

# GRACEMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL

## PARENT COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2007

Present:

Heather Boag, Jim Cassidy, Morag Clarke, Ian Duncan, Ken Gregor, Arthur Hopkinson, Caroline Sanderson

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ken Gregor welcomed everybody to the first meeting of the Parent Council. In addition to former members of the School Board, Arthur Hopkinson was attending as a new Parent Member.

2. Parent Council Housekeeping

Selection of Office Bearers

The following office bearers were selected for the Parent Council:

Chair	Ken Gregor
Vice Chair	Morag Clarke
Treasurer	Ian Duncan

Caroline Sanderson would act as Clerk to the Parent Council.

Co-opted Members

Ken Gregor would invite Bob Perry to become a Co-opted Member of the Parent Council.

Heather Boag and Laura Johnston would represent the teaching staff and would attend meetings alternately.

Dates of Future Meetings

The following dates were set for meetings in Session 2007/08:

Thursday 8 November 2007  
Thursday 17 January 2008  
Thursday 13 March 2008  
Thursday 24 April 2008  
Thursday 12 June 2008

Caroline Sanderson would book school lets for these meetings, which would all start at 7.00 pm.

### 3. Report from Head Teacher

Jim Cassidy reported as follows:

#### Staffing

The school was fully staffed at the start of the session, with 10 new members of teaching staff.

#### School Roll

The school roll was currently 589, which was higher than the projected figure of 544. If this was still the case at the census date of 19 September, then the school would receive additional resources.

#### Examination Results

There had been a significant improvement in terms of attainment across the board and the fast track initiatives in the compulsory subjects (English, Maths, French) had proved to be highly successful.

#### Ogwini Appeal

The school was planning to launch a major fundraising appeal for Ogwini High School in South Africa. Parents, pupils and the wider community would be asked for pledges of £30 to sponsor a child for a year's education at Ogwini.

#### School of Ambition

The School of Ambition programme had now been confirmed by the Scottish Executive and parents would receive a booklet with the title "*Transforming Gracemount High School by 2010*" to inform them about it.

#### Board of Representatives

Jim Cassidy was keen to involve people from the community in the Board of Representatives. He would discuss with Ken Gregor whether Susan Duncan, a former Co-opted Member of the School Board, might be invited to join and what her potential role would be.

#### Alternative Pathway Development

The school was committed to developing alternative pathways for vulnerable youngsters who might leave school with no positive destination and become part of the NEET statistics (Not in Employment, Education or Training). A bid had been submitted to the Capital City Partnership for funding of £40,000 to pilot a different, radical approach to support these young people and the decision would be made later in the month.

#### School Review

A school review was due to take place from 9-11 October, concentrating on 3 departments: Modern Languages, Physical Education and Home Economics. It was likely that the quality team carrying out the review would want to talk to members of the Parent Council.

### HMIe Follow-through Report

The HMIe follow-through report had been circulated to parents at the start of the session, with a questionnaire accompanying it for 1 in 5 parents.

### Budget Cuts

The planned school closures announced by the Council in order to save money had been withdrawn for now, but instead secondary schools would each be expected to bear a budget cut in the region of £20,000 and there would also be a freeze on recruitment. Fortunately a fuel surcharge would not apply to the school, because the heating was the responsibility of Amey.

#### 4. Issues from Parents

Ian Duncan asked why S1 pupils did not have all subjects on their initial timetable. The explanation for this was the system of Blocking and Rotation which had been introduced. Previously S1 pupils had 1 period per week of 16 different subjects, but now subjects were grouped together in 3s and were introduced in different terms. This allowed more continuity for teachers and provided a better, more intensive learning experience for pupils.

#### 5. Issues from Pupils

A representative from the Pupil Council had not yet been selected.

#### 6. Issues from School Staff

There were no issues from staff at present.

#### 7. Any Other Issues

##### Bank Account

Ian Duncan would open a bank account with the Bank of Scotland to receive the funding for the Parent Council.

##### Football Pitches

A fence had now been put up around the grass pitches at the front of the school, which meant that they could finally be used.

#### 8. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 8 November 2007 at 7.00 pm