



**Strathaven Academy Parent Council AGM**  
**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023 @ 7.00pm**

**Attendance:** Jack Campbell (Chair), Jo Tunney (Vice Chair), Cheryl McMorris (Secretary), Elise Frame (councillor), Waheeda Huq (Head Teacher), Kirsteen Kinniburgh, Carlyne Mitchell, Gillian Baker, Lyndsay Rae, Mrs Leck (Teacher), Mr Brown (Head of Faculty for Science), Paula Hamilton (Principal Teacher/Acting Depute Head Teacher), Iain Fleming (Depute Head Teacher), Catriona Webber, Aqsa Khan, Christine Hall, Amanda Minns, Julie Le blanc Smith, Becky Howie, Catherine Cain.

**Pupils:** Zoe B, Grace A, Katie C, Caitlin S,

**Virtual:** Emma Hall, Yvonne Vance, Giovanna McKenna

**Apologies:** Melanie White, Elaine Richardson, Ray Maclean, Adele Brennan.

1. **Minutes of AGM 2022** – Accepted.

2. **S6 Leadership Team Report**

The S6 Leadership team gave feedback of their work so far:

**Younger pupil mentoring** has been set up pairing S6 pupils with S1 pupils, to offer peer support both academically and with wellbeing.

**Extra-curricular clubs** have been established and are proving to be very popular so far.

**Charitable supports** have included: collections for Loaves and Fishes & a sponsored run.

**Student Outings** have been organised including: Bookfest in Edinburgh. Drama theatre visits, cycling competition and netball. Reading week ended last week with a “cosplay” day.

**Plans for the year ahead:** Rotary Club Garden opening in Allison green - students designed artwork to put on benches. Languages day for S3 pupils. Dividing prefects into smaller groups to work with local communities and in engaging with parents. Supported study for younger pupils. Supporting preparation of the school for inspections occurring during the first week in October.

Cllr Frame offered to assist the S6 leadership in relation to vaping issues.

3. **House Council Report**

Junior Captains gave an overview of the House Council and the Junior Captain’s roles. The group is currently gathering pupil & parent views and feedback from this will be presented to pupils during school assemblies. Members have been involved in interviewing staff. Suggestions and ideas raised at the House Council are being brought to the Senior Team; this has already included: an idea from a couple of S5 pupils about the recycling of study guides or study supports that other pupils could then access and S3 have raised the school uniform as their agenda item.

A vote of thanks was expressed to pupils for coming along to the parent council AGM and updating on the work that they are doing.

#### 4. Headteachers Report

##### Roll/Staffing

The pupil roll has risen to 1001 and there are six pupils from other schools accessing lessons through the virtual consortia arrangements.

The staffing complement stands at approximately 73 FTE (including promoted members of the team).

There are six Newly Qualified Teachers with us this year (Music, Art & Design, PE, Spanish and two in Social Subjects).

Applications for the post of Music Teacher closed last week and interviews will take place after the HMIE Inspection.

##### Senior Phase Attainment - SQA 2023

In session 2022-23, our young people performed very well in all the key performance measures, collectively achieving good quality SQA results, including:

- 20 pupils in S4 attained 7 x more As at Nat 5
- 46 pupils in S4 gained 5 or more As at Nat 5
- 57% pupils in S4 passed 5 x Nat 5
- 32% pupils in S5 attained 5 Higher A-C passes, above last year's level
- 13 pupils in S5 received 5 Higher As

In addition, 32 senior phase students set out to complete a range of fantastic work-based learning programmes, including GradU8 and Foundation Apprenticeships.

The focus this year is on learning & teaching and raising attainment in all the key performance indicators through robust tracking and monitoring and early intervention strategies. We have started our SLT learning walks and we aim to visit almost all teachers and share feedback. Social Subjects and Mathematics will be involved this session with Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE). Technologies was our pilot faculty last session; the feedback was very helpful and has allowed the senior team to gather meaningful data. We will revisit the recommendations made for Technologies in April/May 2024 to assess impact.

INSIGHT data will be released this week, and this will give a better picture of how we performed compared to our comparator school and on a national level. The INSIGHT data includes SQA results, data on National Progression Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships and other non-National Qualification attainment which our young people achieve.

##### S6 Leadership Team 2023-24

We have appointed our captaincy team, led by Scott and Zoe.

We have a strong team of House Captains, prefects and a number of ambassadors who will help to take forward school improvement in key areas. To align with the School Improvement Priorities, our House Captains will link with an Improvement Collaborative: Learning, Teaching & Assessment, Curriculum, Raising Attainment, HWB or Equalities.

## **Standards & Quality Report and School Improvement Plan**

The SQR for session 2022-23 is published on the school website along with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) – Plan On A Page. They highlight key messages in terms of our improvement work and identified priorities for this session. Over the last two weeks, the senior team has been engaged in dialogue with faculty heads as part of the annual review programme.

### **HMIE**

The HMIE inspection will take place on the week beginning 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2023, and we have been selected for the short model inspection, which focuses on Safeguarding (QI 1.3), Learning, Teaching & Assessment (QI 2.3) and Raising Attainment & Achievement (QI 3.2).

Inspectors will arrive late morning on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, and, throughout the week, there will be class visits, meetings and focus groups, including the following:

- voluntary meeting with staff to outline the process,
- opening discussions with the senior team
- the Health Nutrition Inspector will be observing and meeting with staff and pupils,
- parent, pupil and staff focus groups.

All going well, discussions of findings will be shared with the senior team on Thursday morning.

Ms Huq thanked the Parent Council and PTA for their contribution to the school and looked forward to strengthening those relationships in the year ahead.

Jack thanked Waheeda for her report and invited questions.

Jo Tunney asked about senior team satisfaction with qualification attainment. It was acknowledged that there had been a slight dip in 4th year results, but that this was in keeping with the national trend. The school is focusing on a couple of specific subjects to support and address interventions including targeted groups for supported study, ACHIEVE and looking at how to support students to prepare for how to study and understand requirements from S1.

Jack asked if there was merit in restarting end of 3<sup>rd</sup> year exams. There was discussion around the pros and cons of this. A further suggestion was made to consult with students on whether they would find this beneficial.

Cllr Frame suggested that, nationally we should be promoting all children across social media and the media - not just those who achieve 5 A's. It was agreed by those in attendance that we should be proud and profile all students for their success and not just for attainment. Discussion was held around how we celebrate the achievements of all our students and the bigger issue around mental health of students who feel unappreciated in comparison to others.

## 5. **Parent Council Chair's Report**

The addition of 3 new members at 2022 AGM took the parent council to its full complement of 20 parent/carers. The provision of virtual access to parent council meetings has become an established addition to the way in which parent/carers can be involved in the meetings. Five meetings were held in the last school year with average attendance of 10 parents/ carers (3 virtually) & 4 staff members. It was acknowledged that the Parent Council had significantly benefitted from Cllr Frame's attendance and participation.

As per the request from the school senior leadership team, the work of the parent council has become more strategically integrated into the School Improvement Plan (SIP) via a SIP subgroup and this has become a standing agenda item for the parent council. The following topics have been addressed:

- School consultation with pupils on the Awards evening and qualifying the meaning of the attainment, achievement & citizenship awards.
- Explored the creation of a school charter to list the roles and expectations of staff, pupils and parents/ carers. Ms Hamilton has completed some preliminary work on this, and Ms Barr was thanked for the information provided to parent / carers of S5/6 pupils which has helped towards fulfilling the purpose of the school charter.
- Holiday wind-down into major school holidays – it was felt this had become too long and too well established. This is being tackled through communications with parents, students and staff, although it was acknowledged that it will take time to change the culture.
- Autumn report cards – following concerns raised, it is hoped that some changes will make this year's reports clearer and provide better understanding of the meaning for pupils and parent/ carers.
- Following an incident within the school perimeter last year – concerns were raised about the delayed communications due to SLC policies & processes. A meeting was organised with Mr Dickson from SLC where he agreed to go back and review council policy. Currently no update of any changes.

A Communications Sub-Group was established to improve communications between the school, parents/ carers, pupils and parent council. SLC recently introduced parentsportal; the implementation of this has been supported by Mr Fleming while continuing to update the other communication platforms. The chair acknowledged that the quality and accessibility of information from the school has improved markedly, and the Parent Council continues to look at how they can best engage with the parent forum.

Promoting Positive Behaviour Initiative led by Miss Hamilton has seen extensive consultation with pupils and parent groups followed by focussed communications to identify and promote positive behaviour in school. The chair encouraged all parent/carers to participate in all questionnaire / surveys etc.

A vote of thanks from the Chair and on behalf of the Parent Council was given to all academy staff over the previous school year with a special mention to those who have attended the PC meetings - Waheeda, Paula, Iain & Vicki.

**6. Election of Office Bearers:**

All existing office bearers were willing to continue and, in the absence of other interested parties the following positions were confirmed for 1 year:

Chair Jack Campbell

Vice Chair Jo Tunney

Comms – Jo Tunney

Secretary – Cheryl McMorris

**7. Election to Parent Council**

Seven members of the 2022/2023 parent council retired after serving their full term. One member retired due to other commitments. Four of those retiring wished to seek re-election. Four parent/carers wished to seek election. Since there were 8 people wishing to fill 8 vacancies, no elections were required, and all were welcomed to the 2023/2024 PC. The new members are, Kathryn Cain, Lyndsay Rae, Becky Howie, Gillian Baker.

**8. AOCB – Nil of note**

**9. Next AGM – September 2024**