



Berwickshire High School Parent Council

Minutes of Parent Council Annual General Meeting - 31 August 2022

Present

Parents: Neil Bennett, Colin Gracey, Danielle Gracey, Mo Lamond, Katy Master, Helena Richards, Claire Stewart, Vicky Tait

Staff: Emma Dickson (Acting Depute Rector), Bruce Robertson (Rector)

Apologies:

Val Redpath, Jane Taylor

1. Election of Office Bearers

Parents were nominated and elected as follows:

Chairperson – Neil Bennett

Treasurer – Mo Lamond

Secretary – Katy Master

Fundraising Officer – Claire Stewart

It was agreed that rather than appoint a Vice-Chair, either the Treasurer or Secretary can act as Vice-Chair according to availability and need.

2. Minutes of last meeting of previous academic year

The minutes of that meeting have not yet been finalised. This is a result of various factors including lack of Secretary last year and the summer break. Neil will circulate to all members for comment and they will be approved at the next meeting.

3. Chairperson's Report 2021-2022

Neil circulated a report summarising the work of the Parent Council as well as work he has carried out with the Scottish Borders Secondary School Parent Councils' Chairs group.

On behalf of all parents he thanked Bruce, the Senior Leadership Team, all staff and pupils for their hard work, efforts and achievements over the past year in relation to school improvement. Bruce in turn thanked Neil for his work in support of those efforts.

Neil also updated those present on

- a) Ongoing efforts to improve professional mental health support provision in Borders' secondary schools. Recent meetings have been held between SBC education staff, NHS, Parent Council Chairs and representatives as well as Secondary Headteachers to discuss how Scottish Government monies for mental health professionals in secondary schools have been spent by SBC and how mental health support for young people in schools can be improved. Discussions are ongoing, but the clear preference from Parent Councils is to have suitably qualified Counsellors available in schools. Neil will further update the Parent Council as discussions continue.
- b) Ongoing efforts to improve school meals. This work has been put on hold as Parent Council Chairs have been focussing on the mental health provision issue. It will be picked up again this coming year.
- c) Parent Council recruitment. Neil welcomed Vicky Tait to the meeting as a new parent to the school and highlighted that the Parent Council would benefit from new members who regularly attend meetings, especially as some parents have only one more year to go before their children

leave school. He also welcomed Danielle and Colin Gracy. It was agreed that improved communications from the Parent Council to all parents would help in recruitment efforts and that the Parent Council would therefore have a regular slot in Heads Up to promote its activities, inform parents of meetings, invite contributions and so on.

- d) Senior Awards Ceremony. This event is to be revived after a Covid-induced lull. Bruce explained that he has asked Ronald Drummond, former teacher at BHS, to organise it for 15th September. The Parent Council has funded three awards in the past and has been asked by the school to do so again. This was agreed. It was also agreed that the Parent Council would staff a tea and cake stall. Katy, Claire, Helena and Mo offered to help with this. The format for the Awards Ceremony will be reviewed after this year's event has taken place.
- e) The PE department has requested an additional £147.42 to buy eight more sports tops in youth sizes on top of the 25 tops in adult sizes already agreed. This was agreed.

4. Treasurer's Report 2021-2022

Mo presented the report, which showed that the Parent Council started the year with £3,389.95 in the bank, received £1,521.00 in income and spent £2,081.55 over the course of year. The end of year balance was £2,820.40.

This total does not include expenditure of £509.67 committed for sports tops or income of £327.45 from the sale of merchandise (mugs and teddies) at the BHS Anniversary event and Sister Act.

5. Fundraising and 200 Club draw

There were two draws for the 200 Club.

June 2022 (Double prizes):

1st – 45, Jane Taylor

2nd – 64, Graham Small

3rd – 18, Dawn Gotterson

September 2022 (No draw, July and August)

1st – 23, Kathy Anderson

2nd – 54, Elspeth Boland

3rd – 16, Elizabeth Landon

Claire reported that merchandise had sold reasonably well at the BHS Anniversary Event and at Sister Act, but that opportunities to sell the remaining stock must be exploited over the coming year. Efforts to recruit a Local Business '200 Club' for the school continue.

Claire proposed that a separate Fundraising Sub-Committee be established, which could meet on an ad hoc basis and as needed basis to concentrate on the task of raising funds. This was agreed. Heads Up will be used to recruit to this sub-committee and promote its activities, as well to promote the standard 200 Club.

6. Rector's Report

Bruce presented his report. He highlighted that the School's Improvement Plan focusses on a culture of ambition and on raising attainment. He discussed various staffing issues and explained that recruiting to maths post is especially challenging presently. This is a region-wide challenge. He is currently working hard to resolve maths staffing issues.

The Senior Awards Ceremony will take place on 15th September. The school hopes to introduce a Junior Awards Ceremony later this academic year.

7. SQA Attainment 2022

Bruce gave a short presentation on SQA attainment this year, focussing exclusively on Nat 5, Higher and Advanced Higher exam results. Full attainment information which includes Nat 4, Nat 3 and National Progression Awards will be presented and discussed at a future meeting.

Bruce presented various data sets which looked at attainment in different ways: tariff points, pass rate, and percentages of students achieving five or more Nat 5s (A-D) and students achieving three or more Highers (A-D) in S5 and the same in S6.

From the data currently available, it looks like attainment at BHS has improved on the last year that exams were taken (2019), particularly at S4. The extent of that improvement is difficult to quantify more precisely until further data becomes available from the SQA (comparative, regional and national data). Bruce will update the Parent Council at the next meeting.

In the meantime, faculty targets are being reviewed and all teachers asked to provide attainment reports for their subject area, which look at 2022 attainment and identify areas for improvement and action, in order that targets can be updated and Raising Attainment plans can be drawn up.

8. Matters raised/AOB

A query was raised in relation to finding resources to help children with their work. The school website signposts parents to various resources. This will be highlighted in Heads Up.

9. DONM

5th October 2022