LHS Parent Council Meeting Minutes

24/02/2026

Attendees

- Chairperson: Ali Berardelli
- Vice-Chair: Laura Smith
- Secretary: Lisa Wharton
- Treasurer: Jane Halewood
- Members: Scott Steele (headteacher), Louise Pescod, Dani Drummon (guest), Kate Willis (HCouncillor), Nick Cochrane

Apologies

- Becky McCook, Sara Bellshaw, Hilary Tresidder

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of Previous Minutes
3. Financial Update
4. Guest Speaker – Dani Drummon
5. Fundraising Initiatives
6. Any Other Business
7. Date of Next Meeting

Minutes

1. **Welcome and Introductions:**

   The Chairperson welcomed all members and noted apologies from those unable to attend.

   Before proceedings began, the Chair acknowledged the recent tragic death of a school pupil. Kai Matheson (S5). On behalf of the Parent Council, the Chair expressed support for Kai's family, and everyone involved. It was very much appreciated that LHS put out information on support they had put in place for the pupils and wider community.

   Approval of Previous Minutes:

   The minutes of the last meeting were unavailable for review. This will be carried forward to March meeting.

2. **Financial Update:** Balance = £3101.51

   £500 out for parent night booking system / £577 in from HC.

There is money due to go out for wind band competition entry fee and next year's parent booking system fee.

Action: NC will investigate pricing for booking system fee for comparison.

3. **Dani Drummon – guest speaker on healthy eating initiatives for school**

Context & Current Challenges

- **Canteen Usage:** It was noted that less than half of the school's 800 pupils currently use the school canteen for lunch. Approximate daily figures are 70-80 for breakfast, 380 for break, and 390 for lunch, with some pupils opting for packed lunches or eating more during morning break than at lunch.
- **Staffing Vacancy:** The school currently lacks a Home Economics teacher. The post has been advertised three times with no applicants. However, the kitchen space remains available for food-related events.

Guest Presentation & Proposed Initiatives

- Guest speaker Dani Drummon (DD) was invited to discuss how she could support the school. DD has extensive experience teaching young people cooking skills, with a focus on nutrition, budgeting, and reducing food waste.
- **Extracurricular & Special Projects:** Because curriculum integration is challenging, it was suggested that early-phase workshops (S1-S3) could be incorporated into 'Health and Wellbeing Days' (scheduled for the week prior to the October holidays), and/or run as a lunchtime or after-school cooking club.
- **S6 "Survival Cooking":** SS referenced a course he had seen at another school for S6 pupils focused on healthy eating and budget shopping for independent living. This could potentially fit into the S6 'Wider Achievement' periods.
- **Community & Local Business Links:** The group discussed delivering these projects alongside community cupboards (using leftover food) and exploring partnerships or demonstrations with local restaurants or estates (such as venison from Jahama). Similar successful models were referenced, such as the '3 Chimneys' initiative on Skye (noted by KW) and the 'Hill to Grill' Skills for Work programme.
- **Progression Model:** The overarching goal is to build a progressive skills model—starting with incorporating into Health and Wellbeing days in the junior phase years and culminating in cooking as an essential life skill in S6.

Action Points

- **Parent Council (PC):** Look into funding opportunities to bring DD in for the Health & Wellbeing Days, the S6 programme, and a lunchtime/after-school cooking club.
- **Dani Drummon (DD):** Investigate format and funding options and send proposed timeframes/ideas to the school to assess how they can be timetabled.

- **School/Timetabling:** Look at integrating the S6 "Survival Cooking" element into the upcoming 2026-27 timetable (which commences on June 1st). Additionally, explore scope to extend this provision to pupils who will not be returning for S6.
- **Kate Willis, HC Councillor** - KW reported that HC is currently working on its food in schools strategy, Good Food Nation Plan is being developed by Scottish Gov. LHS could be a pilot study to introduce local venison into canteen menu – through Lochabair Mor (group of estates that have sales-quality venison). Highland Youth Parliament are pushing for better recycling facilities in schools and reduction of food waste.
- KW will update Parent Council on developments to do with climate change action and food waste, recycling.

4. **Headteacher update:**

- Parental engagement – at the moment there are 5 x parents meetings – S1, 2,3 and 2 for S4-S6. Drop-off in attendance starts in S3, and in second of senior phase parent evenings. Once sure about what data shows, may change to 4 longer parents evenings.
- Need as wide a range of parental input as possible. Fairly good input from S1 and S2 parents, but this has dropped markedly by S6. SS to share draft of parental survey with PC for any comments and then get survey out to parents to inform decisions within school.
- Ideas to help parents with supporting learners include making support videos on website on areas like subject choice, subject pathways, revision planning – useful items that are always helpful.
- **Staffing** – PT Guidance is being advertised, PT Social Subjects, Physics, Chemistry teachers. Appointing Gaelic teacher – 3rd in school. A music teacher will be needed from August due to staff retirement.
- A concern was raised by one parent about the email going out to ask parents to join the PSA supply list. There has been significant staff absence. There is an advert out for PSA fixed term and ASN teacher fixed term. One parent commented that fixed terms are not attractive to applicants due to instability of short-term nature of contracts. So important to have support and short-sighted of local authorities to structure support in this way.
- PSA Staff have to be redirected to support those with most need, as required to cover staff absences. The letter went out asking for volunteers to let people know that there are opportunities to help and to see if this will help to increase available bank of volunteer staff.

5. **Update on Glencoe House:**

   The garden has been cleared, and the new swing is up. A meeting required to decide what to be done in space. Scottish Water staff are ready to help in volunteer time. Scott will speak to PT of Glencoe House to arrange.

6. **Any Other Business:**

   Dyslexia Scotland membership – is it annual? Was it valuable? SS to find out.

7. **Date of Next Meeting:**

   The next meeting is scheduled for Tues 24/03/2026 at 19:00.