



James Gillespie's  
High School  
Parent Council

# James Gillespie's High School Parent Council

Wednesday 29 January 2025

7 - 9 pm

JGHS Library





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Parent Council Meeting  
29 January 2025



# Welcome

<http://www.jghsparentcouncil.org>



# Agenda

- Science teaching at JGHS – Mr Russell and Mr Coltart
- Update from the JGHS Parent Council
  - Capacity
  - SQA timetabling
- Headteacher's report – Neil McCallum
- Q&A





# Delivery of the science curriculum at JGHS

CL Alan Russell and Iain Coltart



# Report from the Parent Council

Hilary Snaith



# Parent Council Office Bearers 2024-25

- Co-Chair – Tiziana Basciani
- Co-Chair – Hilary Snaith
- Vice-Chair – Liz Hilton
- Vice-Chair – Sam Ross
- Secretary – Padraic Kinsella
- Treasurer – Kirstin Leighton
- Refreshments – Julita Burgess
- Comms Officer – Kate Pinault







# JGHS Parent Council finances

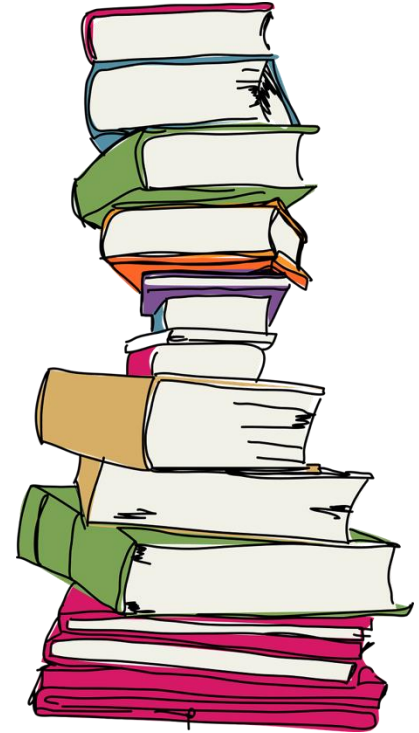
- Many thanks to Kirstin Leighton, PC Treasurer
- Received 2024/25 CEC allocation: **£1501.60**
- Still have not received CEC allocation for 2023/24 – this has been escalated
- 2024 SSF applications have closed
  - **£5401** requested - **£3759** available
- Refreshments – fundraising at School events
- Closing balance: **£2419.54**
- ParentPay balance: **£1073.84**





# Recent issues

- Discussed a wide range of issues with the School leadership – many thanks for their engagement and responses
  - Communication with parents
  - New attainment reports
  - S1 Residential
  - Duke of Edinburgh Award opportunities
  - Fundraising for English texts







# Capacity and rolls



To support the School's efforts to get traction with the CEC, in December 2024 the Parent Council wrote to Councillors

1. Noting significant negative impacts on pupils – both in specific subjects, and in overall school experience – particularly for those with additional support needs
2. Requesting that CEC recognises and fully factors in these impacts, when considering the suitability of the school estate and determining school capacity.



# Capacity and rolls



- PC has had support from Councillors – particular Steve Burgess and Tim Podgson, Joan Griffiths and Neil Ross, to whom many thanks
- CEC officers met with School team on 21 January to explore ways increase access to practical classrooms and social spaces – possible solutions are now being investigated
- PC received letter 24 January 2025 from CEC Head Of Inclusion Dr Lynne Binnie, outlining projected pupil numbers over coming years, and actions underway



# Capacity and rolls



Roll as of 21 January 2025 = **1762**

Year	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
2025	320	360	300	320	280	260	1840
2026	340	320	360	300	300	240	1860
2027	300	340	320	360	280	240	1840
2028	300	300	340	320	340	220	1820
2029	260	300	300	340	300	300	1800
2030	260	260	300	300	320	240	1680
2031	260	260	260	300	280	280	1640
2032	260	260	260	260	280	260	1580

Pupil number is not predicted to drop for 5 years – medium term solutions needed



# Capacity and rolls



- A report was taken to the Education, Children and Families Committee (ECFC) on 21 November 2024 to approve the revised planning capacities for all Secondary Schools –
  - Current JGHS capacity = 1800; proposed capacity 2025/26 = 1855
- Specific **suitability** issues raised by Headteachers.
- ECFC has requested review of these cases in March 2025
- Suitability issues reported for JGHS were limited dining and social space, and a need for additional Science, CDT and HE spaces.



# Capacity and rolls



- **Action:** Scope for repurposing and reconfiguration of existing spaces - alongside the use of some additional space - to provide increased practical subject facilities and improved social space.
- **Action:** PC concerns regarding the suitability of the space especially those with ASN have been shared with senior leaders at James Gillespie's and local authority.
- **Action:** School reviewing travel time between campuses, inc. impact on extra-curricular activities; S6 study spaces; communications with PSLs



# Co-scheduling of Highers in 2025 exam diet

- SQA Higher English and Higher Psychology on 7 May 2025
- PC contacted a range of decision makers to request Higher English is not timetabled on the same day as any other Higher
- Proposed that contingency day on 2 June is used to re-schedule Psychology to avoid any additional clashes negatively impacting other pupils
- Letters available on PC website (Documents)



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba





# Co-scheduling of Highers in 2025 exam diet

- Received positive engagement with Daniel Johnson MSP
- AS of 27 January 2025, SQA have written to the Cabinet Secretary “outlining an approach which [they] believe will provide a solution to the issue...highlighted”.
- Awaiting agreement - watch this space!



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba



# Other activities



- Engagement with City of Edinburgh Council - updates
  - Following the review of Inclusion policies at CEC, JGHS PC and several other PCs, wrote to local councillors requesting better engagement and consultation with parents of children with additional support needs
  - Now have been a number of meetings hosted by CEC officers where the new structures to support pupils with ASN were presented more fully and feedback taken
  - Daniel Johnson MSP also met with Parent Council reps at Holyrood and committed to supporting schools



# Notices

- Newsletters from Connect are posted on PC website
- Skills Development Scotland
  - Monthly newsletter with opportunities for training
  - Apprenticeship Week event **4 February 2025**
  - Book on Eventbrite – link on PC website





# Headteacher's report and discussion

Neil McCallum





# Next meetings of the Parent Council

Tuesday 25 March 2025

- Online
- Health and wellbeing

Wednesday 4 June

- In JGHS
- Agenda TBC







# More information

- More detail about Parent Council activities, news and reports are on our website:
  - <http://www.jghsparentcouncil.org>
- Contact us by email:
  - [jghscouncilcomms@gmail.com](mailto:jghscouncilcomms@gmail.com)

