



Ross High School, Well Wynd, Tranent, East Lothian EH33 2EQ

ROSS HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL  
Meeting of Tuesday 27th November 2018

**Present:** G Walshe (Chair), N Neighbour (Vice Chair), A Muir (Treasurer), J Dall, D Hill, M Macdonald, D Middlemass, H Boyle, W Thornton, B Sanchez, B Esamal, R Averbuch

**In Attendance:** P Reynolds (Head Teacher), C Laud (Depute Head Teacher), M Donnelly (Principal Teacher), L Donohoe, M Henderson, K Furr, Cllr B Small, V Brown (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Cllr G Mackett, Cllr K McLeod, Cllr C McGinn, Cllr F Dugdale, Cllr T Trotter, L Taylor, G Forsyth

Minutes	Action
<p><b>1. Introductions and Apologies</b> GW welcomed everyone to the meeting, apologies as above.</p> <p><b>2. Minutes of last Meeting and Matters Arising</b> The minutes of the meeting on 30th October 2018 were approved. Proposed by DH and Seconded by AM</p> <p><b>3. Senior Reports Feedback</b> PR asked for the Parent Council member’s feedback on the Reporting for the Seniors. S4, S5 and S6 all have one report done each year, which includes testing and data etc. This takes a significant amount of time for the Teachers to complete and just want to know so the parents look at this and feel it makes a difference. A discussion followed and PR thanked the Parent Council members for amazing feedback. It is great to know that what is put out is worthwhile and appreciated. The reports will continue with more elements added as a result from the feedback.</p> <p><b>4. Curriculum Structure</b> CL gave a presentation on the Curriculum structure and how the timetable would alter with the change in hours proposed in the Common School Day Consultation. The idea is to design a flexible curriculum with everyone in place and everyone in mind with a tremendous range of destinations for example, work-placements or universities. Pupils will have their own individualised schedule and it is not one fit all anymore. The school will move to a 32 period teaching week instead of 27 but each period will be shorter so it will be the same number of contact hours per week. There will also be a change from 6 qualifications to 7 qualifications. PR said that this means that we can get really creative around what we can offer the pupils and there will be lots more courses on offer, here or at the College. We are also taking part in the Practical Foundation Apprenticeships, which are the biggest in Scottish education for a long time. It is possible to take half a course one year and return next year to complete the qualification. With such a flexible senior model it is also available for 4<sup>th</sup> year pupils to access these because there will be a need to open it up to more pupils to choose, for the smaller courses to be able to run, for example Nat 5 Higher which can lead on to success in higher level courses. The plan is for it to go ahead from June 2019 so will have almost a year to make it a success and so far the Teachers and departments are positive with the Art department already looking at running an architect course.</p> <p>CL handed out a proposed timetable and gave examples of how the study week would look like for each year, S3, S4, S5 and S6. He also gave examples of how to “fast track” for more qualifications earlier and quicker to free up time for added courses, practical work or science for example.</p> <p>The Parent Council members thanked CL and PR for sharing thoughts and plans that are still in early development and for the really informative and interesting discussions.</p>	

### Course Choice Booklet

CL asked feedback from the Parent Council members for the Course choice booklet. This has all the information needed for making choices for what courses to take and what the qualifications would be. Currently this booklet is printed in color to all pupils in S3 up to S5 and is costly to be produced. CL said that they need to know that it is being useful and being looked at because this could otherwise help to save money. An electronic copy is available on the website for everyone to see and the pupil's and parents can print it themselves. A discussion followed with pros and cons on having a paper copy and the consensus is to only print the booklet for the third year pupil's because this is the year they are making the first choices and to also have a few extra copies for the ones that want it in S4 and S5. PR said that it has never been more necessary to have a booklet because there are so many course choices at the moment and agreed to try this for one year only. Feedback will be sought after a year to help decide if the booklets will be printed for everyone as before. CL thanked the Parent Council members for their feedback and good discussion.

GW thanked CL for coming to the meeting and sharing important information.

### **5. Head Teacher's update**

Staffing changes again. Because it is a bigger school with more than 100 people employed, there will always be changes. New teachers are needed in Drama, Music and English. Margaret Cleat who is the Business Manager is retiring and hope to recruit positive replacement s for them all. There has also been a new PE Teacher recruited and PR is delighted with the choice.

Pupil's won first and second place at the Rotary Engineering Challenge in Glasgow.

S2 held a great performance about underage drinking in the hall after lunch, which was great and absolutely superb.

Pupils went to see the Rip it up Scottish pop music exhibition in Edinburgh, which had brilliant feedback.

Pupil's from S3 attended the Model United Nations day at North Berwick High School and did incredible well. Pupil's were represented from the whole of Scotland and Ross High will make it an annual event

Three girls slept out all night at the front of the school as part of The Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) project to raise funds for homelessness. PR went to see them and they had cctv and the police driving by to make sure they were all fine. They raised more than £300, well done.

The Deputy Head Boy shaved his head for Children in Need and raised £300.

Pupils took part in the Remembrance Sunday to mark 100 years since the end of World War One. They had their own display and it was all about commemorating local people.

Ross High School Mock Court Case continues which provides a unique opportunity for students to learn about the criminal justice system straight from professionals.

The Duke of Edinburgh had 90 children in third year signing up this year, which is great. It is a significant commitment and biggest number yet.

The department for Additional Support Needs (ASN) has newsletters out regularly and these are only sent to the pupil's parents. PR said that they are well worth reading and MD has sent out a compact version of these newsletters for everyone to see.

Ross High is proud to announce the launch of their Health and Wellbeing app "Mind Your Head". This increases understanding of school mental health, what is being done around health and wellbeing and promotes using an app for accessing information rather than the internet. It has links to for example charities, youth cancer trust and mental health wellbeing.

Congratulations to the Children's Parliament team who won an award in their Children and Young People's category.

Christmas presents will be sent out again this year to the elderly in our community and PR will liaise with the local Churches to find out who would benefit the most for these.

In sports, the Judo championship competition won lots of medals for pupils at Ross High, well done. Rugby has had the under 16<sup>th</sup> shield competition. Football is doing really well with all teams into shield except one team. Pupils have won 7 out of 8 medals for swimming, an incredible team effort.

Attainment data analysis from last year identified 15 pupils that were off track and needed interventions. Their parents were invited into school to help with motivation and big improvements have been shown already, which is great.

Statistics for the school is in the right direction and the only one that has fallen behind is attendance, especially for the last day of term with the main reason being cheaper holidays. PR appreciates this however pupils have a duty to attend school and asked for the parent's corporation. Taking time off because of sporting commitments is classed differently so this is still fine. It can be challenging to fix with 1100 pupil's to look at and trying to identify patterns. The school is working hard to identify where possible and MD does lots to try to boost attendance and will invite Louise along to a meeting soon to discuss further.

The school used to have people who would support and push the pupil's that are non-attenders to come to school. Cllr BS suggested funding someone on a one year trial to see how it works? Also, the Area Partnership could help fund it too because attendance comes under mental health so a funding opportunity is there. LD also suggested using the PEF funding for this.

#### **6. The Parental Engagement Strategy 2018**

Members of the Parent Council put together an outline for a workshop on parental engagement, to be run at the South East Collaborative conference on 30th November. Our proposal was not selected, with a primary school from Edinburgh being chosen to run their workshop.

PR suggested targeting first year parents and offering them an experience in the classroom, for example to come along to four lessons and ask for their feedback. The reason being that perhaps it could give them a better understanding to be better able to support their children though High School. The Education System and the teaching have changed over the years and the insight could help parents and carers. DM said that it could give a better understanding of what the child is experiencing if it was a long time ago since they were in school or if they come from another country and don't know the education system. KF said that it could strengthen the bond between the parents and their children with the parents gaining a greater ability to listen in and put themselves in their place when they have seen what it is like. BS said that it is good for parents to find out for example what things can be accessed and also reassuring to be familiar with the setting. NN said that there would always be people who cant make it and would miss out. RA said that it has a lot of value for parents who are actively interested in their children's education. GW said that it would be helpful for parents however suggested coming to other classes other than the ones involving their own children because some children might not want their parents there? PR said that it could be part of the "Understanding our school" evening with two 40 minutes sessions available instead? The Parent Council members were positive, although suggested a clear rationale so the parents would know what the benefit for it would be beforehand. PR thanked the Parent Council members for their feedback and will look into it for the next Parental Engagement Conference.

#### **7. Finance Update**

PR

Balance of bank account at 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018 is £713.23.

The Parent Council members approved £200.00 towards to the weekly film club held by the English department.

PR has had great response for the sofas that needed replaced. They are good to go and have already had help from people coming to pick them up with a trailer. Thanks for all the help.

**8. Fundraising**

GW reminded the Parent Council members to use easy fundraising when shopping online and to spread the word because this does generate funds for the Parent Council with very little effort. VB will send out the link again and a reminder.

The Christmas Fayre is being held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018. MD said that the pupils are all prepared. NN asked the Parents to bring bottles to the wine or water table and it is fine to drop into the school office.

The Burns night will be held on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019 and the speakers are all lined up. NN observed that the 'right' person should run the auction to ensure that we maximise the earnings. A general discussion followed about having a raffle for smaller prizes if there weren't enough suitable prizes for auction. GW suggested having a pupil in the school to paint a painting to go in the auction? JD can ask someone who has won an art competition in the past. Other good prizes would be tickets to various events or a signed memorabilia for example. PR suggested having a welcoming entrance stall so the people without tickets can pay on the night? NN and BS volunteered to do this.

**9. Area Partnership**

The Area Partnership's Annual meeting is held on 11<sup>th</sup> December in Tranent town hall.

**10. Parents' Queries**

There were none.

**12. AOCB**

There was none.

**Date of Next Meetings:**

Next Parent Council meeting will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

VB

NN  
BS