the Rights Respecting Schools Gold award. We are the first Secondary School in the Local Authority to gain accreditation at Gold level and only the second school in Argyll and Bute to attain the award. The first being our friends and partners at Hermitage Primary.

My thanks to Miss Purves, Miss Marshall and the young people from the Rights Respecting Schools group for their energy, efforts and enthusiasm. It is a fantastic achievement and one that represents the hard work of our entire school community.

School Building Developments

I am very pleased to share that the nurture spaces within the school are developing well and we are very grateful to the Local Authority for their support in helping to create them. Many of our young people have worked with staff to put the new furniture together and have taken ownership of how the spaces look and feel. This has been a great help with running the first of our nurture groups in conjunction with SDS and Live Argyll for some of our young people with poorer attendance.

As mentioned previously the sensory space plans have been approved and the funding required sourced from the Local Authority. We had hoped that the build would take place during the Spring Break. However, as we expected recent covid mitigation caused delays to the building works and the development is now due for completion during the summer break.

We have recently purchased washing machines, microwaves and other white goods to kit out our Life Skills spaces within the school. WEI Faculty staff will be utilising these spaces with their young people and it offers an environment that encourages more independent learning and partnership working with Parklands school.

As mentioned in the newsletter last week Miss Paterson in Art, continues to lead a group of our young people in designing and developing the learning hub in the former library space. The group recently organised a visit with a local architect and had the opportunity to work on their plans and understand some of the challenges they may face throughout the process. Our young people really enjoyed the visit and will now be developing their ideas further.

Mr Munro has been working with our catering manager, Mrs MacKinnon PT Art/HE to put together initial plans for the introduction of a Barista Café into the Main Hall at the side of the stage. This new facility is being developed in conjunction with Cameron House and will be staffed by senior pupils who will start their training and gain SCQF level

5 Barista skills with Cameron House staff after study leave. Utilising this space more effectively will also help to increase the seating capacity within the main hall at intervals and lunchtime.

Our office and cleaning Staff have been working hard to prepare for the reallocation of lockers. The new S2-4 will have the opportunity to sign up during study leave and S5/6 on their return after exams. There will also be the opportunity for new S1 pupils to rent a locker at the P7 Information Evening on Wednesday 8th June.

Staffing

I am pleased to share that I have had approval from the Local Authority to advertise our temporary posts nationally and on a permanent basis. The growth of our school roll puts us in a really strong position with recruitment and we have a very busy summer term ahead of us to ensure that we are at full strength in August.

For all class teacher appointments moving forward a lesson observation will also take place on a separate day to the interviews as part of the recruitment process. This gives our young people the chance to be involved in staff recruitment and to enhance the process accordingly.

We have a number of staff retiring this year and we will share further information around this in future school newsletters. I would however like to highlight a couple at this time. Mr Hotchkiss will be retiring from his post as one of our DHTs and he will be greatly missed. Recruitment for this post will go live nationally on Friday and it will be interviewed in early June with the Parent Council Involved with the process. The second retirement I would like to highlight this evening is Mr Gordon Turnbull. Mr Turnbull has been a teacher at Hermitage Academy for his entire career and this year sees him complete his 47th year in teaching. To spend 47 years teaching in one school is a truly remarkable achievement, hence the fact that I was keen to give our community early notice of Mr Turnbull's time at the school coming to an end.

Change of Timetable

The change of timetable for S1-3 pupils takes place on Monday 9th May when they will become S2-4. As we have shared with parents/carers, teachers will be using the timetable change to refresh class routines to support building back from covid and also adopt and utilise the nurture training that staff have undertaken this year.

Now that the new timetable has been established Mrs Harvey and Mrs Muir are exploring where we can offer some pupils who have difficulty attending some departmental areas the option to attend some of their subjects in a smaller group setting.

We are also utilising the change of timetable to focus on increasing our shared expectations around uniform and we issued information to parents/carers before the Easter Break and again last week about the support we can offer around this. Our Family Liaison Officer Emma Whitfield is very keen to help and families that require it, so please get in touch.

P7 Transition

My thanks to Mr Docherty for leading the first of the P7 Information sessions on Wednesday evening. We had a great turnout from parents, carers and young people and look forward to being able to welcome them into the school for an in-person information session on Wednesday 8th June, which is the night before the induction days on 9th/10th June. This year will see the return of the full transition experience following the lifting of covid mitigations.

The meeting on 8th June will give parents and carers the chance to meet the house staff that will support their young person throughout their time in the school as their classes and house group will have been shared with them before the session.

Mrs Harvey and Mrs Kennedy report that the majority of transition reviews and enhance transition visits have taken place. With a few that were rescheduled due to take place over the next few weeks.

Our new S1 are currently working on their Hooked on Hermitage materials in their P7 classes and they will be together for the first time at the transition sports on 20th May. My thanks go to Martin Caldwell for coordinating the return of the Getting Hooked on Hermitage event.

Senior Transition

On Tuesday last week, seniors finished up for study leave and both our SQA Coordinator Mrs Muir and the Chief Invigilator Mrs McKeirnan have reported a very calm and positive start to the exam diet.

The Senior skills Academy has also launched this week to give some of our young people sitting two or less exams the chance to use the period of study leave productively and enhance their qualifications and wider achievement awards.

Our S6 class of 2022 we exceptionally well behaved on their last day and it was great to see them around the school in their leavers hoodies, signing each other's shirts and reflecting on the years they have spent at Hermitage Academy. We look forward to welcoming them back into the school for their leavers breakfast on 1st June, where Skills Development Scotland staff will also be on hand, and of course to Prom at Mar Hall on 7th June.

Wider Achievement – Duke of Edinburgh

As we come to the end of our first year as a presenting centre for the Duke of Edinburgh Award our lead member of staff, Mr Toole is currently organising both the practice hikes and their final assessment. We will be giving our Bronze group the chance to move onto silver next year whilst adding a new S3 cohort into the programme in at Bronze. We will also ensure that we have a number of places available for pupils with additional support needs as we did this year.

One of the main reasons we can continue to increase our provision is down to the generosity of the Helensburgh Duke of Edinburgh Group. As they are disbanding, they are presenting Hermitage Academy with the expedition equipment and a cheque for £5000. The staff involved will be visiting the school on Wednesday to hear from our young people about their year and to make the presentation of the equipment and funds. My thanks to all involved for their support.

PTA Car Boot Sale

Finally, I would like to remind everyone that the PTA will be hosting the return of the indoor car boot sale on Saturday 7th May, 11am -2pm. The funds raised from this type of event are invaluable in supporting the clubs and activities on offer at Hermitage Academy. I would like to thank the PTA for their efforts and encourage everyone to come along and get involved.