

Wallace Hall 2-18 Parent Council

Information Booklet 2021/22



**Wallace Hall Academy,
Primary & ELC**

"Together we grow, learn and achieve"

What is a Parent Council?

The Parent Council is the committee appointed by the Parent Forum to run matters on its behalf. A Parent Council is not run by the school or the local authority but by the parents/carers in the school. The local authority should support a Parent Council both financially and with advice/support. Parent Councils are statutory bodies i.e., their roles and responsibilities are set out in legislation. Parent Councils help parents/carers to become more actively involved in their children's learning.

What is the Parent Forum?

The 2006 Parent Involvement Act states that every school in Scotland has a Parent Forum, which consists of all the parents/carers who have a child at the school. They are automatically members, therefore, every parent/carer within our school is a member of our Parent Forum.



The Role of the Parent Council

The main aim of a Parent Council is to try to represent the views of all parents/carers at the school, to help the school community be successful and to support learning and school improvement.

The activities of a Parent Council are not specified in legislation. Parent Councils are designed to be flexible – to ensure they can effectively represent their own school community and interests. It is for parents/carers to decide what is most important for their Parent Council to work on. However, it does have some rights (for example, involvement in recruiting senior staff).

What can a Parent Council be involved in?

The Parent Council can get involved in:

- Providing a voice for parents/carers in schools and in their local authority on issues that are important to them and their children.
- Helping the school understand how to involve parents/carers most effectively in their children's learning and life of the school.
- Supporting the school and Head Teacher in developing strong home/school partnerships.
- Supporting the school in its development and improvement, and in understanding and making links with the wider community.
- Supporting the work of the school.
- Helping parents/carers to support their child's learning.
- Gathering and representing parents/carers views to the Head Teacher, Local Authority and Education Department.
- Promoting contact between school, parents/carers, pupils, and local community.
- Fundraising and organising social events.
- Reporting to the Parent Forum.
- Organising and running extra-curriculum clubs and activities.
- Being involved in the school inspection process.
- Being involved in the development/review of school policies, for example, Anti-Bullying Policies, School Travel Plan, Homework/Home Learning, Health and Safety
- The appointment of Head Boy/ Head Girl and their Deputies.

The Parent Council must be involved in:

- The appointment of senior staff, for example, the recruitment of a new Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teachers.
- School Inspections
- The development of the School Improvement Plan and Standards & Quality Reports.

Parent Councils provide an opportunity for parents/carers to support their school in getting the best education for all their pupils, in a safe and caring environment.



Aims and Objectives of Wallace Hall 2-18 Parent Council

Our Parent Council was established to encourage a closer link between the school and its parents and carers, and to give parent/carers a greater say in the running of our school. The aims and objectives of our Parent Council are:

- to work in partnership with the school to create a welcoming organisation which is inclusive for all.
- to promote equality and fairness.
- to promote close co-operation and partnership amongst the school staff, its pupils, and its parents.
- to develop and engage in activities which support and advance the education provided by the school and other matters affecting the education and wellbeing of the pupils. (It should be noted that the Parent Council **does not** deal with individual specific parental matters; these should be addressed to the Head Teacher directly).
- to inform and engage parents and carers.
- to organise social and fundraising activities to support the school in its educational and extra-curricular work.



How we achieve the above:

A) Meetings

All members of the Parent Forum are welcome to attend and be involved in our meetings. Our Parent Council normally meets twice a term, with a minimum of six meetings per year. Presently our meetings are held online, via Microsoft Teams on a Monday night at 7pm. Our Annual General Meeting (A.G.M) is held once a year in October.

Dates of meetings can be found on the school website under the sub-heading 'Parent Council,' on our notice board in the school and in the Head Teacher's termly newsletter. Two weeks prior to meetings dates are advertised on the school social media platforms: Facebook and twitter, as well as the school website.

Any parent/carer wishing to register their attendance at one of our meetings, should contact us via email at wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com before the meeting to request a link to the meeting. Links to meetings are sent out by our Secretary via email on the day of the meeting.

B) Agendas and Minutes

Agendas for meetings go out two weeks prior to our meetings and can be found on the school website under the sub-heading 'Parent Council', on our notice board in the school canteen, and on the school social media platforms: twitter and Facebook.

Copies of all our meeting minutes are available to all parents/carers with children at the school, and to all staff within the school. Minutes of meetings can be found on the school website under the sub-heading 'Parent Council', on our notice board in the school canteen, and can also be obtained on request via email from our Secretary.

C) Emailing List

Any parent/carer who is not on the Parent Council but would like to receive Parent Council Meeting Minutes and Agendas, and up-to-date information on what is going on, can add their name to our emailing list. Anyone wishing to add their name and email address to this list should contact our Secretary via our email address.

Note: Under our Data Protection Policy, parents/carers will be asked to complete and sign our Data Protection Policy, to allow us to use their contact details before adding their name to our emailing list.

D) Communication with Parents/Carers

The Parent Council communicates with parents/carers through many forms; letters, leaflets, flyers, notices of meetings and fundraising events, of which are presently mainly either posted on the school website under the sub-heading 'Parent Council' or on school social media platforms: Facebook and twitter. We also, through the school, use email group call to communicate with parents when required.

E) Consultation with Parents/Carers

The Parent Council seeks views from parents/carers when required throughout the year via surveys, weathers, feedback on policies, changes to the Parent Council, questionnaires, focus groups and through feedback at Parents evenings.

F) Parent Council Stand at Parents Evenings

Normally, the Parent Council Chairperson and other members, will attend Parents Evenings held within the school to speak to parents/carers, to find their views on certain topics, to keep them informed of what is going on within the school and the Parent Council.

G) Pupil Involvement

During the year, the Head Boy and Head Girl attend our meetings to represent the views of the Pupil Voice groups throughout the whole school. Pupil representatives are also involved in some of our sub-committees for example, School Travel Plan and Fundraising, and helping at events and Parents Evenings as required.

H) Consultation with Head Teacher

The Parent Council Chairperson constantly consults the Head Teacher through the year, meeting with him at least twice a term, and communicating with him via email at other times.

The Head Teacher has a right and duty to attend all Parent Council meetings as an advisor. Therefore, attends our meetings, giving us a Head Teacher's report on what is happening within the school.

I) Staff Involvement

During the year, staff attend our meetings to give presentations on the work they are doing in various topics of interest, new material and methods, and new policies. We also have staff representatives on our Parent Council, including the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher from both Primary and Academy, and the ELC Manager, and on all our Sub-Committees.

J) Involving the Wider Community

The Parent Council presently involves Local Councillors, Police, Community Council, MSP's and MP's in the work of the Parent Council; seeking advice and support and inviting them along to our meetings when required.

Sub-Committees

The Parent Council presently has four Sub-Committees each consisting of parents, staff representatives and Parent Council members, as follows:

Primary Fundraising and Events

The purpose of this sub-committee is to raise funds for the Primary. Our aim is that all money raised goes straight back into the classrooms for the pupils, so it helps to enhance their education.

We meet about four times a year and keep communication via WhatsApp. We work with pupils, parents/carers, and staff to come up with ideas for events and what items are needed.

We like to provide all students with gifts at Christmas, end of school year and provide the P7 class with leavers gifts.

Throughout the year teachers can request items from funds, for example, new curriculum reading books, classroom materials. We like to give each class a small fund in Term 2 so they can purchase items for topic work that can be used every year.

The sub-committee consists of a small group of three who run the sub-committee, but also have a large number of parent/carers who help us out with events throughout the year, for example, the Halloween Disco, Christmas Market, family barbeque, etc.

Secondary Fundraising and Events

The main purpose of this sub-committee is to raise funds for the Secondary school, through holding various fundraising activities and events, throughout the year. Our aim is that all money raised is put straight back into the classroom, or to help support extra-curriculum activities, to help enhance the pupil's education and learning experience during their time at Wallace Hall Academy.

The sub-committee meets as required, and is made up of parents/carers, staff, and pupils. Some examples of fundraising activities and events previously held include Quiz Nights, Christmas Craft Fair, Joint Christmas Raffle with Primary and Easter Egg Raffle.

Throughout the year, the teachers can fill in a Funding Application Form, to apply for funds from the Parent Council, for items they require or need financial help with for example, we have recently provided funding for Tents for Duke of Edinburgh and a Spanish Licence for the Modern Languages Department. We also on a yearly basis provide the Dux Medal and Prize and purchase Academy school ties for the P7 leavers.

Learning and Teaching

The main purpose of this sub-committee is to look at all areas relating to learning and teaching within the whole school, from the ELC through to the Academy.

The sub-committee meets as required and is presently made up of staff members from across the 2-18 Campus. Any learning developments across all areas of the Curriculum for Excellence are shared with the Parent Council on a regular basis to keep members informed of educational schemes, practice and forms of approach concerning delivering the curriculum to our Young Learners at Wallace Hall.

We meet termly and keep communication via email and Microsoft Teams. We work with pupils, parents/carers, and staff to share educational developments and communicate directly how these will impact specifically on young people's learning here at Wallace Hall.

We always welcome new information about any area of education that members of the Parent Council, staff or other stakeholders think would be worth exploring or developing in the field of education.

School Travel Plan/Road Safety

The purpose of this sub-committee is to produce a live working document on behalf of our School (School Travel Plan). Our aims are to give information on how we travel to and from school safely, to promote the Health and Wellbeing of our pupils. In our role we work with the local council, education authorities and parents/carers to address specific traffic issues to encourage and enable our pupils and families to walk and cycle safely to school.

The sub-committee meets as and when issues arise, and yearly to review the School Travel Plan. The meetings usually take place either in school or in one of our local cafés. The sub-committee is made up of parents/carers, staff, pupils, local Police Officer, and School Crossing Patrol.

Any member of the Parent Forum or staff member can be involved in any of our sub-committees, you do not need to be a member of the Parent Council to be on a Sub-Committee. You can be involved in any way you wish and give as much or as little time as you are able. Anyone wishing to get involved should contact our Secretary via our email address, who will pass your name onto the appropriate Sub-Committee Leader.

Constitution

It is good practice for a Parent Council to have a constitution as it gives a framework to the group and contains a description of the Parent Council and how they carry out their aims and objectives. A copy of our constitution can either be found on the school website, under the sub-heading 'Parent Council', or by requested via email from our Secretary.

Connect Membership and Insurance

All Parent Councils in Scotland have membership to Connect which is the trading name of Scottish Parent Teacher Council. Membership includes Employers' Liability Insurance, Public Liability Insurance, and access to free training/information sessions and events, and up-to-date information and resources for Parent Councils, parent/carers, and staff. For more information visit www.connect.scot.

Raising Concerns, Issues and Making Complaints

The Parent Council will happily deal with any concerns, issues, or complaints that parents/carers have in relation to general school matters, for example, heating, curriculum, health and safety, school transport, etc. **Note:** We **will not** deal with any individual personal matters or concerns relating specifically to your child(ren), and as such, **should not** be brought up at meetings. Parent/carers should address personal matters to either the Head Teacher or the School directly.

Confidentiality

The Parent Council **will not** discuss issues about individual pupils, families, teachers, or other school staff, under any circumstances, and as such **should not** be brought up at meetings. Parents/carers should consult the Head Teacher directly.

Data Protection and Protecting your Person Data

Our Parent Council is committed to protecting the personal data, whether you are a member of the Parent Council or the wider Parent forum, and as such have in place both a Privacy Policy and Data Protection Policy which are strictly adhered to, to ensure your personal data is never shared with third parties and is dealt with in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. We collect/process your personal data under the legal basis of consent and as such before we hold and use any contact information for individuals, you will be asked to sign a Data Protection Policy form. These Policies are reviewed by the Parent Council every three year, to ensure they are kept up-to-to-date with the latest regulations. Any parent/carer wishing to read these policies can do so either via the school website under the sub-heading 'Parent Council', or by requesting a copy via email from our Secretary.

How to become a Member of the Parent Council?

New members are welcomed and encouraged. As a member you can get involved as much or as little as you wish. While attending every meeting is encourage, it is not compulsory, if for any reason you cannot attend you simply put in your apologies in advance of meetings to our secretary.

If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact the Chairperson or the Secretary at wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com

Present Parent Council Office Bearers and Members

Louise Cochran – Chairperson

Jane Valentine – Treasurer

Ann Andreason

Kerry Fry

Melanie Halliday

Claire Ingram

Mark Ingram

Laura Kennan

Jillian Maxwell

Lynne Maxwell

Maria Navarro de Sepulveda

Caroline O'Hara

Sharon Young

Staff Representatives

Barry Graham - Head Teacher

Euan Mack – Deputy Head Teacher (Academy)

Anna Meredith – Deputy Head Teacher (ELC-P3)

Sarah McDiarmid – Deputy Head Teacher (P4-P7)

Lynn Smith – Acting Deputy Head Teacher (P4-P7)

Judith Park – Acting ELC Manager

Secretary to the Parent Council

Our Secretary is Katrina Galligan. Katrina was appointed to the post in October 2020 and is responsible for all our secretarial duties, overseeing our email in-box, for our social media post, keeping our 'Parent Council' section on the school website up-to-date, as well as setting up online meetings via Teams and Zoom.

How to Contact us:

Any parent/carer wishing to contact us can do so via our email address, wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com

Further information can be found in the school handbook, on the school website or by contacting our Chairperson or Secretary at wallacehallparentcouncil@gmail.com.