

Grove Parent Council meeting minutes

Grove Academy Staffroom, 7:30 pm, Tuesday 13 November 2018

Attendance

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| 1. Louise Abercrombie, Chair | 7. Graham Hutton |
| 2. Stephen Bain | 8. Clare Jefferson, Clerk |
| 3. Andy Creamer | 9. Ewen Jenkin |
| 4. Lindsay Crosbie | 10. Fiona McLaughlin |
| 5. Cllr Craig Duncan | 11. Doreen Phillips |
| 6. Elaine Hodge | 12. Gary Torbet |

Item 1 Welcome

Louise Abercrombie, chairperson of the Grove Parent Council, chaired the meeting. All attendees took it in turns to introduce themselves.

Item 2 Apologies

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| 1. Dawn Archibald | 4. Ashley Low |
| 2. Jim Cochrane | 5. Julie Lynch |
| 3. Taletta Jamieson | 6. Deepa Narayanan |

Item 3 Approval of the previous minutes

The minutes from the previous PC meeting of 11 September 2018 were adopted without changes: proposed: Doreen Phillips; seconded: Fiona McLaughlin.

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 promoting recycling in Grove Academy was discussed. Grove has a number of recycling bins to allow for the separation of recycling containers such as bottles and tins from general waste. It remains a challenge to minimise the use of plastic bottles for water as provided by Tayside Contracts. It was noted that pupils also buy plastic bottles when sourcing lunch in the Ferry. There is a huge cost consideration to introduce alternatives to plastic bottles. After the discussion, it was decided to remove this item from future agendas.

2. The statistics on the use of the **Show My Homework App**. Andy Creamer, Deputy Head, provided a handout with the statistics on the use of the Show My Homework App (SMH App). In summary, the SMH App allows for a teacher to issue homework via the App, and both pupils and parents/carers are able to view this homework. Thus, parents/carers are able to see the homework set, due dates, completion and submissions. The SMH App allows the school to target and track pupils' progress. The App allows many options besides promoting communication. Andy explained that there had been some technical glitches between the SEEMIS, GLOW and the SMH App which has delayed the roll out to S1 parents. These issues have now been resolved. Grove has issued letter to all S1 pupils with the password details to use the SMH App and to allow for individualised homework. Across Grove, approximately 40% of the parents check in on the SMH App. Grove is planning on doing another push in December to increase the uptake of App usage.

3. **Parking congestion at school entrance.** Recently the Parent Council has posted a message up on their Twitter and Facebook page to remind parents of the congestion risks of using the car park in front of Grove Academy such as hindering access by emergency

vehicles. Craig reiterated that he would be happy to assist on this issue if the Parent Council or Grove Academy required. Craig spoke about the idea of developing a safety corridor around Grove Academy, Eastern Primary School and Forthill Primary School, and how action to minimise parking at one area can have a knock on effect to another area.

4. **Blazers.** Parents asked whether Grove Academy could reinforce the wearing of blazers at school. There was wide agreement that this remains a challenge. It was felt that blazers help pupils identify with the school. In winter it is more difficult to wear blazers as pupils have over coats/jackets. Graham said that more lockers for storage would help. Graham also reminded the meeting that there are clothing grants available for parents who cannot afford blazer. Grove will look at making a new push on the enforcement of blazers wearing in spring. Overall there is good uptake on blazers amongst the S1 and S2 pupils, but this declines from S3 upwards.

Item 5 Correspondence/meetings attended

5.1 Meetings attended

1. Louise Abercrombie attended a training meeting at Downfield Primary School with Taletta Jamieson, DCC, Children and Families Service, Parental Engagement Officer on parent councils on 4 October.

2. No one from the Grove Parents Council attended the City Wide meeting on 25 October.

3. Doreen Phillips attended the meeting with Executive Director of Children and Families Service (Paul Clancy) Wed 7 Nov 2018 7pm. The meeting was a mixture of items pertaining to both primary and secondary schools, with an emphasis on primary school issues.

- The main issues raised (pertaining to primary schools) included: access to community playground after hours; functioning of after school clubs during the holidays; the fact that breakfast clubs are running at a loss and focusing on childcare rather than breakfast meal provisions; swimming provision removed for P6 pupils while a more effective system could be developed.
- The issue raised pertaining to secondary schools dealt with information on the **National Action Plan on Parental Involvement 2018-2020**. Under this plan, a member of staff at Grove Academy will be appointed as a Co-ordinator of Parental Involvement to focus on better communication between staff and parents. This function will be supported with focused training to enhance teachers' abilities to deal with parents. The Co-ordinator of Parental Involvement will fall under the Senior Management Team remit.
- The issue of the budget for schools will be discussed at the next meeting (12 Feb).
- Mental health/resilience for primary and secondary schools looked at what was in place as Dundee's Approach to mental and emotional wellbeing.
- Results of the recent inspection

Craig mentioned that there was a citywide consultation on budgeting which had its closing date extended, and parents can still get involved.

5.2 Upcoming meetings

1. Doreen will attend the remaining meetings as default representatives. Louise can attend any meetings as available. The upcoming meetings are as follows:

- Danny Webster, Education Manager, meeting on how to raise awareness with parents/carers on the changing curriculum in the Secondary Sector on Thursday 29 November 6.30pm, Sidlaw View Primary
- 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

2. Clare to attend the Ferry Community Networking Event on 22 Nov from 6-7pm at Broughty Ferry library. Doreen will try to attend if she is back in time from work.

Item 6 Rector's Report

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

6.1 Staffing

Parents were provided with an update on the staffing at Grove. Staffing at Grove is in a good situation as there is only a single vacancy in the maths department. Luckily supply cover is available. Ms C Dow has been promoted to acting Principal teacher of Guidance, to cover maternity leave of Mrs Lauder.

6.2 Achievements and events

Mr Hutton provided an overview of the key highlights since the previous Parent Council meeting. This information is published on the Grove webpage, Grove Twitter and Grove App.

- USA trip to Washington and New York. The Modern Studies pupils had many highlight during their trip including being in Washington during the protests against the appointment of Associate Justice Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court and visiting the United Nations in New York.
- S4 history pupils visited Summerlee Museum of Scottish Industrial Life.
- S1 Disco
- S6 Halloween Dressup
- Remembrance service, to commemorate those who fought in the Great War, which was spearheaded by the history department and supported by the Chaplaincy Team. It is hoped that next year Grove's memorials will be within the school building.
- On Sunday 11 November the S5/6 pupils involved in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission attended an event in Glasgow Cathedral where they met the Princess Royal and First Minister. These pupils also attended a ceremony at Broughty Castle with the unveiling of the Ribbon of Poppies.
- The 'For the Fallen' concert event was held at Grove to commemorate the centenary of the first armistice in 1918. The production included history, dance, poetry and music productions to honour the Fallen in the run up to Armistice Day. At the end of the evening a poignant moment was the lighting of candles and reading out of the names of the 93 former Grove pupils who died in the World War.
- Furthermore, a number of pupils attended remembrance services at local churches, facilitated by the Grove Chaplaincy team, in Broughty Ferry.

- The award of IDEA Award certificates to 13 pupils who got Bronze and 1 pupil who got a silver award in recognition of their digital learning.
- John Farnworth provided a demonstration of his football free-styling skills to the S1 pupils.
- Staff and pupils donated 195 shoeboxes to the Blythwood Care Shoebox Appeal for Romania.
- The EcoClub who presented Marie Curie with a cheque for £566.
- The EcoClub also won the Rotary School Challenge Cup.
- Grove PE Department was awarded the Sports Scotland School Gold Award
- A School of Tennis will be established at Grove which should see £12,000 disbursed over three years towards the promotion of tennis.
- In addition to this, there have been a number of individual and team awards for swimming, hockey, golf and football. Special mention was made of Kier Robb on being nominated as nominee for Hockey Scottish Player of the Year.
- Grove was recognised for the establishment of the LGBT charter in an award ceremony at Pride Dundee.
- Finally, there have been a number of Walkthroughs in various departments including geography, modern studies and modern languages.

6.3 Looking forward

- Grove Academy will have two in-service days for staff which will focus on issues such as the development of the young work force and nurturing. Some staff will also visit other schools.
- The Christmas Fayre on 17 November.
- Extended Review is due to take place where an external team of teachers will validate Grove's internal assessment.
- There have been a number of letters from Paul Clancy on how to improve parental involvement.
- There are S4 parents' evening on 4 December and S5/6 parents' evening on 10 December.
- In December there are 46 pupils going to Berlin. A parental meeting is set for 28 November.
- Senior pupils participated in Safe Drive event.
- Pupils are going on a football trip to Manchester.

6.4 Head Teacher Charter

The Head Teacher (HT) Charter is being developed to give HT more power on issues that affect the operation of their schools. The aim of the HT Charter is to empower schools to made decisions distinct from the local authority and move decision making to a school level. Graham supports the HT Charter initiative as it will improve the quality of teaching and learning at Grove. Learners will also be more empowered through the Pupil Representative Council, questionnaires and five-a-day.

6.5 Large donation from a Former Pupil

Douglas Craig, a former pupil at Grove Academy in the 1960s has donated £20,000 to the school. Both Douglas and his wife were former head boy and girl at Grove Academy. There are a number of discussions within the school to decide on how best to use this money. Graham shared ideas with the parent council. Pupils as well as staff are being consulted on ideas.

Item 7 School Improvement Plan

Mr Hutton provided a handout with a summary of the main aspects of the School Improvement Plan. The Grove school improvement plan incorporates how the Pupils Equity Fund disbursement of £72,000 which is for the sole use of S1-S3 education. There are four broad priorities including: to improving learning and teaching, especially in literacy and numeracy; closing the attainment gap; improving young people's health and wellbeing; improving employability skills and sustained positive school leavers' destinations. The plan will be placed on the website.

Item 8 Update on the SQA results and the Insight statistics

Mr Hutton provided an updated version of the SQA results and Insight statistics. These showed a marginally better picture than the original data (shared at the previous meeting). The updated data is based only on the results of those pupils currently enrolled at Grove Academy. Attainment remains very good at Grove Academy.

Item 9 Chaplaincy Team

Gary Torbet provided an overview of the Chaplaincy Team at Grove Academy. The Chaplaincy Team is inter-faith and seeks to support Grove in the achievement of its objectives. The Chaplaincy Team assist with assemblies to ensure they are pupil lead with chaplaincy support. The Chaplaincy Team also have a role with pastoral care and well-being support to pupils. The Chaplaincy Team aims to better understand and serve the school i.e. a role beyond spiritual care. It supports initiatives such as the fair-trade week and community linkages such as with the Remembrance Services. Going forward a representative of the Chaplaincy Team will attend the Parent Council meetings.

Graham explained how in recent times the Chaplaincy Team has been re-established. A room has been set aside and will be renovated as a reflection and prayer space. This will allow for a space for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness and mindfulness. Louise said this strongly ties in with the values of the school.

Item 10 Any other current business

9.1 **Bus usage for PE.** Lindsay enquired why Grove uses buses to transport pupils to Dawson Park. Graham explained that the road is busy and it takes a long time to walk to the Park especially in light of the time available for the lesson.

9.2 **Friends of Grove:** FoGA are progressing the War Memorial restoration with the school. Their next event is assisting with refreshments on Tuesday 18 December 7pm at the Music department's Christmas Concert. Helpers are welcomed; if you want to find out more contact Julie Lynch by email at julieannelynch@gmail.com

9.3 The Parent Council will invite Susan Epworth to speak about the Cost of the School Day at the next meeting.

Item 10 Dates of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is Tuesday 29 January 2019. Dates for the remainder of the session are 26 March and 28 May 2019.