

Minutes of Dalkeith High School
Parent Partnership
16th September 2025

Present: Emma Ormerod (HT), Karen Chojnowska, Rebecca Nelson, Julia Critchley (Treasurer), Heather Lovatt, Laura Diamond, Moira Nelson, Marjory McClanachan, Dorothy Delaney, Joanne Arneil, Sara Scott, Warren Scott, Mairi Milne, Karlyn Durrant (Chair), Helen Beasley (Chair)

Apologies: Aoibhe O'Callaghan

Helen welcomed all to the meeting, introductions carried out.

The secretary role was offered to the table, role explained. No volunteers for the role so it was explained that Aoibhe was happy to take this role on for the remainder of the year, Aoibhe was proposed by Karlyn Durrant and seconded by Laura Diamond.

Julia: explained that PP is now a charity. There are bank issues around changing the name on the account but this is being looked into. There is £677 in the bank account but there is a need for parents to fundraise. Grant Funding will be looked into.

Conversations to be had with the S6 charity committee to see if they can help. We will get a minimum of £500 from the Tesco community fund.

ACTION Emma to discuss fundraising with the S6 Charity committee.

Helen: would be good to hear what the department requirements would be if there was a wish list we could work towards.

We have donated £150 to the Golf section run by Mr Gordon.

We could look at starting up a Sub Committee for fundraising.

P7 Open evening will be selling refreshments.

Winter Ball is the 18th December and Karlyn and Laura have offered to help at this.

Head Teacher Update:

Maths now have a full body of staff, the same with the Humanities faculty.

NQT's will be within English, Science, Social Subjects.

New SFL teacher is Loren Alexander.

Ashley Linton has been promoted to Grade 5 senior in the school office.

Rosemary Paxton is retiring from the office staff.

There will be a grade 2 admin, 3 PSA roles advertised.

There has been no appointment of staff in the Art department to cover Mat leave. There seems to be an issue recruiting Art teachers at the moment.

Faculty reviews have been introduced and this will incorporate parental views as well as pupil voice and staff views.

The school improvement plan is available to view on the website.

There is a redevelopment of the Visions and Values of the school and this will come from feedback from pupils and parents.

The new Parent Portal pilot is up and running and selected parents are trialing this out and will give feedback to the school after the trial. The hope is that this will roll out to the whole parent body. Reports will be published on this and parents will also be able to keep up to date with their child's attendance. Permission slips will also be on the portal. This will help limit the paper use in the school.

The app can be downloaded from your App store.

More info to follow.

There is a new S1 learners log being rolled out as a pilot. This will be brought along to the next meeting. Parents will have access when launched.

There is a review of the S3 curriculum. A cohort of S3 pupils where concerns lie will have interventions put in place to support and this will be reported back with successes.

Attainment is looking very positive. DHS is top in authority for Numeracy for 3rd level.

There is improved tracking and monitoring. There will be full attainment data at the next meeting.

There is confusion around a D grade. This is not a pass according to the Scottish Government but it is a pass for the SQA.

Attendance is still tracked and monitored.

The last week of term the whole school attendance was 71.53%, this is lower than the average.

Factors that contribute are family holidays. There is an average of 23 days of learning lost.

Staff have been asked only to show films from the Wednesday of the last week.

There was then parents discussing SUSTI and other ideas to encourage children to attend in the last week. Pupils have voiced that it is boring. Parents also mentioned that children and staff are tired, something fun would also help to build positive relationships and this may encourage children to attend in the last week.

ACTION Emma to discuss with SLT.

Julie Bones: Senior Phasing

MACO was briefly introduced to the new parents at the meeting.

Helen went to explain the issues that other parents have faced with MACO.

Julie explained that the travel is religiously complained about but having taxi availability has been a great addition.

There has been extensive conversations around travel but it is not viable to send buses round the schools.

The fact that all columns are at the same time in all schools should be making MACO run smoothly but there are still hiccups appearing.

There has been an introduction of Construction NAT4 in S3, this will help with any child that wants to undertake construction in S4.

Julie explains that exam times are the responsibility of the host school.

The SQA coordinator for the school is Craig Knight and he raised all issues from last year with the SQA.

Midlothian Unions will not comply with the digital offering so this is what is preventing the offer going ahead. Teachers are keen to go online to deliver classes.

A parent commented on the lack of information that was delivered around MACO. More information around what schools are offering what may have helped with course choice for some children.

There will be Spotlight Career sessions run on different dates in November where industries will show off their career opportunities.

Dates will be published in due course.

AOB:

It was raised by a parent about the lack of storage children have while in school and how they are carrying laptops around in bags that are subsequently ripping causing the parent to have to purchase a new bag.

Another parent also raised the damage to their children's shoulders and back to where they are having to seek medical intervention.

Emma explained there is no funding for lockers and also no additional space to house lockers. BAM also owns the building and they would likely not agree to the lockers.

Parents had raised safety concerns about the lack of supervision in the playground at breaks.

Emma explained that staff are out on duty at these times and their presence is spread out. The campus has a large area to cover.

Staff have also opened up classrooms for children that might not want to go outside.

There are staff out on the Astros and also in the canteen.

Prefects will be going out on duty with walkie talkies and they will wear lanyards to make them more noticeable.