It has been another busy year for the Royal High Parent Council, working in partnership with parents, staff, learners and the wider community. 

The recruitment of a new Rector legally requires parental representation across the process, including at the interview stages. We ensured that parents took part in the interviews which resulted in Pauline Walker’s appointment, and also achieved representation at both the shortlisting stage and for drawing up the job specification. These latter two points have long been championed by parents in Edinburgh in terms of obtaining representation (other local authorities have enabled this for a number of years) and we were delighted to finally win the debate and become the first school in the city to have parents take part in all stages of the process. 

Much as we’re looking forward to working with Mrs Walker, we’ll be very sad to see Jane Frith leave our school community. Her commitment to parental engagement has been outstanding and we’ve enjoyed a very successful partnership. This year that partnership included parental representation in the appointments of senior staff in Modern Languages, Support for Learning and Support for Pupils teams.

In school, we continue to represent parental views on future development of the curriculum and we took part in a curricular panel alongside staff and learners this year. Beyond the school gates, we have been active in keeping road safety issues (particularly at the back gate on Queensferry Road) very much on the agenda of local politicians and the police. We also made strong representation regarding the City Council’s proposed education budget settlement, and have continued our campaign for improved dining space and social space in the school. We will continue to look for support from all parents and carers on these matters as we enter the new academic year. We made representation regarding proposed Council session dates which would have seen 7-week summer holidays become the norm, and Christmas holidays reduced to well under a fortnight. These proposals have now been withdrawn.

We have continued to maintain relations with all of our local councillors, our MSPs, our MP, the city’s West Neighbourhood Group, the cluster Primary Parent Councils, and the media. Recent stories in which the Royal High’s Parent Council has been quoted include items on the local development plan, which could increase the local school population substantially, and on headteacher recruitment.

Going into the new year, I would expect the Parent Council to focus on establishing our relationship with the new rector, on representing parental views on the S3 and Senior Phase curricular challenges, on increasing our parental communications, and of course continuing our campaigns regarding road safety and social space. We are also due to work with other cluster parent councils regarding the cluster modern languages policy. I would encourage all parents and carers to keep in touch with us throughout the year, and to join us as a parent rep if you can. We are looking for additional representation from parents of the year which begins S4 in August, and of course for the new S1. You can find our details on the school’s website.

In closing, I would thank all of our parent, staff and co-opted members this year for their time and commitment to the Parent Council – Susannah Enahalo, Fiona Gilbert, Alan Kirkpatrick, Eric Jackson, Pauline Lindsay, Tanya MacLeod, Elaine McLeod, Moira Mackenzie, Marie Sheerin, Stewart Smith, David Toal, Tina Woolnough, Jane Frith, Dave Hill, France Dubanchet, Katie Mcleod, Frank Crowe &
Robin Boog. Thanks to Mary Keegan, Karen Reilly and Liz Leslie who have all served as Clerk across parts of the year. Special thanks as mentioned above to Jane Frith, and also to Elaine McLeod, who has volunteered her time to the parental group for 8 years and leaves our school community this summer with our very good wishes.

Luke McCullough
Chair
The Royal High School Parent Council