

James Gillespie's High School Parent Council



Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday 21 March 2023

Note of meeting

This meeting was held using Microsoft Teams. Questions from parents and carers were invited prior to the meeting and could also be added during the meeting using a moderated chat.

The following are notes of the presenter names and main points covered, as well as any relevant links, to accompany the video of the meeting held on Teams, which is available to view at:

<https://youtu.be/ITZhu7j4HzM>

Presenters:

Neil McCallum – DM (HT), Iain Coltart – IC (CL Sciences) and Sarah Scott – SS (PC Chair)

Moderator:

Hilary Snaith – HS

1. Welcome and introduction (0:00:00 – 00:02:34)

SS welcomed everyone and outlined the format of the meeting. Formal minutes were not recorded for the previous online meeting (29 November 2022) as a video record is available at:

<https://youtu.be/qx2MbkB1UGc>

Live captioning in English, Polish, Ukrainian, Urdu, Italian and Chinese (Simplified and Traditional) was available.

2. Parent Council report – Sarah Scott (00:02:34 – 00:14:30)

SS asked for volunteers to help with providing refreshments at school events to put their names forward to the Parent Council email: jghscouncilcomms@gmail.com. The PC had already provided refreshments at various events during the year, including concerts and the opening of the Darroch building.

SS reported that the Council had considered its budget for 2023/24 in which cuts to the education budget were proposed. The Parent Council joined with other Parent Councils across Edinburgh to campaign against those cuts.

The recent South-East Locality meeting had considered vaping in schools, Active Schools, school excursions abroad, school IT infrastructure, and the effect of the rising cost of living on parents and

children across Edinburgh. It was confirmed that no reply had yet been received from Joan Griffiths, the Education, Children and Families Committee Convener about the letter on capacity at JGHS which the Parent Council sent on 1 February. SS also reported on the school's A+ group and the progress of the Hayward review on education reform.

PC finances. Since 1 February, the Parent Council had paid in £410.36 proceeds from school events in December and £57.95 from SumUp from the Darroch Opening. A further £90 from that event will feature in the next report of accounts. Also received, £100.89 from Easyfundraising. £2,000 had been paid to the school from donations made by parents for the Donald Macdonald Award for Kindness. Another payment of £108 was made for the PC Teams licence for the period August 2022-January 2023. The balance in the PC bank account was £2,147.94 and the sum held in ParentPay on 15 March was £2,088.92, including £910 raised during the period of the Festive Fundraiser.

The Parent Council had received guidance from Connect on Parent Council finances which had been put on the PC website: <https://jghsparentcouncil.org/2023/03/27/connect-money-matters-for-parent-councils/>. The guidance will form part of the discussion at the next PC meeting on 31 May.

Parents can contribute to Parent Council fundraising via EasyFundraising and ParentPay. Further information is available at: <https://jghsparentcouncil.org/fundraising/>

3. Sciences Curriculum – Iain Coltart (00:14:30 – 00:46:00)

IC gave a presentation on science teaching at the school, and answered questions connected with it.

The presentation is available at: <https://jghsparentcouncil.org/2023/03/21/info-from-jghs-parent-council-meeting-on-21-march-2023/>

4. Head Teacher's report and update – Neil McCallum (00:46:00 – 01:06:00)

NM gave updates on staff recruitment, the end of industrial action, school toilets, the Homework Working Group, the Communications Working Group, school Wi-Fi, misogyny and action on hate crime, education reform, Scottish Government/OECD visit to the Darroch building, coursing and timetabling, the Easter Study programme and revision support, Events (Mental Health Information Evening, S1 Residential, Spring Fling), the Alternative Timetable and study leave.

5. Questions and answers (01:06:00 – 01:31:12)

NM answered questions on the Alternative Timetable and outdoor activities, private study space in the school, study skills, school excursions abroad, homework, 'catch up' learning, and GME teaching.

6. Thanks (01:31:12 – 01:32:07)

SS thanked IS for his presentation and NM for his update and for answering parents' questions. Further information on the work of the Parent Council can be found at <https://jghsparentcouncil.org/>

7. Date of next Parent Council meeting

The next meeting is on 31 May 2023 to be held in person at the school.