



PHS Parent Council 11 May 2026

Attendees

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

Jeremy Lee, Deputy Head Teacher

Claire Barrett, PC Secretary
Tristan Compton, PC Vice Chair & Trustee,
FoPHS
Gillian Moran, PC Events Lead

7 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.

Chair's Update

Toilet provision - following the discussion at the last PC meeting, there was a positive meeting with students, where the legal requirements and proportionality were discussed. The consensus reached was that the status quo be maintained.

Smart phones – at the last PC meeting there was a discussion around phones and social media, following a survey conducted by some local parents. Tristan will stay in touch with the parents and they may come back with further results. Rather than banning phones, many seem in favour of tools & tips for parents, and rules around the use of phones in school. The Social Media discussion should be continued. There is also the danger of addiction to phones/social media.

Parent Council posts - The Chair and the Secretary are giving up their posts after this meeting, and the Chair extended her personal thanks to the Secretary for 7 years service to the Parent Council.

Attainment & Achievement

Jeremy Lee presented on 3.2 Raising Attainment & Achievement

Peebles High's position in the Times League table has improved from position 103 in 2024 to position 32 in the most recent league table:

Times League Tables – Learners leaving with 5+ Level 6 (Higher)	
Year	PHS
2026	32
2025	42
2024	103

Schools are measured on Literacy and Numeracy Levels, Positive Destinations, Attainment for All and Attainment v Deprivation. Improving trends across all these areas with a significant increase in the attainment of the lowest attaining 20% (our main focus) as well as increasing the middle 60% and highest 20%.

There are clear trends of improvement across the board and a summary of the main points is below:

2025/2026 School improvement plan

1. Continued focus on process and target groups (lowest 20% and FSM) for attainment reviews, adapted pathways and SCQF flexibility
2. Proactive coursing and high expectations.
3. Improved data literacy for all and tracking systems from Primary through BGE and senior phase.
4. Support attendance projects
5. Continued focus on improved teaching and learning.

- Literacy at L3 and L4 improving but not yet above VC for leavers (2025)
- Literacy L5 and L6 improving and above VC for both levels first time in 3 years.
- Numeracy at L3 increasingly above VC. L4 attainment is above the VC for the first time in 3 years.
- Numeracy at L5 continues above our VC for the 4th year in a row for leavers.
- L6 numeracy is above our VC for the first time in 5 years
- S4 has been our focus specifically the lowest 20%.
- L3 literacy for S4 leavers is now above our VC for the first time in 5 years and is 10% above our VC.
- Level 4 literacy for S4 leavers is now above our VC for the first time in 3 years and is 5% above our VC. (10% less than last year)
- S4 has been our focus, specifically the lowest 20%.
- L3 Numeracy for S4 leavers above our VC has continued to improve for 5 years and is 10% above our VC.
- Level 4 numeracy for S4 leavers is above our VC has continued to improve for 3 years and is 5% above our VC. (10% more than last year)
- PHS focus on lowest attaining 20% - 3 year improving trend
- First time above VC for 3 years. (5 tariff points above the VC)
- S4 leavers Lowest 20% - our 2024/2025 SIP focus. Improving over 3 years. Highest tariff score in 5 years. 35 tariff points above VC
- 3 year improvement for middle 60%. Highest tariff scores in 4 years. 70+ points over the VC in 2025 for middle 60% leavers.
- 3 year improving trend for the Highest attaining 20%. 80+ points above our VC this year (2025 leavers).

Acronyms used:

BGE = Broad General Education (S1 – S3);

VC = Virtual Comparator (a virtual cohort of similar pupils (based on key demographic characteristics) to pupils in PHS. Allowing PHS to compare performance to a meaningful benchmark).

FSM = Free School Meals.

SCQF = Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework, the national qualifications framework for Scotland.

SIP = School Improvement Plan

Next steps for improvement: Attendance, Motivation, Meeting learners' needs, ie Pupil Support

Do you have any stats on attendance. What are the main issues, causes?

Same as national picture – average is around 91%, down from 95% before Covid. Causes are varied. Donna Moretta doing lots with Pastoral around this. There are some students who struggle to come in and engage throughout school life, then some who lack motivation in the senior years and tail off (maybe have conditional offers etc). A lot is being done, attendance panel, etc. Attendance figures include authorised (eg illness) and unauthorised absence.

What were the top 3 'missed opportunities'/challenges shown in the data?

The lowest 20%. Literacy & numeracy. Broadening of choice.

Headteacher Update

SBC Survey Results

The Headteacher shared data gathered from the recent SBC parent survey. (see slides at the end of these minutes). The figures show consistent improvement since March 2024.

The %s in green are evidence for developing Learner Conversations in the School Improvement Plan. Learner Conversations were discussed at the last Parent Council meeting and will be discussed further in August. Senior staff recently visited Hyndland School in Glasgow who have a well established system using learner conversations for evaluation. Learner conversations have to be very well planned, pupils self- evaluate then record next steps, and parents see this.

The areas being focused on which should improve with the evolving coaching culture and learner conversations are:

Parent Responses - All agree	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
The school gives me advice on how to support my child's learning at home.	27	41	50
The information I receive about how my child is doing reaches me at the right time.	43	52	56
My child receives the help he/she needs to do well.	51	61	63
I understand how my child's progress is assessed.	52	59	64
I receive helpful, regular feedback about how my child is learning & developing	46	55	59

Other areas of focus (in blue) are:

Parent Responses - All agree	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
The school organises activities where my child and I can learn together.*	11	14	31
The school deals well with any bullying (approx. 50% parents tick 'not experienced')	18	25	28

*The recent S1 learning together event may be extended next year to S4 – S6.

Course Choice Update

- S3s – 100% have their choices (this includes subjects chosen as a Reserve choice).
- Seniors – 87.2%, before recouring conversations begin. Timetable is hoped to be out before the new term starts but this is not guaranteed.
- Subjects not running:-
 - German – numbers and staffing
 - N3 Practical Craft Skills – (very small numbers – Crafting Futures is the replacement)
 - ESOL – very small numbers

It is not yet known what the effect of the change to 7 subjects will be – ie which subjects are impacted.

Mr Lee and the HT mentioned the many pupil adjustments that are now needed at exam time, (eg 100 adjustments for 1 exam this Friday) and the pressure this puts on the school. The number of adjustments is likely to increase not decrease. Exam.net is a program which is anticipated will help with this.

Staffing

- Mrs Delaney will be Principal Teacher for BCT and Modern Languages from August

Parent Council Postholder Nominations

Parent Council posts were discussed and agreed for next session as follows:

Role	Name	Nominated by	Seconded by
Chair	Tristan Compton until August*	Ellie	Claire
Vice Chair	Tristan if not Chair		
Secretary of PC and FoPHS	Alex Corbishley	Ellie	Tristan
Events & Communications Coordinator (combined role)	Gillian Moran	Tristan	Claire
PHS Parent Website	Alex & Gillian offered to cover this		

* Tristan is currently Acting Chair of the Friends of PHS charity and flagged that this could be a conflict so may need to seek a new Chair for this position. Discuss again at next meeting.

There are other opportunities to get involved throughout the year, as required. Parents can offer help at any time.

AOB

Early UCAS group – this group offers support to young people for early applications ie for Medicine/Vet/Conservatoire/Oxbridge. The group needs more parent helpers and there is some urgency as usually this starts at S6 induction.

Alex to send email to Ellie on what is required. Tristan happy to help. HT will chase up Faye Scott (DYW) re NHS Borders.

Can more of these meetings be hybrid with a better experience – this could attract more parents.

Head & Chair will look at the use of technology, eg 'owl' camera

How will you measure success of the S2 Academies?

The academies are 2 periods a week for S2, with a choice of different topics to develop metaskills, eg Nuclear Showdown with Mr McMordie, STEM, Art, Biking, forensics. We will work out its main target and what the outcomes should be. Tracking on My World of Work meta schools tracker, surveys, etc.

Are there any plans for a school show?

We want to do this, yes.

Uniforms – A parent raised the issue of EB (the new supplier) having a 20% discount which runs out before senior students find out if they have secured positions in the Head Prefect team (red piped blazers). Also there is a charge for delivery – could the school look at a bulk delivery to school to avoid this? **Action - HT will ask Lorraine Sykes at school to liaise with BE Embroidery.**

Water safety – a parent expressed their concerns about young people going to the river in the summer. Borders Water Rescue Team and Fire & Rescue Service are two organisations who could potentially do safety presentations. Assemblies are held at school but none so far specifically on water safety. Chair suggested the parent get in touch with other community groups to spread the word too – Scouts, Guides, Cadets, etc.

Action - HT can share info from safety organisations with parents in the weekly update. The Chair offered to post any relevant links on the PHS Parents FB page.

Update on furniture issue (some stools too short for tables)- HT is still awaiting a reply from SBC and will advise.

The meeting closed at: 9.20pm

Next Meeting: TBC August 2026

Parent Council May 2026



Self Evaluation triangulation

- QS results
- INSIGHT
- PHS LTA
- SIP/FIP/LPP



- SBC Surveys
- ELT evaluations
- PHS LTA
- SIP/FIP/LPP

PHS LTA

Parent Responses - All agree	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
The school takes my views into account when making changes.	27	34	39
The school supports my child's emotional wellbeing.	47	59	65
The school organises activities where my child and I can learn together.	11	14	31
The school is well led and managed.	34	65	78
The school helps my child to feel confident.	41	65	73
The school gives me advice on how to support my child's learning at home.	27	41	50



Parent Responses Over Time	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
The school encourages young people to treat others with respect.	57	72	79
The school deals well with any bullying (approx. 50% parents tick 'not experienced')	18	25	28
The information I receive about how my child is doing reaches me at the right time.	43	52	56
Staff treat my child fairly and with respect.	82	80	87
Overall, I am satisfied with the school.	41	63	77



Parent Responses Over Time	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
My child was well supported to make choices about taking the subjects that are right for them.	52	46	62
My child was well supported if they moved to a new school within the last year.	9	5	14
My child receives the help he/she needs to do well.	51	61	63
My child likes being at this school.	58	74	81
My child is making good progress at the school.	67	75	78



Parent Responses Over Time	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
My child is encouraged by the school to be healthy and take regular exercise.	58	61	64
My child finds their learning activities hard enough.	75	75	86
I would recommend the school to other parents.	36	51	72
I understand how my child's progress is assessed.	52	59	64
I receive helpful, regular feedback about how my child is learning & developing	46	55	59



Parent Responses Over Time	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
I feel that my child is safe at the school.	59	71	80
I feel staff really know my child as an individual.	49	65	68
I feel encouraged to be involved in the work of the Parent Council and/or parent association.	65	63	58
I am satisfied with the quality of teaching in the school.	52	58	72
I am kept informed about the work of the Parent Council and/or parent association.	86	70	77



Parent Responses Over Time	Mar-24	Dec-24	Mar-26
I feel comfortable approaching the school with questions, suggestions and/or a problem.	69	71	75
<p>The %s in green are evidence for us developing Learner Conversations in the School Improvement Plan. Learner Conversations were discussed at the last Parent Council meeting and we will expand further on this in August.</p>			



QI 1.3	QI 2.2	QI 2.3	QI 3.1	QI 3.2
<i>One Pebbles</i> • UNCRC Gold Award	<i>Work hard and Achieve</i> • L5, S2 courses • SBC Way • S2 Academies	<i>Contribute and Grow</i> • Learner Conversations	<i>Show kindness and Belong</i> • ADHD	<i>Work hard and Achieve</i> • Exam.net



Why Learner Conversations?

- well considered proposal based on well judged looking outwards
- build on existing strengths and address identified next steps
- careful planning
- addresses workload
- builds capacity and ownership in learners and parents

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

Helpful Info/Reminders

Parent Council Meeting Dates for 2025/26	Post Holders
11 May 2026	Chair – Ellie Johnstone
	Vice Chair – Tristan Compton
	Secretary – Claire Barrett
	Communications Officer –
	Event Coordinator – Gillian Moran
	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)