

## Dalkeith High School Parent Partnership Minutes of Meeting

**Date: Wednesday 7 February 2024 7pm-9.15pm**

**Attendees:** Ed Jupp (Co-Chair), Helen Beasley (Co-Chair), Joanne Arneil (Secretary), Julia Critchly (Treasurer), Robbie Pearson, Sara Lightbody, Hannah Clark, Susan Wright, Aiobhe O'Callaghan, Emma Ormerod (Headteacher), Emma O'Connell (DHT), Barbara Moir (Careers Advisor)

1. **Apologies:** Zoe Orr, Laura Diamond, Laura Saunders, Lucy Napier
2. Approval of previous minutes - approved by L Saunders and L Diamond December 2023
3. Treasurer Update - JC. £600 in the bank account and JC and JA now have access and are signatories to the account. HB asked how previous parent council's used to fundraise. JC said the previous treasurer told her it was done via supermarket backpacks with music pupils, football cards, tombollas.
4. Headteacher update:

EO spoke about what she felt wasn't in place that she noticed during her first month in post - no interventions for certain groups of young people, lack of collaboration between pupil support dept, how did the Hive pupils get access to more mainstream classes. Now there is a fully integrated pupil support team.

Attainment focus- all staff know where gaps are to close the,. Moore robust tracking and monitoring. Now, the raising attainment strategy from DHS is being rolled out in Midlothian and DHS is the pilot school for S1-3 tracking and monitoring system. Pupil aspirations by staff and parents but lacking from pupils. Coursing meetings needed to be more robust, Attainment interventions now in place. S3 banks as many qualifications as they can so they have a fall back in S4 if required. Still developing different pathways for young people.

Quality Assurance - attendance was a major area and now a system in place which is also being rolled out across MC. Learning walks are taking place in the school with groups of both staff and pupils. Faculty reviews therefore QA processes in faculties in preparation for starting in August '24. Lesson observations with pupil, staff and parent focus groups in every faculty in a 3 day review of faculties, taking a few faculties per year over a four year plan. Starts Aug '24.

Art Link for S1/2 - 55 pupils selected as a result of poor engagement, anxiety, bullying. 2 groups: 1 more vulnerable, 1 more relationship building. Focus on resilience, confidence and relationship building.

Tree of Knowledge interventions for S1 to build relationships and understand their own behaviours with their own peer group. ALL S1 taking part.

Barista Skills level 5- invested in equipment to run this course starting Aug '24.

Polar Academy - 1 of 2 schools in Scotland going to Greenland 24/25.

S5 mentoring for those taking 5 or more Highers. 1-1 mentor with a staff member to meet up, set targets for exams, revision, attainment tracking and monitoring.

EO stressed again that the toilets in the school are not fit for purpose. No pupil is denied access to the toilets but are asked to go when not in classes. Staff use professional judgement but no young person will ever be stopped from going. Vaping continues but is reduced and mainly a problem in S1-3. HC asked if the feeder primaries are involved in supporting the raising awareness of vaping. Nothing is in place at present but EO thinks this is a good idea.

Recent article in the news about Shawfair HS. Education estates strategy for 3-18 and a solution regarding Shawfair has been put forward and a decision will be made by elected members very soon. As it stands DHS will breach capacity by 2027 and therefore there needs to be a solution for DHS.

AO'C suggested parental pressure on the council to get a solution to the capacity problem/Shawfair. EO said the capital prioritisation plan would be going in front of the meeting in February.

Staffing Update - new posts added to pupil support team: care and welfare officers, nurture teachers S1-3, outreach/inclusion teacher, 1 home link practitioner, 1 more teacher of enhanced and complex needs. Already 4 PSL's, 1PT SfL, 2 LS teachers, 1 PT Enhanced and Complex Needs and 2 teachers of ECN. Prevention rather than intervention approach.

2 maths vacancies - the teacher employed before Christmas fell through. Other teacher is going on a career break next year. Business Education post a new role.

5. Careers Advisor - Barbara Moir. 33 years experience, works for Skills Development Scotland and is in DHS everyday. Help pupils with career choices and planning via 1-1 chats. Works more intensely with those who could fall into negative destinations. CV help, job application help, subject choice help. Introduced the My World of Work website. Helps pupils understand the qualifications framework. Those pupils who left in '22 96% went to a positive destination. 29.9% higher education, 23.6% further education, 40.2% employment, 1.1% training and 3.4% unemployed. Gives support for after leaving school as well.

6. Bullying and Equalities Policy (EO'C, DHT Pupil Support and Buccleuch) EO'C outlined the stages this policy has gone through and will continue to go through over the next few months.
- a. What is bullying: pupil, parent/carers, staff views to get a definition
  - b. Responsibility of ALL
  - c. Procedures - for prevention and also for when it occurs
  - d. Support - for those being bullied, for the bully and staff training
  - e. Reporting and Recording incidents - form to complete
  - f. Communicating the policy - via new website and will be shared and accessible by all
  - g. Gather and monitor information
  - h. Evaluate and review the policy
  - i. Concerns, complaints and compliments

EO'C wants to seek a range of views. A questionnaire has already been given to 60 pupils from different groups within the school who might feel vulnerable to bullying e.g. LGBT group etc. Full staff questionnaire sent and received 35 replies. Staff said they see it take place in the hallways, outside and in classrooms.

39% of pupils said they would not report bullying behaviour, 36% said maybe and 25% yes they would report.

Staff: 31.4% said they challenge it weekly and staff are reporting it. They were asked what could be done to reduce it.

Next steps - parent/carers questionnaire by Feb '24, will raise awareness at assemblies, posters around the building, staff bullying/equalities incident form shared along with the reporting and recording procedures with staff in May. S1 receive a senior buddy. Finalise and share new policy June '24.

AO'C asked four questions regarding the policy:

1. Will DHS link with the ASG primaries? Her P7 is concerned already about bullying in DHS and they are aware of fights happening. EO'C said yes, they are increasing engagement this year with the primaries, P7s will visit DHS 4 afternoons in May to experience curricular areas they don't get in primary. English and Maths teachers will go out and visit before June. It will be addressed with pupils on all visits.
2. Could parent council chairs of the feeder primaries see the draft questionnaire first before going out to parent/carers to see if there has been something missed and to have their input? Yes, it is EO'C's intention to do this.
3. Do pupils know what happens after reporting? Do they know the timeline of dealing with an incident? AOC feels this is important to include these details in the policy. EO'C said yes, this is the plan and the policy details will be shared clearly with the pupils.

4. Mentors and Violence prevention programme - will the school partner with this group or get them in to talk? - This is something that can be looked at once the new policy is in place and up and running.

HC suggested a google form that could be permanently set on the google classroom so if pupils see something they can subtly report it. EO'C has also thought about QR codes as a means of reporting.

EO addresses the Facebook comments regarding bullying that were posted before Christmas. She encourages people to behave more appropriately online in terms of what is written and the impact that can have on people. If any parent/carer has a concern about bullying the first thing to do is contact the school and pursue the issue that way.

SW asked if the school are aware of the quieter areas of the school e.g. Science block, that can be used for things to happen in? EO - none of the S1-3 pupils should be in corridors at break and lunch as S4-6 are in classes. Staff sweep corridors and move them back into the dining hall. There are lots of clubs and activities available for people to go to.

6. Study periods (HB) - HB asked if pupils with consecutive study periods could be allowed home to study instead of sitting in classrooms. EO said they did this last year with seniors but they took advantage and went off to work which is illegal. EO has spoken to some S6 who had asked the same thing but the school would prefer to keep them in school for the remaining 6 weeks of term. Next year there will be fewer pupils getting study periods due to MACO. Options will be on offer for those who have study periods back to back to do other things in school to break the day up. AO'C asked if there will be a clear communication on pupil commitment to staying in school during study periods? Eo -yes.

7. MACO - Nothing regarding timings of periods Mon-Fri will change except for Friday break time when the whole campus of 1600 pupils will be together. 1 reason for this is S1-3 pupils don't have older pupils to look up to at present. Staff are also split break and lunches. Within Midlothian, DHS pupils currently receive 1 more week of schooling than anywhere else. The 50 minutes could come from a range of options. See details below from the recent letter emailed on 9/02.

- S1 and S2 will follow the Broad General Education setup. Within this pupils currently receive 3 x 50 minute periods of Physical Education (PE) and 2 x 50 minute periods of Personal and Social Education (PSE) each week
  - Scottish Government states that pupils are entitled to 2 x 50 minute periods of PE each week. As you can see, we currently offer more than this.
  - PSE is a core subject in schools and pupils, in Scotland, typically receive 1 period of PSE across the week.
  - The 50 minute saving could come from either of these areas.
- S3 pupils continue to follow the Broad General Education setup, which includes the compulsory study of English, Maths and Languages. In addition, pupils are provided with the core subjects or PE, Religious Studies and PSE. Pupils then make choices across 4 curricular areas with each subject being allocated 3 periods x 50 minutes. These choices include 2 free-choice options.
  - The 50 minutes saving could come from any of the non-compulsory subjects or the free choice options.
- S4 pupils currently study 6 national qualifications, with 6 x 50 minute periods allocated to each subject, plus 3 x 50 minute periods of core subjects, PE and PSE.
  - The consultation proposes that S4 pupils study 7 national qualifications, with 4 x 50 minute periods allocated to each subject, plus 4 x 50 minute periods of core.
  - Therefore, the total number of periods allocated to an S4 pupil would be 32 per week.
- S5/6 pupils currently study 6 national qualifications with 6 x 50 minute periods allocated to each subject, plus 3 x 50 minute periods of core subjects, PE and PSE.
  - The consultation proposes that S5/6 pupils may study a range of qualifications and wider achievement awards, totalling 30 periods per week. S5/6 pupils will also study 2 x 50 minute periods of core subjects, PE and PSE.
  - Therefore, the total number of periods allocated to an S5/6 pupil would be 32 per week.

8. AOCB: Miss Frame is organising the leaving ceremony on 10th June and is looking for a speaker connected to Dalkeith in some way to inspire pupils. The original leaving ceremony date was changed to accommodate a large group of pupils going on an S6 holiday but the new date in April was not popular so the 10th of June has been agreed.

RP asked in the chat if there was an update on the pupil school transport public consultation. AO'C replied in the chat that an announcement had been delayed. AO'C then brought it up with EO and EO hasn't received any update on it.

Date of next meeting Tuesday 26th March 2024 in the Art department.