

Websters High School, Kirriemuir

Parent Council Annual Report

The Annual Report

What is this report about?

Welcome to the 2nd annual report of Webster's Parent Council. The Parent Council is made up of a group of parents and carers of children who attend the school. Any parent or carer with a child at the school is a member of the Parent Forum. Any member of the Parent Forum can join the Parent Council or any one of its sub-groups. (See contact details below)

This report sets out some of the things we have undertaken during the last school year and what we propose to do next year. If you find after reading this that we have missed out items that you feel are important, or you disagree with the suggestions we have made, then we would like to hear from you. Please contact us.

What the Parent Council did in 2008/09

Parental Survey

It is very important to us that we accurately represent your views to the school. We sent out over 600 questionnaires - one to every family - in October, and we would like to thank the 130 families who returned them. We collated the results and we learned following things:

- the overwhelming response is that Webster's is valued as a good school
- areas that you would like the Parent Council to discuss with the school are:
 - o communication between the school and parents
 - o school uniform
 - o lunchtimes - what our children eat and where they go

Formal Meetings

We meet regularly, 6-8 times a year. We meet with the Rector or his representative, other staff members and representatives from the community, such as local councillors and church ministers. Pupil representatives are also invited to attend. Occasionally the Parent Council calls on members of the Parent Forum who can offer particular skills to help with projects at the school.

The minutes of these meetings are available to everybody from the Parent Council secretary (we have a vacancy for this {paid} post at present - contact us for details). We are hoping in the future to post these on the school website.

During the past school year the Parent Council discussed items you've told us are important to your children's education at the school. For example, the Parent Council were instrumental in helping the school suspend the construction work for the extension during exam time. Other issues included:

- term dates
- school buses
- Curriculum for Excellence (<http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/curriculumforexcellence/>)
- specific issues raised by parents/carers.

Informal Meetings

As the regular meetings are busy with a formal agenda, we also meet informally to discuss ideas for the future. If formal meetings do not appeal, then you are welcome to just join these informal ones. We aim to advertise these on the Parent Council area of the school website and, if you give us your email address, we can let you know where and when these are being held.

Meeting with Webster's

In November, the Parent Council met with the school management team (the Rector, his deputies and other teaching and administrative staff). Also present were representatives from the Parent Councils of the local primary schools. The meeting discussed many issues facing the school in the future. These included:

- Education
- Communication
- Health
- Manners
- Environment

As a result of this meeting, several initiatives have been started. For example, the Parent Council organised and paid for a series of six lunchtime exercise classes called the Bodyworks Initiative. This was aimed at children who perhaps would not normally get involved in school team sports. The music was geared to their age groups and the classes fitted around the school timetable. The pilot was very well supported and we hope to repeat this.

Webster's Parent Council is represented on two committees organised by Angus Council's Education Department: The Angus Parental Consultative Group, which meets roughly three times a year to discuss issues facing parents about education matters and to offer advice and support to parent councils throughout Angus; and the Angus Parents Updating Website Committee which meets to develop the education area of the Angus Council website. This area aims to help parents understand their children's education better and to help parents help their children make the most of their education. It also offers advice and support to parent councils. The new website area, called Parents as Partners, will shortly be launched to parents across Angus and is available at www.angus.gov.uk/parentsaspartners/. Please take a few minutes to have a look.

What else has the Parent Council done?

On Mo Brodie's retirement, a representative from the Parent Council was involved with interviews to appoint the new Deputy Head Rector, Donald Currie.

In addition to the main Parent Council, we have an events sub-committee called the WAGs (Webster's Activity Group) who organise fund raising and help at various school events. Any parent or carer is welcome to join WAGs - we are always keen to have new members.

In the past year, this group has raised funds through two major events..

On Valentine's Day we held an old school Disco in Kirriemuir Town Hall that raised significant funds, building on the previous year's success. We hope this will be an annual event.

The WAGs also organised a very enjoyable Quiz Night in November.

This brought the fundraising total to £1039.19

Some of these funds were used to provide:

- ✓ two marquees, as requested by the sports department - these were needed for outdoor activities to provide shelter and a base for refreshments for Webster's athletes attending sports meetings.
- ✓ contribution towards a projector, replacing an older version which was donated by the school to the Litien school in Kenya.
- ✓ a dinner money float for the school office to use for emergencies.
- ✓ the Bodyworks Initiative described above.
- ✓ refreshments at the annual prize giving and the Christmas Concert.

The Future

Next year we are looking at the following projects outlined below but we will always be guided by what you think is important. To do this we need you to let us know. There are plenty of ways to contact us, details of which are given below.

We want to communicate better with all parents and carers involved with the school and this will be the focus of next year's activities.

WHS website

We are currently considering how we can help the school to develop and maintain its website. We want to do this to improve communication with the Parent Forum. We plan to work with parents and the school to look at ways we can help to keep the website completely up-to-date and to be a reliable and comprehensive source of information. If you have expertise in this area and would be willing to advise or assist, we would be delighted to hear from you. We need to involve parents who have the technical know-how.

E-mail

Our database of e-mail addresses of parents is growing. If you haven't already done so, please give us your email address. We will only use it to let you know what is going on in the Parent Council. There is no pressure on you to join in with anything if you don't want to but we would like to hear your views and to be able to reach you direct through occasional e-letters which we piloted last year.

Uniform

We know from our survey that school uniform is another area of parental concern. Some parents would like the policy to be stricter and some want it to go altogether. The only clear thing is that most parents aren't happy with the current situation. What do you think? Please let us know.

Involvement

Most importantly, we want to involve more parents and carers with Webster's Parent Council, in as many ways as possible. Several of us are due to leave in the next year or two, as our children move on from Webster's. We badly need new members to build on the foundations we have laid. We strongly believe that the Parent Council can make a real difference - but it needs parent/carer volunteers in order to do that!

Who is on the Parent Council?

Any member of the Parent Forum may be a member of the Parent Council. We have a wide cross section of people but we are always keen to have more.

Current Members of the Parent Council are:

Veronica Barnes

John Corrigan

Sally Cowie

Denise David

Rhona Guild

Donna Hood

Claire Kadoch (Executive Secretary)

Alison Niblock

Helen Pratt (Vice Chair)

Kathy Robertson (Chair of WAGs sub-committee)

Alison Ross (Treasurer)

Jane Stork

Helen Stott

Janice Torbet

Gill Urquhart

Louise Valentine

Alan Weir (Chair)

How can I contact the Parent Council?

If you would like to contact the Parent Council you can:

- contact any member of the Parent Council directly
- ring Jane Stork 01828 640196, email Jane@thestorks.co.uk
- call at the school office or ring on 01575 572840 and they will pass the message on.

TO WEBSTER'S PARENT COUNCIL:

EMAIL ADDRESS

If you are happy to be included on the Parent Council database to enable us to contact you via email, then please complete your details below and drop it into the school office, email to jane@thestorks.co.uk or alternatively send this slip to us at : The Auld Kirk, Dundee Road, Meikle, PH12 8SF

Name:.....

Email Address:.....

If you have any comments on this report, or any other activity that the Parent Council undertakes please let us know:

Comments: