



Portobello High School Parent Council - Report and Accounts – April 2024 – March 2025

The Parent Council is a mechanism for parents / carers to hear what is happening around the school, help shape the curriculum and wider school activity and to get involved in their young person's education. It is an important forum in which to involve all members of the school community in issues that affect students.

The members of the Parent Council and associated volunteers are all parents /carers of young people at Portobello High School. They all give their time for free to support the whole school. A big thank you to all of them for the time and work that they put into the Parent Council last year, and to everyone who has contributed in terms of participation at meetings, donating prizes or supporting fundraising efforts throughout the year.

We would also like to express our sincere thanks to the Head Teacher and the wider staff team for the hard work that they have undertaken throughout the year.

What does Portobello High School Parent Council do?

The Parent Council are volunteers who seek to represent the views of parents and carers in the school community. The Parent Council members manage the secretariat and funds of the Parent Council.

As a Parent Council we aim to:

- Represent the views of parents /carers in the running of the school.
- Promote communication between parents /carers and the school.
- Support the school and the welfare of its students.
- Fundraise to support the school and its students.

How can you get involved?

All parents /carers of students at Portobello High School can get involved in the work of the Parent Council. There are a variety of ways that you can take part:

- by becoming a member of the Council, helping with fundraising events, taking part in the recruitment of senior staff, and attending Parent Council meetings
- and/or attending the wider Parent Forum meetings to engage with the School. Parent Council, other parents and carers and pupils.

You can use your skills to enhance the experience of your young people and you can meet other parents /carers and have fun while you are doing it.

To find out more:

- Email us at portyhighparents@gmail.com
- Join us and Message us on Facebook: Portobello High School - Parent Council <https://bit.ly/3mCaOoh>
- Contact the school office and share your details to be shared with us
- Visit: <http://portobellohighschool.org.uk/school-info/parent-council>

The work of the Council 2024 - 2025

Parent Council / Parent Forum meetings

In line with the previous year, the Parent Council have held both Council and Forum meetings across the year. (Parent Council - small group of volunteers and Parent Forum - open to all parents/carers to attend).

The Council meetings have been a mixture of in-person and on-line meetings, but the majority have hybrid to allow maximum attendance and engagement. With the support of the school all Forum meetings have been hybrid this year.

This year we have been developing the relationship with the new Head Teacher and reshaping how parents/carers can engage, shape and keep informed with what is happening and the future planning for the school.

Throughout the year the Parent Council has taken a focused approach in responding to initiatives/ changes or new areas of activity/ themes of comments/ concerns and positive action/ updating and responding to regional and national education organisations and groups.

Alongside a regular update from the Head Teacher, the Parent Council has hosted a number of wider conversations and introduced new topics and agenda items e.g. hearing from pupils about initiatives they are involved with at the school.

Topics that have been covered at Parent Council / Parent Forum meetings include:

- The school's mobile phone policy and the no mobile phone pilot;
- School inclusion and attendance policy and projects;
- Pathways Programme consultation and feedback;
- Navigator programme consultation and feedback;
- Outdoor Education and Excursions consultation and feedback;
- Self-evaluation of Creativity, English and Performance and Humanities, Languages and Technologies
- School Day, Curriculum, Reports and Learning Planner consultation and feedback

Parent Council – Other Activities

Alongside the fundraising activities (see below), the Parent Council (PC) has undertaken a range of other activities during the year as follows:

- Supporting 5 Parent Forum events across the year - scheduling, agreeing agendas based on parent/carer and Head Teacher requests, communicating to parents/carers, arranging and minuting the events.
- It has supported the recruitment of a number of senior staff.
- The Parent Council expanded the refreshments at the parents' evenings to include S1/ S2/ S3/ S4 and S5 parents' evenings, which gave Parent Council representatives the opportunity to engage with parents / carers and hear directly about the experiences that they and the pupils had had of the school and to hear any suggested areas for improvement.
- The Parent Council communications group has been working on several areas including feedback to School communications e.g. Snippets/Website/Future pathways microsites etc. and discussions have been had with the school to look at developing improvements in communications both from and to the school and the Parent Council.
- Supported the school around a number of reactive bespoke activities including the Porty Cook Book, Art Exhibition, sitting on panels for school initiatives, feedback to a range of consultations, reactive support around a number of activities – CEC school iPad hack, Tick Tok influencer etc., and supporting the school with media and local councillor engagement e.g. the media launch of No Mobile Phone Pilot etc.
- Feeding into discussions around proposed changes to the City of Edinburgh Council Education Inclusion Organisational Review and other key areas.

Communication

Facebook (Portobello High School - Parent Council <https://bit.ly/3mCaOoh>) continues to grow with over 840 followers and is a strong communication channel for parents / carers to chat with each other.

The Facebook page is also used to understand themes of focus for meetings, targeting the agenda towards areas of interest and need.

Parent Council members attended wider Parent Council locality network and specialist meetings (run by City of Edinburgh Council) to raise and feed in parents / carers views on issues of concern and to bring insight back for all.

The Parent Council also continued to liaise with the wider Parent Forum through email and via the school Snippets Updates, which was considered especially important for those with no Facebook access.

Finance

An independent review of the accounts of the Parent Council for the period April 2024 – March 2025 has been undertaken, with no issues being raised. (See Appendix 1 and 2). The Parent Council would like to thank the Treasurer, Andrew McFadyen and Valerie Rogerson for undertaking this task.

Fundraising

At the beginning of April 2024, the Parent Council held £4,802 in total funds (bank and cash). The total amount raised by the Parent Council over the period (net of expenses) was £7,459 (£5,698 from fundraising plus £1,761 Council donation - see Appendix 1 for detail). Expenses for the period were £5,465 including £815 for stock and other expenses and donations to the school of £4,650 in this financial year.

The Parent Council also provided card reader facilities to support several student activities (Pizza, Bake Sale etc.) and the collection of donations to the School Inclusion Fund totalling £387 which has been included in the donations and transfers total.

At the end of March 2025, the Parent Council held £6,796.61 in total funds (bank, cash and a small level of stock for upcoming fundraising events). Post the end of the period covered by the Parent Council Accounts (April 2024 – March 2025) the Parent Council will agree a final transfer to the school in this academic year to support a number of School activities and equipment at the Parent Forum in May 2025.

We fundraised through an online Christmas raffle, supported by several parent volunteers and a number of local businesses and refreshments and raffles at the Sports Personality Awards, Cabaret nights, Christmas Concert, Edinburgh 900, and the school Parents' Evenings.

A small element of funds is generated through Easy Fundraising. We would like to increase the flow of funds generated through this avenue. Easy Fundraising is a service that donates money to the Parent Council as individuals make purchases on sites like Sainsburys and Amazon.

<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/portobellohighsc>

The Parent Council is keen to increase the range of fundraising activities and has put together a fundraising "sub-group". If you are interested in getting involved with fundraising, please get in contact with us using the details in the "Find out more" section above.

The school will outline some key 25/26 needs including the Portobello High School 150th celebrations, which will help us shape future fundraising activity and provide feedback on what was achieved with funds that were given to departments e.g. Drama from 50% funds raised through cabaret nights.

Council – 2024-25

- **Chair** - Nancy Riach
- **Vice Chair** – Chris Isles/Anne Steinberg
- **Treasurer** – Andrew McFadyen
- **General members** – Lindsay Drybrough, Martin Corley, Lorraine Inglis, Mary Campbell, Lesley Lawrie, Kirsten Donaldson-Wheal, Joanne Macauley, David Atkinson, Alison Adams, Claire Haggett, Claire Braidwood, Spoke Wintersparv, Colin Ross, Gemma Ruck and Rachel Fallon
- **General members who joined during the period** - Rachel Fallon
- **General members who stood down during the period** - Alison Adams, Claire Haggett, Mary Campbell, Claire Braidwood, Anne Steinberg and Spoke Wintersparv

Thank you to the members of the Parent Council, and all at Portobello High School for the hard work undertaken over the last year. As ever, a huge thanks to everyone who supported the Parent Council - we only work with the support of the whole school community so please continue that support next year.

Appendix 1 - PHS Parent Council - April 2024 - March 2025 Financial Accounts

April 2024 Opening Balance	£	£
Bank Balance	4,721.69	
Cash in Hand	80.00	
TOTAL		4,801.69
Income		
Edinburgh Council Donation 2024/25	1,761.40	
Christmas Raffle	2,109.60	
Easy Fundraising	215.18	
Sports Personality (1)	374.33	
Cabaret (June) (2)	1,056.68	
Cabaret (November)	284.71	
Christmas Concert (3)	874.91	
Edinburgh 900 Exhibition	336.08	
Parents Evenings	446.76	
Sub-total		7,459.65
Expenditure		
School - Donations & Transfers (1,2+3)	4,650.00	
Fundraising Supplies (4)	802.98	
Bank service charge	11.75	
Sub-total		(5,464.73)
March 2025 Closing Balance		
Bank Balance	6,624.57	
Cash in Hand (Edinburgh 900)	51.61	
Cash in Hand (float)	80.00	
Stock	40.43	
Total Bank, Cash and Stock		<u>6,796.61</u>

(Includes Card reader payments taken on behalf of others - **1** - £7.50 Social Inclusion Fund donations **2** - £43.00 Tickets/ programme & £9.00 Social Inclusion Fund donations - total £52.00 **3** - £315.00 Social Inclusion Fund & £12.00 Tickets - Total £327.00. All transferred to School during the financial year. **4** - Adjusted to include value of stock)

Appendix 2

Independent Review of the accounts of the Parent Council of Portobello High School

I report on the accounts of the charity for the following periods: April 2024 – March 2025

Guidelines for independent reviewers

Connect - an organisation that supports partnerships in education - provide guidelines to parent groups and treasurers in relation to annual accounts. These are outlined below and were used of the basis of my review.

The Treasurer is responsible for organising an annual review of the accounts by an independent examiner. This does not have to be done by an accountant but should be done by someone who is good with numbers, e.g., someone who works in a bank or building society, or the Treasurer of another group in your community, e.g. local Girl Guides Treasurer. However, this person should not be a member of the PC/committee or a relative of a PC/committee member. (There are different requirements for groups with charitable status.)

The following checks are the kind of review the independent examiner might do. However, they will have their own methods and must satisfy themselves that the accounts are accurate. Once they have satisfied themselves, they will need to state in writing that they have checked the accounts and they are a true and accurate financial record of the parent group, dating and signing the statement.

1. Most important. Check the bank statements agree with the spreadsheet total. If the Treasurer has been doing this on a monthly basis, it should be straightforward.
2. Examine the expenditure and pick five entries to check the back-up paperwork. Examples would be:
 - a. A large external purchase. Proper invoice received and signed off by two signatories.
 - b. Regular re-imbursement to PC/committee member or volunteers – receipts provided as proof of purchase and signed.
 - c. Any item of expenditure that seems unusual or out of the ordinary.
3. Examine the income. Compare it to the previous year. Does it seem in line? Query any obvious changes e.g. Easter Egg hunt last year £350, this year £150. Reason – it was raining this year.

Where there are discrepancies, the independent examiner should liaise with the Treasurer until these are corrected – often they are simply errors or omissions. The examiner should put any concerns that cannot be resolved in writing to the committee. What action is taken is then up to the committee.

Once the accounts have been checked, the independent examiner should write to the PC formally and confirm they are satisfied with the accounts. This letter will form part of the Treasurer's written annual accounts and financial report to the Parent Forum at the AGM. The approved annual accounts and financial report should also be made available to the Parent Forum by being displayed in the school/on social media.

Independent reviewer's statement

I confirm, therefore, that I am satisfied that the accounts presented are an accurate and appropriate representation of the financial position of the Parent Council.

The bank statements agree with the accounts. Cash sales are all logged and checked. Receipts are in place. I can see no errors or omissions in the accounts.

Name: Valerie Rogerson

Address: 28 Southfield Loan, Edinburgh, EH15 1QR

Date: 27 May 2025