

**PHS Parent Council**

**27 April 2023**

**In-person meeting – Peebles High School**

**Attendees**

Sarah Duncan, Chair, Parent Council

Susan Jarvis, Co Vice Chair

Ellie Johnstone, Co Vice Chair

Claire Barrett, Secretary

Judith Ackerman, Communications Lead

Tristan Compton, Property Working Group Lead

Eric Nightingale, Friends of PHS SCIO representative

Campbell Wilson, Headteacher

Kirsty Wylie, Principal Teacher for Data

Julie Pirone, Councillor for Tweeddale West

4 parents were in attendance

**Welcome, Minutes & Actions Sarah Duncan**

**Updated actions:**

* **Daily Bulletin** - ongoing issue to keep this up to date on the website but a further workaround has been put in place from 28 April.
* **S4/S5 leavers** –a small celebration ceremony was held in the assembly hall led by Mr Wilson for 18 pupils who are leaving school at the end of S4/5. Plans for next year include a Graduation Ceremony for all S4/5/6 leavers which would be more inclusive.

**Chair’s Update**

The Chair is part of a network of **Secondary School Parent Council Chairs** in the Borders who meet regularly and the following update was provided:

* **Mental Health** – recent meeting with SBC was positive with recognition there is a gap between the services offered by Quarriers and CAMHS. SBC agreed to run a pilot to commission a psychology service to fill this gap in 2023/24 while all commissioned services are reviewed to determine long term requirements.
* **Catering provision** – SBC have been asked to present details of the current provision at the next meeting for all Parent Council Chairs to inform discussions on how to improve the service for ELC, primary and Secondary.

**Uniform review group** – the PC presented findings and recommendations to Mr Wilson/SLT who will discuss with Extended Leadership Team in the next few weeks and communicate decision on new policy to parents in May. No drastic changes have been proposed, still black/white/red but with a bit more choice allowed.

**Property Subgroup** – SBC have now published report on engagement sessions, showing the ground & first floor plan changes. The Subgroup are hoping to meet with SBC in the next few weeks as questions on several areas still require clarity, eg assembly hall layout and evacuation plan. Mr Wilson confirmed he had met with Steven Renwick and was waiting for more detail to enable him to form a response to the group. Steven Renwick was also due to speak to staff again in coming weeks for final input on plans.

**Equalities -** ‘Respect policy’ has been extensively reviewed and being finalised by the school with a podcast version planned and all versions to be available on website before the end of term.

**Current building** – John Curry committed to investigating introducing a process for volunteers to make cosmetic improvements to SBC properties without supervision of approved contractors and the Chair had chased a response this several times. Mr Wilson confirmed plans were being made to recarpet the ground floor of the Millennium Wing over the summer holidays.

**Friends of PHS charity –** the fundraising arm of the PC has vacancies for Fundraisers. If anybody is interested in helping out, please [get in touch](mailto:FriendsofPHS@outlook.com). The charity have an Easy Fundraising account which pays cashback for online purchases: [Easy Fundraising](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friendsofphs/)

*What is the process for asking for funds from the charity and can we spend some on the current school?*

Any school staff, pupil groups or parent groups can bid for funding. The only exception is that we expect extra-curricular clubs to be self-funding. The Taskforce Coordinator was made aware of the ability to request funding from the charity or school to take forward work but has opted not to do so. Mr Wilson confirmed that there had been an underspend in the staffing budget this year which he would be using some of to offset feeder primary overspends however he could request permission to carry forward some of this towards making improvements to the school.

*Action: Mr Wilson to request permission for underspend to be carried forward to carry out improvement works over the summer holidays.*

**Notice of AGM and upcoming vacancies**

The Parent Council AGM will be held on Tuesday 6 June, online using Microsoft Teams and all parents/carers and staff are welcome to attend. There are several vacancies for elected roles so please [get in touch](mailto:phspc@outlook.com) if you’re interested in becoming more involved: Chair, Communications Officer (Social Media mainly), Taskforce Coordinator, potential for more Working Group leads once the SIP has been finalised.

**Our School Improvement Priorities (SIP) for 2023/24**

SIP discussions were due to kick off among staff at the upcoming inset day and a summary of the [**Parent Council’s Improvement Priorities**](https://phsparents.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/PHS-Parent-Council-School-Improvement-Priorities-April-2023.docx) had been shared with Mr Wilson to ensure they feed into this process from the beginning. The priorities had been shaped by feedback received from parents in the past year either through meetings or correspondence and were around the themes of Behaviour Management; Wellbeing, equality & inclusion; Communication; Teaching & Learning and Curriculum. The detail under these priorities were agreed correct by those present but further comments from parents would be welcomed.

There was a discussion about the increased use of cover teachers in recent years and Mr Wilson confirmed that staff absence rates remain higher post-Covid which means supply or internal cover is needed on a daily basis and at times is a real challenge due to shortages in supply availability. The priority is to ensure all classes are supervised. It was confirmed that data on which classes were being covered is collated to understand impact on year groups or individual classes/pupils however this could be looked into. A parent shared an example where one BGE class appeared to have had no input from a qualified Maths teacher for a 6 week period which was a significant gap in their learning. It was confirmed that there is a shortage of Maths teachers throughout Scotland but the school would look into whether such patterns of cover could be avoided in future.

*Action: Mr Wilson to investigate data held on cover arrangements and report back on how the school will avoid the same class being covered by non-subject teachers frequently.*

**Headteacher Update Campbell Wilson**

**Peebles High School Review and School Improvement:**

The return visit of senior staff from SBC Education department in early March was robust and challenging as ever. While clear progress was recognised, particularly in young people feeling safer (60% in Oct, up to 70% in March) and the experience of young people in the enhanced provision improving, there are still areas where the council expect to see more progress to build on the green shoots. The appointment of a fourth DHT and the new PT Leadership roles in Learning and Teaching, Student Leadership, Wider Achievement and Data and Tracking were welcomed and their positive impact noted. Further improvement in the Leadership of Change and the culture of leadership is asked for going forward. Members of staff from SBC will return in October 2023 to review progress again. While this increased level of scrutiny is challenging it is also welcomed as it is accelerating improvements for our young people and ensuring we are better prepared for HMIe inspection. It is really useful to hear about Parental Improvement Priorities provided to me by Sarah as we embark on the annual School Improvement cycle for the coming session. At the AGM on 6 June I will provide a comprehensive report on progress this year and planned for the coming session. Your input with our newly appointed PT, Kirsty Wylie, this evening will help to further ensure that Parental Voice is shaping our Improvement Priorities and leading to a genuinely co-created plan.

**Staffing:**

Next session’s timetable - Mr Reid is in the final stages of completing next session’s timetable and is on track to meet the deadline of every young person moving up a year on 5th June. As is always the case at this time of year, a new timetable requires new teachers to meet the changing demands and we are currently advertising for teachers in several subjects across the school. Mr Reid reports that student satisfaction rates in terms of young people getting their first choice of subjects is very high once again this year (>97%). Where a young person cannot get their first choices, Pastoral staff will be reaching out to families to discuss in advance of the timetable to support re-coursing. Thankfully, this impacts only a very small number of young people.

*Action: Mr Wilson to ask Mr Reid to notify all parents once subject choices have been confirmed to reduce anxiety in the school community about whether choices have been accepted.*

**Library, Study Leave and study spaces silent study spaces:**

Our reading shed and temporary Library has arrived and been erected. Our Tweed Read leaders are working with Mrs Stewart to have book borrowing services up and running soon. I am delighted with the maturity and focus of seniors who have been coming into school to study this week. It is normal for young people to start taking their study very seriously once the exams are under way but it is particularly notable this year how hard they are working.

**S6 Graduation and Leavers’ Ball:**

Another year have flown the nest! They seemed to enjoy their graduation ceremony greatly and I am looking forward to their Leavers’ Ball on Saturday 3rd June.

**Opportunity to Feedback on Reporting**

Miss Wylie introduced herself and confirmed her new role as Principal Teacher for Data had the initial task of reviewing the reporting framework and making recommendations for improvement. She highlighted the importance of staff, pupils and parents all having a chance to feed into ths process and invited feedback from the Parent Council on the frequency, standard and content of reporting. She has already gathered views from staff and the student parliament. It was noted that Showbie was being introduced across the school and had potential to feed into the reporting framework. Those present were provided an opportunity to provide written feedback and the wider parent forum would be invited via a Facebook post the opportunity to share their views by email. The Chair confirmed they would collate all comments received and share them anonymously with Miss Wylie.

*There was no time for Q&A as janitorial cover had only been arranged until 8:30. Please get in touch if you wish to discuss any of the issues raised or any other issue by email:* [*phspc@outlook.com*](mailto:phspc@outlook.com)

**The meeting closed at 8:20**

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**Helpful Info/Reminders**

**Parent Council Meeting Dates for 2022/23**

Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 6 June 2023 at 7pm (virtual)

**Post Holders**

Chair - Sarah Duncan

Vice Chairs - Susan Jarvis  & Ellie Johnstone

Secretary - Claire Barrett

Communications Officer - Judith Ackerman

Equalities Lead - Lorraine Murray

Event Coordinators - Dee Hollingsbee & Elodie Seller

Friends of Peebles High School SCIO representative - Eric Nightingale

Property Lead - Tristan Compton

Taskforce Coordinator - Max Volino

We welcome interested parents & careers on the Parent Council as general members or working group members. We simply ask that you try to attend meetings regularly. If you would like to be considered an ordinary member or join a specific working group, please email your details to**:** [phspc@outlook.com](mailto:phspc@outlook.com)

Any parent or carer interested in supporting the Friends of PHS charity with running fundraising activities should get in touch at [FriendsofPHS@outlook.com](mailto:FriendsofPHS@outlook.com)

**Website: phsparents.org.uk** (includes live feed for Twitter)

**Facebook: PHS Parents –** contact us via Messenger

**Twitter:** **@PHSparents @PeeblesHigh**