



PHS Parent Council 12 March 2025 In person meeting

Attendees

Ellie Johnstone, PC Chair (Chair)
Kevin Ryalls, Head Teacher (HT)

Claire Barrett, PC Secretary
Gillian Moran, Events Lead
Tristan Compton (Vice Chair)

11 parents joined the Parent Council meeting. *Parent comments and questions are shown in bold italics with answers given below.* **Actions are in red** and action tracker is at the end of these minutes.

Welcome, Minutes and Actions

The Chair welcomed everyone and the minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Chair's update

The Re-inspection report has still not been published, formal comms will go out from SBC when ready to share. SBC hosted a Parent Council chairs meeting, nothing to report from that.

Headteacher's update

New School - Kevin Ryalls (HT) shared the Vision and Tracker for the move to the new school.

Vision

The vision for the move to the new school is aligned to the One Peebles vision. This means that staff, pupils and parents have opportunities to contribute and are informed.

Purpose

The purpose of this new school tracker is to ensure the smooth planning for and start to the new school. This means that we will be able to positively maximise the full potential of the new build.

Ethos – Space - Move

Teaching Spaces
Pupil Support Spaces
Library
Skips and Recycling
Staff wellbeing and social areas
Practical Subjects
Legacy
Learning and Teaching
Culture Change
Aspirational Environment
Pupil Toilets
Admin and Reception

Facilities
Inventory and Packing
<i>Auction and Farewell</i>
Decant

The SLT meet twice per week with SLT members each leading on different parts in the 3 categories: Ethos, Space, Move. They are getting into the detail of which spaces will be used for which faculty. The 3 big areas will also be timetabled.

There are areas for Enhanced provision; Pastoral support, Connect and Outreach. For staff wellbeing there is a staff hub. (In the current school building there is no staffroom, there are staff bases so some subject teachers never see others). Practical subjects are on the ground floor. Science has big STEM areas, that is new.

Legacy – some items will be preserved, eg stained glass in the atrium; Dux Boards; etc.

Learning & teaching – everything will be on screens and ipads. Some subjects already act like that but in future all will.

HT pointed out there will be a **Culture change** – a need to raise our game, eg there is too much litter – this could be habits, but there is a need to step up and be better around the school. Behaviour has settled down a lot. HT emphasised the school and its pupils and staff need to be amazing, and to love this ‘new house’. There is a need to be aspirational, and to step up and keep firm but positive.

Q: Regarding the big areas being timetabled – the double classroom – will that always be 2 classes at the same time or, a breakout space,what does that mean?

A: Principal teachers will decide how that is used. It could be a breakout space. IDL – interdisciplinary learning - we have never done this, others have. It means groups of students get together with staff, take an issue eg climate change, they come up with a problem and look for a solution. That is an ideal space for that. We haven't got that in curriculum yet but next year we'll develop that for S2. Larger spaces enable this.

Q: You mentioned IDL – would that be embedded with existing subjects or a separate curriculum stream?

A: Separate. A teacher would volunteer eg athletics, debating, they would work with students in S2 and use meta skills to decide what do we do and produce something at the end of the block. Learn and track those skills. Something has to come out of the timetable to do that.

(The parent suggested a contact for the HT to speak to, who has developed these for Edinburgh Uni.)

Aspirational Environment –The HT emphasised the importance of this and parents agreed. Eg hall of heroes, where does this go in the new school. It could be digital, on a slideshow on screen (there are fewer walls and can't put blutak on them). Help is needed soon from parents with the vision and values for the school. How should they be displayed? Eg the large windows at the entrance to the school could have decals on them. There was a discussion about the communal areas of the building and how these can be used as spaces for aspirational activities, eg music ensembles (busker slot), debating, (parent pointed out recording and sharing on social media may put pupils off). Piano somewhere?

A parent asked about **pupil toilets** and whether they will be male/female or unisex. The HT replied that there is no agenda from SBC currently. New schools have found that if segregated they still caused problems. Maybe a blend of some boys, some girls and some anyone. School will take their lead from students on it.

Library – currently there is a quiet reading room which holds about 30 which is working well just now. Debating just now whether this is the right place for S6 to go to study in the new school. The plan is to take the fiction books to the new school. Tweed Reads will take care of these books and lead that move. HT would like them to run and manage that library of books. Live Borders will probably not be involved – another system is needed for booking out/in rather than scanning as it can't be manned.

Q: For out of hours/evening study, there is a lack of places to go (where you don't have to buy a coffee). Will the school function in the evening?

A: Staffing is the issue. But I would love that.

Q: Is there a plan for a big enough car park for staff?

A: There will be a big car park where the portacabins currently are. The current car park near the sports centre will remain and have a few more spaces too.

Q: Furnishing –Is it roadtested for suitability? Is there pupil and staff input to that?

A: No, they are ordering the furnishings, it will go out to tender. There will be pods for private conversations.

Q: Are there solar panels?

A: There are solar panels and the whole building is level 1 energy efficient and can't fall below that.

Q: Will there be enough spaces to sit at lunch? Staggered lunchtimes? Outside areas to sit?

A: I think it will work out about the same as we have at the moment, but it depends if they stay in the school. Re staggered lunchtimes - it's a lot of unnecessary work to have more than one lunchtime. It's a disruption to the day. Outside there is a garden area, an amphitheatre, a greenhouse.

Auction & Farewell events. A number of ideas were discussed – see fundraising section below.

The HT welcomed parents to get involved with the issues discussed and particularly these 3 areas: Culture Change, Aspirational Environment, Auction & Farewell Events. Interested parents to email Parent Council at phspc@outlook.com and we will collate and feedback to school. Meetings could be held hybrid to enable parents to join.

Fundraising planning

There was a brief discussion about fundraising events and some ideas are listed below. A meeting to pull together all ideas is set for **Wednesday 2 April at 7pm** in the school. All parents welcome, ideas can also be emailed to phspc@outlook.com

Ideas:

New School:	Old school
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils doing tours for parents or any interested community members – welcome drinks/snacks donated by local business, social evenings or a Saturday.• Parents nights in person – come early and have a tour• Open evening with teachers in classrooms and the pupils show you round and showcase the learnings too.• Music – in communal areas during the evening• Food on offer• School service S6 pupils (Leadership) to come up with these activities too – to showcase them in their space.• End May there is a Primary school event in Whitestone Park – perhaps tie in with High School as it is a fundraiser.• New school limited edition tie or accessory• Time capsule	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ceilidh/farewell party in assembly hall – specific year groups eg 60s &70s, 80s & 90s• Farewell event during weekend - Assembly Hall open to general public to come and view photos, plaques, trophies, hall of heroes photos and former pupils and staff memories about the school (Priorsford did similar for 40th birthday)• Auction of things not moving to new school (otherwise recycled)

AOB

Presentation of Duke of Edinburgh awards – hasn't happened even though all activities have been completed. HT will look into it.

Action: HT to look into this.

Q: Regarding extra study sessions, what is available when?

A: It is teacher by teacher, but in future it could maybe be collated.

A parent voiced a concern about dates of course assignments and how these could be communicated better. Parents are left unsure when assignments are happening and how to support their child. General information but also subject-specific consistent information would be useful. There was a discussion about Showbie, feedback and communications from teachers and how these varied - the HT took notes.

The HT pointed out there are 3 formal attainment reviews in the year – these show which subjects and teachers are performing well and not so well.

It was suggested that the Parent Council survey could ask specifically about learning & teaching at home – and be specific about what we want to improve. The HT pointed out that countries that have systems that do that across the world are outperforming other countries. The survey should focus on the parts that the HMI inspection tells us aren't good. The HT noted we should only ask for feedback on areas that can be acted upon. There was further discussion about the PC survey and Tristan Compton and Alex Corbishley agreed to take this away and consider what should go in the survey

Action: Tristan Compton/Alex Corbishley consider questions for the PC parent survey and send to Chair and HT for review.

Alex Corbishley wished to record formal thanks to Mairi Stark for her help over the last few years with medical student applications to university.

Action: HT to follow up with Dr Katie Walling, who is expected to succeed Mairi Stark

The meeting closed at: 9.10pm

Next Meeting: 13 May 2025 (Last meeting of this session)

Parent Council Action tracker 2024/25

Meeting	Item/Issue	Action	Who	Update
Mar 25	University Aspirations Group – Medicine parent helper	HT to follow up with replacement for Medicine parent helper	HT	
Mar 25	PC Parent Survey questions	Tristan & Alex to consider questions for the PC parent survey and send to Chair and HT for review.	Tristan Compton/Alex Corbishley	
Mar 25	Duke of Edinburgh Awards presentation	HT to look into why these have not been presented to pupils	HT	
Feb 25	Fundraising (new school)	Bring back list of fundraising ideas (and helpers) to the next PC meeting for discussion.	PC	Meeting agreed for 2 April
Feb 25	Parent FAQs on new school and move	PC (Tristan/Ellie) to send Mr Ryalls the collated FAQs and comments from parents to form basis of communication to parents.	PC	
Nov 24	Smoking/vaping on school bus	Chair to pass this onto HT	HT	
Nov 24	Parent Council Survey	Chair & HT to discuss best timing for 2025 survey	Chair/HT	
Nov 24	Street lighting concern	Chair to contact SBC about faulty street lighting in Craigerne Lane and future plans for lighting around new school	PC Chair	
Nov 24	Career Pathways Resource	Career Pathways resource to be shared on the new school website under Curriculum and/or DYW	Mrs Boyd	Done?
Nov 24	Upcoming Further Inspection	Parent Council will share our enthusiasm for continuity of leadership and feed this into the inspection report/SBC	PC Chair	Done
June 24	Raising awareness of Uni aspirations group	Action: Dawn to send University aspirations letter to Kevin to send out to S4 – S6 parents to encourage uptake amongst that age group.	Dawn/Head	Done
June 24	Attendance at PC meetings. Is there another way we could meet digitally?	Action: Dawn to investigate another digital platform.	Dawn Johnstone	Done

Please get in touch around any of the issues raised at phspc@outlook.com

Helpful Info/Reminders

Parent Council Meeting Dates for 2024/25	Post Holders
Wednesday 11 September 2024	Chair – Ellie Johnstone
Tuesday 08/10/2024	Vice Chair – Tristan Compton
Thursday 28/11/2024	Secretary – Claire Barrett
Wednesday 29/01/2025 Wednesday 12/02/2025	Communications Officer – Dawn Johnstone
Thursday 06/03/2025 Wednesday 12/03/2025	Event Coordinator – Gillian Moran
Tuesday 13/05/2025 (AGM)	Friends of Peebles High School SCIO representative
	Property Working Group Lead – Tristan Compton
	Taskforce Coordinator – post vacant

We welcome interested parents & carers 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 an ordinary member or join a specific working group, please email your details to: phspc@outlook.com

Any parent or carer interested in supporting the Friends of PHS charity with running fundraising activities should get in touch at <mailto:FriendsOfPHS@outlook.com>

Website: phsparents.org.uk **Facebook:** **PHS Parents** – can contact us via Messenger

Twitter: [@PHSparents](https://twitter.com/PHSparents) [@PeeblesHigh](https://twitter.com/PeeblesHigh)