

James Gillespie's High School Council Bulletin

NO 1 . OCTOBER 2007

Welcome to this first issue of the Bulletin - you'll see that the new School Council is off to a flying start! There are many activities to get involved in, to find out more about what's happening at the school, and to meet and network with other parents. The buildings campaign is hotting up, the events group has exciting plans, S1 and S2 parent-groups have been formed, we are working with staff on "Health Promoting Schools"... the list goes on and on! We are supporting the school in preparing for the alternative timetable week 23-27 June 2008 and welcome your feedback on how that went in 2007. We're delighted that so many parents are getting involved with the school community, and look forward to meeting many of you over the coming year.

The JGH School Council formally came into being on the 29th August replacing the previous School Board and incorporating the former PTA. We adopted the Constitution and agreed interim officers:

Chair - Nigel Goddard; Vice Chair - Alpana Mair; Secretary - Karina Kodymowska; Treasurer - Nick Hughes; Communications - Ann Henderson.

All parents are welcome to the AGM.

For more information please contact the School Council (see contact details above).

Diary for JGH School Council AGM

Tue 23rd Oct deadline for anyone wishing to submit motions & constitutional amendments

Mon. 29th Oct mailing of AGM agenda, motions & supporting papers

Tues. 27th Nov AGM, 7pm School Library.

How may we contact you?

Please cut off and fill in this slip and deliver it to JGH School Council c/o the school, or send details by email to council@jghs.org.uk:

Your name		Please tick any or all of the options below:	
Child / children's name	Yr Group	Email: <input type="checkbox"/>	I am on-line and am happy to be contacted with JGH School Council information to e-mail address:
		Royal Mail: <input type="checkbox"/>	Postal address:
		School bag: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Sub Groups: work in progress

Much of the work of the School Council will be done through Sub Groups. Recruits are welcome for Groups already at work, suggestions are welcome for additional ones.

All sub groups and networks can be contacted via the School Council. Sign up if you would like to be added.

Here is the news so far...

The Communications Group has been formed to work closely with the school staff on the whole subject of communication within the school community. Initial priorities are to:

- ✿ identify the best way of communicating with all parents and carers, including Non Resident Parents in line with the new 'Parent Contact Policy', and the feeder primaries;
- ✿ ensure all families know about the new School Council;
- ✿ produce & distribute information & news;
- ✿ support parents as well as pupils already in the high school and those making the transition from P7.

To facilitate this we are working with the school on a questionnaire to all families as part of the "Health Promoting School" initiative.

An Edinburgh-wide group looking at all aspects of the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act, has asked for comments on their draft paper by 16th November. See <http://council.jghs.org.uk> for a link, or let us know if you would like a hard copy. You can comment direct to them or let us know your thoughts.

How do you think the School and the City Council should be involving parents? Suggestions welcome.

S2 & S1 Parents' Networks have been formed. An opportunity to meet each other, share views and experiences so far, and discuss any concerns related to the school experiences reported home. We will also have opportunities to raise any pressing issues with Alex Wallace (HT) through the School Council.

All welcome.

S2 parents met on 24th September to chat about what second year may hold for them. Issues raised included: how Standard Grades 'work'?; clarification on subject choices and coursing; improvements in communication; the alternative time-table; homework policies; and enabling greater parental involvement by providing a broad outline of work for subjects early in the year.

S1 parents will meet on Tuesday 6 November from 7-8pm in the school staffroom. The JGHS Council meeting runs straight after this.

The School Rebuilding Campaign has moved into an active phase. You will have seen in the media that, contrary to what we were led to believe, there is no funding to refurbish/rebuild the school currently available from the Scottish Government. Together with other Edinburgh schools (e.g., Portobello, Boroughmuir) we will press the case with the City Council and the Government. All parties made a strong commitment to education prior to the election.

Parent action will be essential to obtain adequate funding. We are looking for volunteers to help us build the campaign, and for parents willing to act when needed (e.g., email, letter, meeting, delegation). It's likely that the City Council will be developing a more detailed refurbishment/rebuilding plan, and we will need parents to contribute. Please go to <http://council.jghs.org.uk> for the latest updates and to register your interest

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An invitation for you to get involved in the Events Subgroup (the old "JGHS PTA" reborn)

Events planned this year, include:

- big socials starting with Festive Fun in early December;
- a Burns Supper & Ceilidh in February;
- a big Summer event;
- a programme of Parent Workshops, with info and discussion around topical themes eg: drug & alcohol abuse awareness; supporting home study; the school's pupil support structure; and more...);
- & providing support for the School's many events (eg. parent consultation evenings, school talks, concerts, etc.)

We are keen to keep up the momentum, and we need lots of support for this ambitious programme. It is undoubtedly a great way to be part of the school community and to get to know the place your kids spend so much of their lives!
Please join us. Looking forward to seeing you around!

FESTIVE FUN

Wednesday 5 December from 7 to 9pm in JGH School Hall

Calling all students, parents, staff and friends of JGHS.

Come along and enjoy an evening of seasonal crafts, music, ice-cream, sculpting, fair-trade Christmas shopping, mulled wine, mince pies and more....

Come along to join in *and meet up with your school community*.

This is a fundraising event for School causes.

The School Council Events Group will also need support for raffle and tombola prizes, and above all, a bit of your time to help us along! If you think you might be able to help, look out for us at one of the school events and make yourself known or contact the JGH School Council.

Put this date in your diary. We look forward to seeing you there!

Other dates for your Diary

Tues. 6 Nov: S1 Network 7-8pm in the school staffroom.

School Council meeting 8-9pm in the school staffroom

Tues. 27 Nov: School Council AGM 7pm in the School Library

Wed. 5 Dec. Festive Fun 7-9pm in the School Hall