



Newcastle High School  
P&C ASSOCIATION

Parkway Avenue, Hamilton South NSW 2303

**NEWCASTLE HIGH SCHOOL P & C ASSOCIATION  
OPEN PARENT FORUM/DISCUSSION**

**5.30PM, MONDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> November 2020**

TIME & DATE:	9 <sup>th</sup> November, 2020. Zoom Discussion opened at 5.29pm.
LOCATION:	Via Zoom.

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
	Welcome & thank you.	KW
2	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>	
	Staff: Janene Rosser P&C committee: K White, A Clancy, M West, R West Parents: 18+ parents, no attendance list taken	AC
3	<b>PRESENTATIONS</b>	
	<p><b>Principal Presentation</b></p> <p><b>(Attached)</b></p> <p><b>Parents Q&amp;A</b> Parent Questions:</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> Concern regarding language use in year groups. – Year 7 group is being put down often - Staff giving of a bad vibe and the difference of language being used is quite confronting. Son has mentioned it a few times.</p> <p><b>Janene:</b> Fully aware of the behaviour and statistics of negative referrals, Year 7 are a cohort of unprecedented times, behavioural challenges due to Covid -years 7&amp;11 impacted transitions heavily when Covid hit. Add behavioural challenges to transitioning years can be very challenging.</p> <p><b>Parent:</b> Staff giving of a bad vibe and the difference of language being used to describe them is quite confronting.</p>	

**Janene:** Suggests a face to face and to get in touch. Doesn't have great first impressions of the school, what she can see happening is not at the standard she'd like it to be at, student non compliance and as a whole relatively loose in organisation and relative support. For teachers, student behaviour is worse than they've ever seen it. Mainly coming from Yr 7, fighting, excessive use of phones according to staff, there is an inability to manage them, its not the intention to target all, but know that year 7 is on the radar.

**Parent:** If teachers are stressed, we need to see what we can do to be proactive

**Janene:** New Deputies are needed, behaviour has escalated – has encouraged student voice as to what was needed. A student spent the day. Student observed Classes not being able to be managed and the bad behaviour and disrespect is an area that needs to be explicitly focused on. It's a cultural issue we need to address. Not the relational trust yet to take it to a level with her staff. Still managing to safely navigate to the end of the year. Behavioural issues are complex and causes and solutions will definitely need to be addressed. Husband is a director at the department, has also noticed an imbalance in behaviour across the school area.

**Parents:** Weakness – in English faculty addresses by two parents.

**Parents:** Strength – Pleased that Janene has addressed staffing.

**Parent:** Weakness is over use of Mobile Phones – there should more kids in the playground using less phones. – Many parents concerned about the use of mobile phones on grounds

Phones don't belong in schools but happy to consider that they can be used for good. Too distracting. Young people don't have the self control or mechanisms to be able to cope with constant dings and pings.

As previous principal at Dungog there was an open forum to remove phones – P&C advocated to ban from 9am-3pm but ended up just class hours ban. Full ban was too hard for teachers to police and control. Difference to NHS, Dungog had a huge supply of laptops which was a plus. Having the tech was important less phone/photo distraction. NHS doesn't have those provisions at this time. New BYOD provision being introduced 2021 will open the door to less mobile phone use. Social impediment and social distraction is problematic for teaching. There's no place for phones in a workplace, and school should be a focus and not a distraction. Kids don't have the ability to turn off, nor are they responsible enough to limit use.

**Parent:** Wifi at school poor and students need to hotspot data.

**Janene:** Department is to be BYOD compulsory – Head Teacher of Tech advises Wifi standard is very good. Also a Chewing gum ban – due to children leaving it everywhere, to the point a staff member had to go home.

**Parent:** Energy drinks

**Janene:** Energy drinks are not to be brought on the school grounds at all, not an item conducive to learning.

**Parent:** Passion projects were amazing. Due to Covid - can they return and be kept on the positive.

**Parent:** Agree – maybe inject a bit more into passion projects – if you're going to be taking things away from students ie. phone and gum, could there be an incentive/reward scheme in alternate.

**Janene:** Not the psychology to take things away and reward them with something else. If the rules aren't enforced, it gets away from you. Explaining the reasoning and understanding why we have these rules and making sure they are abided by. Learning how to responsibly use a mobile comes with age and maturity.

**Parent:** Views on technology, I think we need to bridge a balance. Some children are dependent on phones, but during learning it shouldn't be there. Mostly Instagram checking, going draconian there will be push back. Re: passion projects, maybe creative writing through the English Dept, or poetry.

**Janene:** Agreed, will be looked into.

**Janene:** What do other people think a Quality school looks like.

**Parent:** Son in gifted art, maybe more programs offered for gifted students?

**Janene:** Gifted program being launched next year – Developing that area of the school is valued and is really important on the development

**Parent:** High quality teachers

**Parent:** High quality leadership – particularly with the 3 new Deputies

**Parent:** Good feeling moving forward.

**Parent:** High expectations – Swimming/Sports carnivals – not expected to turn up to carnivals or the last week of school. High expectations for kids to just show up.

**Janene:** Kids talk themselves out of it.

**Parent:** Fun vs Real swimming carnival – could there be a return next year. Lots of fun. Gets everyone involved.

**Janene:** Will pass on the feedback to planning

**Parent:** Was a couple of years we had sport awards for graduation – was a great initiative maybe try to keep that

**Parent:** Showcasing that separately would be my ideal as well, that's great.

**Parent:** Increase in Motivation.

**Janene:** Appreciate the comment around motivation – internally we give things to the things we love, and desire in kids comes from the drive to do well and meeting their needs of transitioning – no goals have been set for transitioning and goal setting at this stage. There will be emphasis on this from the new deputies. Strategically focused on the kids and each year group and making sure they're successful when they leave school.

**Parent:** Is there a buddy system similar to primary school? – Is there something creative that could be implemented to ensure younger year 7 transitioning are comfortable, if there is behavioural issues and lack of respect to Peer support doesn't currently operate at NHS – Tolerance and acceptance could build relationships. It's a really good program, restorative practices and culturally the peer program could definitely benefit the school.

**Parent:** Student representative council could be strengthened

**Janene:** EV – External Validation – Currently the SRC is a healthy leadership group – the great voice that they bring will be very good for the students. Agree.

**Parent:** Current year 10 – a lot are leaving to go to SFX and other surrounding schools – intending to do trades, lost motivation not engaged at NHS. Some others have dropped out also.

**Janene:** Thank you: Biggest challenge, our school is surrounded by so many other school choices. NHS have to identify strengths and weaknesses. So many good schools to compete with - NHS needs to step up and change. Strong areas for improvement are to help kids achieve outcomes. I want the school to be made the top choice, so we have a huge focus on a strategic target of growth and achievement – I love that NHS is diverse and tolerant. We need to cater for everyone's needs.

**Parent:** Lack of aboriginal studies available. Offered in yrs 10/11/12

**Janene:** Not aware of numbers and the threshold of not able to run. Will investigate.

**Parent:** Child is advanced in maths but is lacking work, are they missing opportunities that could further their Education? Luckily self motivated, but concerned other kids are getting lost in the System

**Janene:** Results to put kids in placed levels of ability. Met with Maths and key executives to get their view - currently not levels of maths in year 9/10 graded within the syllabus. Differentiation/Streaming Mixed ability – Janene trying to get head around it and work out where to go from here. Please bear with me and the approach I take. Streaming may not always be the right approach. Certainly will be a topic that will be raised.

**Parent:** Child in yr 9, moved to top class. There is definitely movement in the year 9 Maths. Maths assessment I really love – Budgeting/Stall/Data Collection – really good at doing creative assessments.

**Janene:** Thank you will pass on that great feedback, great to have a way to do it in a way that is relevant and engaging.

**Parent:** Positive – Year 11 early commencement classes – really great. Daughter is loving it, even the exams.

**Parent:** Also love the early commencement.

**Parent:** Feedback from teachers – For assessments if you require feedback please see teacher before the due date, lack of support for students that do ask for feedback, seeing it as advancement/cheating. Can a conversation be had.

**Janene:** Juniors or seniors? Of course.

**Janene:** Policy ratification for P&C rename forum vs P&C – definitely needing a P&C – to have a conversation & have input to form part of the school decisions. Uniform, standard and expectation is very low. Mobile Phone policy etc.

**Exec:** P&C moved to forum format due to lack of being able to run meetings as not enough parent representatives. New format will include a small forum with limited time for parent questions and answers, then a formal very short (30min) P&C meeting after.

**Parent:** Getting to a meeting is difficult, but could make to zoom no problems.

	<p><b>Secretary:</b> Constitution needed for ACNC with P&amp;C, will need to run an AGM.</p> <p><b>Exec:</b> Calls for parents to attend P&amp;C and needs members who can be more active.</p> <p><b>P&amp;C:</b> Moves to hold AGM at a venue for social distancing – Janene will check restrictions - P&amp;C will be considered essential part of guidelines &amp; eased restrictions. Secretary to minute &amp; wait confirmation to hear from Janene.</p> <p><b>P&amp;C:</b> Bank account signatories need changing due to error on last signing.</p> <p><b>Janene:</b> Thank you for all feedback. Will take back to staff and review for next meeting</p>	<p>JR &amp; AC 2<sup>nd</sup> MW</p> <p>MW 2<sup>nd</sup> KW</p>
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<b>Meeting Close 7.40pm</b>		
	<p>Next parent forum &amp; AGM will be held at a date to be advised and will return face to face in 2021 under current eased guidelines issued 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020, copy attached. P&amp;C Annual General Meeting (AGM): an agenda will be sent out prior to meeting date.</p>	AC

<b>FINANCIAL P&amp;C MEMBERS 2020</b>			
	<p>Ally Clancy Caroline Smith Jennifer Herbertson Karen White Lisa Marshall</p>	<p>Marina Anderson Mark Lock Myles West Neville Anderson Rebecca West</p>	<p>Sue Kenny Tai Bawden Ying McKenzie Beth Higgs Deb Smith</p>
<b>P&amp;C MEETINGS 2021 (HELD AFTER PARENT FORUM – DATES TO BE ADVISED)</b>			