

Grove Parent Council meeting minutes

Grove Academy Staffroom, 7:30 pm, Tuesday 11 September 2018

Attendance

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| 1. Louise Abercrombie, Chair | 8. Clare Jefferson, Clerk |
| 2. Dawn Archibald | 9. Ewen Jenkin |
| 3. Johnathan Carrotte | 10. Julie Lynch |
| 4. Jim Cochrane | 11. Duncan McIntosh |
| 5. Cllr Craig Duncan | 12. Sela Mdlalose |
| 6. Graham Hutton | 13. Deepa Narayanan |
| 7. Ross Hutton | 14. Doreen Phillips |

Item 1 Welcome

Louise Abercrombie, chairperson of the Grove Parent Council, chaired the meeting. The meeting followed on directly from the Annual General Meeting so welcomes and introductions had already been made. Louise welcomed the two school captains, Johnathan Carrotte and Ross Hutton.

Item 2 Apologies

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| 1. Stephen Bain | 2. Fiona McLaughlin |
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Item 3 Approval of the previous minutes

The minutes from the previous PC meeting of 22 May 2018 were adopted without changes: proposed: Duncan McIntosh; seconded: Julie Lynch.

Item 4 Matters arising from previous minutes

The following issues were discussed as they arose from the previous minutes.

1. The issue surrounding the **minimising plastic bottle use** and recycling. This issue will be carried forward to the next meeting.
2. The statistics on the use of the **My Homework App**. This issue will be carried forward to the next meeting. The school is still arranging that S1 parents are given their app login information.
3. The **all-weather pitches at Dawson Park**: Graham and Bruce Burnett (including all four Ferry Ward councillors) held a meeting with Dundee City Council to explore a suitable solution to the inadequate pitch surface at Dawson Park. Although the final decision is still to be made, the school left the meeting feeling optimistic about the outcome. Parents raised questions about the possibility of renovating the changing rooms too. Cllr Craig Duncan provided some information on possible proposals to make maximum use of the facilities, following a renovation. The date of the final decision of the pitch and changing room upgrade is unknown, but the issue is gaining momentum.
4. **Parking congestion at school entrance** Car access in the parking lot at the start and end of the school day is congested. Cllr Craig Duncan raised a number of options as to how we could address the situation. These include the lobbying for a comprehensive plan such as a safe corridor which would also minimise displacement of parking to another site around the Grove and two nearby primary schools. Craig also raised the idea of arranging a site visit by the police at Grove Academy. Louise suggested that the situation requires a change of behaviour by parents/carers and possibly we could arrange for traffic wardens to visit the school. Ewen suggested we send a letter to parents. Clare will put another message on the Parent Council twitter and Facebook.

Item 5 Correspondence/meetings attended

5.1 Meetings attended

1. Doreen Philips attended a meeting on behalf of Grove Parents Council (6 Sep 6.30pm at Downfield Primary School) dealing with Parent Dashboard. Parent Dashboard compares the key performance indicators of different schools in Scotland. It is a bench marking system.

2. Julie Lynch, chair of the Friends of Grove, provided an update on their activities. FoGA held the first event of the academic year on Saturday 9 September namely the Doors Open Day. Over the course of the day FoGA recorded 157 visitors. FoGA focused on celebrating the 100 year anniversary of the end of WW1 and the contribution made by Grove pupils. Julie extended thanks to all the contributors and to the staff and pupils that helped make the day run smoothly.

Good news on fundraising for the War Memorials! FoGA needed to raise approximately £12,000 to restore the war memorials and rehouse them within the school. FoGA applied for partial funding from the War Memorials Trust during the summer and after recently launching an appeal on JustGiving.com to make up the difference they have been advised by Dundee City Council that the Council will donate the difference and so have asked us to stop fund-raising.

The next FoGA committee meeting is on Monday 22 October at 6.30 pm, in the Conference Room. Everybody is welcome.

5.2 Upcoming meetings

The Parent Council are invited to number of city wide meetings as follows:

- Training Afternoon & Evening Thurs 4 Oct 2018 7pm
- City Wide Meeting Thurs 25 Oct 2018 7pm
- Meeting with Executive Director of Children and Families Service (Paul Clancy) Wed 7 Nov 2018 7pm
- Secondary Chairs only with Executive Director, Paul Clancy Tues 12 Feb 2019 7pm
- City Wide Meeting Tues 26 Mar 2019 7pm
- Meeting with Executive Director, Paul Clancy Wed 24 April 2019 7pm

Item 6 Rector's Report

Graham Hutton, Rector of Grove Academy, presented his Report on staffing, achievements and events since May 2018.

6.1 Staffing

Parents were provided with an update on the staffing at Grove including the following appointments:

- PT Chemistry – Mr Watson
- PT Mathematics – Mr Fergus Maclean
- Acting PT Guidance – Jayne Samson
- Teachers of English – Jon Mitchell, Ross McNair
- NQT's – Aimee Maclaren, Sean Boyd, Ryan Honeyman

There are a number of vacancies due to the departure of the following staff:

- Teacher of Maths (Mr Gourlay)
- Teacher of SfL (Mrs Wilson)

6.2 Achievements and events

Mr Hutton provided an overview of the key highlights since the previous Parent Council meeting in May.

- Our S6 Engineering Project Team, led by PT CDT Jack Waghorn, went to Seattle in June. The Project Team were presented with the No Guts Go Glory Award.
- Prize giving S1-5: Mr Hutton felt the prize giving was kept brief and slick. He asked for the views of parents who attended. Doreen Phillips said that she attended and felt that it was well delivered. There was a discussion about different format options including the previously used the S1-S6 event at the Caird Hall. Deepa mentioned how much she liked the former system which entailed the handing over of the old captaincy to the new captaincy was symbolic. Mr Hutton said the Caird Hall venue generally had a low parental and pupil turnout. Grove Academy review the prize giving format every year and discuss how to change or adapt it to enhance the experience. Currently the school is looking at the system used in Renfrew High. Under their format, the S1-5 prize giving is conducted in September (instead of May) based upon the actual SQA exam results, while the S6 prize giving is held in May. The Senior Management Team will discuss the format.
- Broughty Ferry Art Society winners – Lucy Gibb and Calum Arthur
- Keir Robb – vice captain of U16 Scotland Hockey Team
- Amiens – 3 pupils attended including Collette McCourt, Caitaidh Thomson, Eva Terroni
- Battlefields trip
- Restoration/relocation of the War memorials
- Agnijo Banerjee obtained a perfect score in an international maths Olympiad
- SQA Results
- Cyclathon
- Dundee Schools Music Theatre (DSMT) undertook a number of products in which Grove pupils performed including Into the Woods, Phantom, Godspell
- Maths Week is a huge event in Grove and across Scotland. Thanks to Mrs Treece for organising this event.

Mr Hutton has a twitter account as follows: @ghutz1

6.3 Looking forward

Grove Academy will continue its partnership with Royal High and Madras College. In addition to this Grove will strengthen cooperation and collaboration with Braeview. Furthermore, Grove is tentatively looking at a tri-partnership with Elgin Academy and Renfrew High.

Item 7 Exam Results

Mr Hutton provided a handout (dated 11/9/2018) with the provisional SQA results (see annex 1). The black results are the official results from Insight, while the red results are the estimate results. Overall 2017/18 was a very successful year, including very good SQA results.

- Overall the Nat 4 results are better than last year, but down on the year before that. Grove tries to push pupils on to do Nat 5, rather than settle for Nat 4 results.

- Overall the Nat 5 results are slightly down on the previous year (which was a strong performance), but the same as the year before that.
- S5 Higher results are the best of the last five years, although 5+ Highers could be better, despite being an improvement on last year. This is partly attributed to the fact that many students are only doing 4 Highers, electing to do a NPA or alternative non-SQA course instead or are struggling with Maths. The results do not adequately reflect that pupils are doing a greater breadth of learning.
- Overall the S6 figures are down on the previous two years. One of the reasons for this is that many students are obtaining unconditional acceptance at university based on their Higher results, as a result they are not performing as they feel the AH results are not worth it.

In the discussion, parents noted the staff dedication and pupils' hard work to achieve these results. Louise praised the impact of staff on her child's willingness to learn and do homework.

Item 8 School Uniform

A brief discussion was held on the issue of non-adherence to the School Uniform Policy by pupils. Mr Hutton reaffirmed that neither hoodies nor denim jackets are part of the uniform, nor are grey jumpers and white trainers. The meeting did not discuss the issue of wearing blazers. This topic will be carried over to the next meeting.

Item 9 Any other current business

9.1 **Cost of the School Day:** Clare Jefferson will act as the Parent Council representative on the Cost of the School Day working group. Clare will liaise with Carla Barbour, Deputy Head Teacher on this issue.

9.2 **Duke of Edinburgh:** Parents asked about changes in the funding mechanism for the Duke of Edinburgh and some August expeditions were cancelled.

Item 10 Dates of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 13 Nov 2018.