



Hermitage Parent Council

9th June 2025

7pm-8pm

HAPC Public Meeting:

Name	Role/Year Rep	Attendance
Douglas Morgan (DM)	Head Teacher	In Person
Mrs Kennedy	Deputy Head Teacher	In Person
Laura Watt (LW)	Chair (S4 Year Rep)	In Person
Vacant	Vice Chair	-----
Stella Kinloch (SK)	Deputy Chair / Treasurer (S2 Year Rep)	In Person
Kirsty Sweeney (KS)	Secretary (S2 Year Rep)	Virtual
Fiona Ramsden (FR)	ASN Rep	Virtual
Claire Walker (CW)	S3 Year Rep	In Person
Andrew Tennant (AT)	S5 Year Rep	In Person
Kathleen Daly (KD)	S4 Year Rep	Apologies
Anna Tkachenko (AT)	S1 Year Rep	In Person
Donna Holland Gairns	S1 Year Rep	Apologies

Acronyms

PC – Parent Council

ASN – Additional Support Needs

SDS – Skills Development Scotland - [About SDS - Skills Development Scotland](#)

ANA – Addressing non attendance

SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timescale

CONNECT – formerly Scottish Parent Teacher Council

BGE – Broad General Education – encompasses curriculum from S1 to S3.

1. Treasurer's update

£7, 704 liaising with TSB business account. Despite getting signatures, but unfortunately they haven't been there and can't speak re the Parent Council.
In a loop.
This happened before and a cheque would need to be signed by old signatories.

We are committed to finding a solution.

The balance on the new account remains £0 as the last payment from the Council was paid into the old TSB account.

2. ASN Update

ASN Parent Council Representative update:

A quick update as the last meeting ASN comms, was cancelled. The focus has been around the Learning Centre and is on schedule to open after the summer. It will mean a change for some of the rooms used for pupil support.

We are looking understand from the wider school community, including other schools, to get a handle on what they are looking at. Rise in increase of ASN. Want to link into other schools and bring to the table what they are doing.

School comments

A team has been to other schools with Learning Centres. Mrs Henderson and Mr Morgan going to a school in South Lanarkshire. The school can see if we can get a parent connection for the Parent Council ASN rep.

Rep - Agreed - That would be great to get that connection to get wider idea and thoughts of how parents are involved.

Point raised by PC - Information evening – it wasn't mentioned that there was a ASN parent group.

School Response: Fair point, there are a few sub groups that could have been mentioned and a note will be taken and bring it in at the next Information session.

New term, get a note out on Expressions and the school can do that at the start of the new term. And on the School Facebook site.

It can be information overload on these evenings, so important to drip feed the information via these other channels.

3. Headteacher's Update - Learning Hub. Staffing updates

Staffing update:

The School will not be losing any staff this year and additional staff. Only one member of staff retiring in the office and this post has been reappointed.

Kirsty Muir deputy head for Davaar will return to that post.

Mrs Dougan soon to go off on maternity.

Mrs Taylor will be leaving. Interviews are on Thursday for that post.

Additional staff going into social subjects. Not a replacement a new additional member of staff.

SQ Exams – A huge congratulations to Mrs Muir. 3,000 presentations.

English exam for example took place across 19 different locations across the school.

The young people are to be congratulated. Young people to make appointments re guidance about slots for future pathways. Very successful Leaver's breakfast and the 6th year had a fabulous time. Leavers party is still to happen.

Information P7/S1 transition – many have been doing extended transition and there was a smaller setting for ASN. It was really well attended. A lot of information. Feedback received that it was a happy, inclusive place. The nervousness that had been around, then parents had more confidence that pupil will be supported. There was more interaction this year. New S1 made a superb first impression.

Summer trips – a buzz across the school and pupils looking forward to the trips.

Learning hub – everything is on order, holding off getting delivered until after exams. The furniture has now arrived and will be set up by end of June and S6 induction – told that they will get to use that room in August – the pods, etc.

School captain interviews – Frid 13th June – need a parent volunteer if anyone interested. Parent Council said they will confirm who would attend via email.

4. Communications Update

Communications group hasn't met. Meeting next Monday.

Newsletter – Parent Council group had been discussing and noted that really important messages being missed and overlooked due to length, order and need to review and look at different formats. Get to good news stories first. A number of parents were seeking a review. Maybe it could be split into year group. Most parents are only getting the link via Expressions (a phone app) and not email. The point about the format – pdf format is hard to read on a phone and it would be good to have in a webpage format that responds to the screen size. The Comms team can look at what parents are using to read the Newsletter.

School response: Certainly the teachers/pupil group who prepare the Newsletter can look into the format of the Newsletter and look at layout, different formats.

Parent question - Local Place Plan – Helensburgh – this post didn't get on to Expressions.

Chair - Apology given by Parent Council as it was missed. Parents can put things up on Parent Council up on Facebook.

Point raised - Some parents might prefer to come via Parent Council if not confident to put it out a message by themselves.

School response - If it is a community event that involves young people then yes, it is important to get these communications out.

5. Safeguarding

Parent Council - Given a recent incident Parent Council thought it was important for parents to understand safeguarding policies.

School Response - In a school this size then safeguarding and child protection is dealt with all the time. There is a child protection team. Social work, health, police and young carers – we work together with all these external partners. On an annual basis all staff received full training on safeguarding and child protection. It is the first thing that is offered and there are refreshers throughout the

year. It is something living and breathing. Generic training, guidance staff receive enhanced training. We work to get students away from risk taking activities.

S1 – peer mentor with S6 buddy. And the S6 – get information so they may get told something from a S1 and the chain of who they pass that on to.

It's about culture in the school. There is a clear intervention programme. Social work came into school. House teams have connection with families so there is a relationship of trust. We want to get to know the pupils really well.

It was explained that it is an integral part to my job every week. Come straight to me or their house teams. More than often, I consult with other partners. Work very closely with children and family services at the Council. Young people are told about what the channels are and continually deliver training. Ensure pupils know that no issue is too small.

Q: Could that include social media and what is acceptable and not acceptable and report to? Are we giving 'life' examples to pupils? E.g. an example could be - A friend request has come in from a member of staff – teacher. Not all young people have someone to speak to about these things. Important to teach young people about the line.

Answer from school: A teacher gives a presentation to staff - over familiarity – is part of the session – code of conduct, professionalism on social media. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to talk about examples in class when getting taught about being online. –PC Gallachar gives examples and try to make it as real life as possible. We talk about how someone could look like someone they know.

6. AOB

Q: Timetabling – two things raised. Lateness of timetables – appreciate big task to timetable all these pupils – S5/6 on the day. S2/S3 – had generated anxiety. Could it be brought forward.

School Response: Can't bring S5/S6 forward. But the young people with ASN – some have been given in advance and this year it happened before. Particularly in younger year groups 2/3 days before.

Q - What is the reason? If it is ready on the Wed then can't it be emailed out to pupils?

School Response: We don't have a system that can merge it on mass at the moment. It is hoped by next year we can start to bring forward a few days. We are moving to online attainment as a first step so timetable moving over is the next thing. Pupils will be making changes right up to the last minute. We do an extended registration on the day timetables are handed out so Guidance staff can help sort anything out with pupils. Generally – most parents had said it was a positive experience.

Q: One feedback was S6 not as much choice. E.g. advance higher accounting, history

School Response: Example - advance higher history – Northern Alliance – 7 local authorities – Aberdeenshire will be facilitating that.
16 advance higher – it is the most advance higher offered in Argyll and Bute.

If you go to 5 columns then there are going to be clashes.

Always take one where there is a teacher if a pupil is struggling to choose as the virtual one are more difficult to achieve/engage with. Accessing the help can be more difficult. In class connection is so important. 3 young people want to do advanced higher history. It is a real balance so that's why we go with doing things jointly with others. It also has a cost to sign pupils.

Q: Barista course, did pupils choose?

School Respose: We could have only places for 20 practical – 80 applied. So we changed how we are going to deliver it. Leadership academy – sign up – offering barista as part of that. They sign up to be on shift and one time in the week to check in with a staff member to do training. Then they will get the qualification alongside the other 4 they have chosen.

Q: S5 – putting off accounting – not available at higher

School Resposne: Columns are only created after the pupils have selected. If you do it the other way around then you don't get as high a pass rate. We get 97%. Unfortunately there will be some courses that don't run because of numbers. It is difficult one. In all course booklets it tells pupils this could happen. Hermitage offer support to other schools through online learning but that is only done if the numbers at Hermitage is low and the teacher can cope with it. School do their very best to facilitate pupils pathways for the seniors and all pupils.

Date of next meeting – next school year to be confirmed

Note post meeting Parent Council discussion regarding 'disclosures' (PVG) for parent council members as it had been raised at the 'area' meeting. It was noted that we are a 'regulated role' which we do not make any strategic decisions and any contact with children would be incidental (i.e. at a school event when a parent or teacher(s) are present). <https://www.mygov.scot/disclosure-guidance-parent-groups>
It should be noted that to ask Parent Council members for conviction information (i.e. PVG) when not entitled then this is an offence.