

Deans Community High School  
Parent Council Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday 26 March 2019

1. Present:

Angela Ritchie, Mark Cockburn, Jacqueline Baird, Linda Irvine, Sandra Fallon, Pauline Allison

2. Apologies:

Janice Ritchie, Caroline Bennett

3. Guest: Melissa Byrne Family Support Worker:

Melissa Byrne is Family Support Worker who is employed 18hours per week supported from the Pupil Equity Funding. Referrals and identification of students who could benefit are from Heads of House and/or SMT

Family Work includes- Individual Support (1:1 support), Family Contact, Themed Groups, Community Outreach

Individual Support (1:1) – Based around Mental Health, Wellbeing, Transition, Relationships

Currently 9-11 Families supported

Adverse Childhood Experience (s) – If required students can be referred for counselling to appropriate service.

Groups involved – Include Fast Forward, Give us A Break, Young Carers

Themed Groups / Outreach Events – Includes meeting parents in own community, Knightsridge Vennie – Soup was made and taken for parents and young people to attend together for tasters and information.

**Benefits;**

Increasing support for attending school – Families enjoyed cream tea event in school.

Improved home-school relationship – Parents/carers and young person cookery where good value nutritious meals were made together.

Young people gaining more confidence in their own abilities.

Improving relationships between student & parents.

Respecting choice; visits can be home, school or community based

Advice and support with funding, clothing, transport

**Summary of Output so far;**

148 1:1 sessions delivered

21 school uniform bank referrals

37 participants in family events

4. Drama:

Gallery to be refurbished as drama studio. Drama going to be built up more in school as builds confidence up in students. DCHS always working in subtle way to build up confidence of young people. Introduction of new Drama Teacher very well received.

5. Autism Ambassadors:

Autism Ambassadors have been continuing their work in assemblies and will continue to support students until end of term / study leave.

6. Blazers:

Headteacher met with student council to discuss blazers. Students also took part in a questionnaire regarding implementation. S4-6 wanted to move forward unanimously with blazers. S1-3 voted No.

Blazers are going to be rolled out across whole school however will not be compulsory. Those in S6 taking on additional roles such as Prefect, House Captain, Captain etc will be expected to wear school Blazer with braiding and will be made fully aware of this.

7. Lockers:

With effect from August 2019 all S4, S5 & S6 will have allocated lockers.

Additional spacing is being looked at around school to identify areas where more lockers could potentially be located and discussions are ongoing for rest of the school.

8. Attendance:

It has been noted that in some cases, once unconditional university offers have been received by student's attendance decreases significantly. In order to limit disruption to classes, lessons planned, rota activity etc SMT are looking at ways to move forward during term 2019/2020 with different approach to this minority for the improvement and benefit to all.

9. Music:

Janice Parker has been invited to DCHS to speak with Music Department to see where best any funding that may be offered to the department could be used.

10. Head Teachers Report:

**1. Staffing changes**

Teacher Appointments:

English            Haley Russell (starts 1.4.19)

Grant Henry (starts 23.4.19)

Computing        Ross Cumming (starts Aug 2019)

Current Probationers offered permanent posts:

Physics            Kathryn Liddell

Drama             Ryan Stewart

Bus Ed            Lesley Jakubiak

Other Staffing News:

Ali Easton – English – Fixed term 1 year contract

Lyndsay Lammie – Bus Ed – Maternity leave from August

Frances Riddell – Music – Retiring at the summer

Requested a number of Probationer Teachers for next year – will know more after Easter.

## **2. News**

- Senior Handball Team won the Scottish Schools Handball Championships (4<sup>th</sup> time)
- Wind Band and Cluster Band both awarded Gold in the Scottish Concert Band Festival
- Percussion ensemble won the SBBA Scottish Championships
- Level 3 gymnastics team won the level 3 WL Gymnastics Trophy and level 2 team won bronze medals
- Rolling out cycling as part of the S1 Excellence Awards – group of staff and senior students now qualified as level 1 leaders
- Gallery being refurbished as a Drama Studio
- Student Council requested additional lockers – will be offered to S4 also from August
- P7 transition is now well under way, led by Stephen Small (DHT). This includes:
  - Enhanced transition for students with additional needs
  - DHT and Support staff attending P7 Parents' evenings
  - DHT and Support staff attending coffee mornings at Cluster Primaries
  - DHT and S1 students holding Q & A sessions with P7 students at each Cluster Primary
  - P6 student visits in May
  - P7 visits over 5 days in June
  - P7 parent info evening in June

### **11. P7 Transition**

The enhanced transition for P7 starting DCHS August 2019 has already begun.

SMT are attending parents' evenings in cluster primary schools. Information booklet containing information parents could find useful such as telephone numbers, Head of House, time of the school day etc, taken along and given out.

Coffee mornings being arranged and attended by parents and staff to discuss any concerns and get to know staff, school, etc.

Information Evenings held in DCHS offered where parents/carers have the opportunity to visit with their child and have tour around school. Suggestion that representatives of the parent council will be present on these evenings to welcome potential new parents on board

and to answer any questions. Parent council discussed ways of reaching as many parents as possible on these evenings. Entry into a prize draw in exchange for contact email address was suggested. Several parent council members offered to donate prizes.

Mr Small asking parents of P7 their main worries for their students starting DCHS and trying to alleviate as many as possible. One of the main concerns parents raised was leaving the school at lunchtime to go to Morrisons. In response to parents concerns DCHS has listened and with effect from August 2019 S1 will **no longer** be allowed to leave school grounds during lunch hours.

Mr Small has attended cluster schools with Q & A for P7 students. Current S1 students who had attended said cluster school were taken along to answer any questions current P7 had. This was well received and lots of questions directed to the S1 students who helped ease many of the worries and concerns raised. Positive sessions in all cluster schools. Students from S2 will buddy the new S1 intake August 2019 and a mentor system will also be in place to ease the transition process.

#### 12. School Website:

The website is now complete from DCHS and currently with IT services to go live in line with other West Lothian schools. No date for this as yet but expected soon.

#### 13. Head of Services & Head of Planning:

The local Ability Centre in Carmondean is undergoing a 1-year refurbishment. Pauline Allison (HT) was approached and visit was undertaken of DCHS to identify areas that could be used by service users of the ability centre whilst refurbishment being carried out. Various rooms have been put forward to the council for suggestion. DCHS is designed and used as a community school and areas being offered to the community do not interfere or cause any interruption to the day to day running of DCHS. Pupils will not be affected by service users of the ability centre using DCHS whilst the refurbishment work is ongoing.

#### 14. Mrs J Baird:

Mrs Baird has served as an active member of the Parent Council for the last 6 years and has contributed greatly. Mrs Baird leaves the parent council as her child also leaves S6 this summer. On behalf of the parent council and Head Teacher we thank Mrs Baird for all her valued contributions and support to DCHS. Flowers were presented as thankyou and appreciation.

#### 15. S6 Prom:

This year's Prom will be held in the Hilcroft. Students as well as parents/carers are invited to meet at school on evening of 21<sup>st</sup> June 2019 for photos and reception prior to making their own way to the venue.

Times and further details will be released closer to Prom date.

#### 16. Date of Next Meeting

28<sup>th</sup> May 2019