

**MINUTES OF PARENT COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT GROVE ACADEMY
ON TUESDAY 14TH JANUARY 2014**

Members in Attendance

Andrew Llanwarne (AL)	Cllr Laurie Bidwell (LB)	Sheonagh Scott (SS)
Richard Smith (RS)	Dawn Archibald (DA)	Fiona Anderson (FA)
Sally Hart (SH)	Rhona Gray (RH)	Louise Scullion (SL)
Carole Jenkins (CJ)	Phil Eva (PE)	Mary Holligan (MH)
Graham Hutton (GH)	Alice Turpie (AT)	Ruth Chalmers (RC)

Welcome

1. AL opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. He introduced Ruth Chalmers, the new Clerk to those present.

Apologies for Absence

2. Wendy Butter Laura Kobine Cllr Kevin Cordell
Susan Kydd Hilary Sandeman Lesley Elder
Karen O'Rourke Cllr Derek Scott

Minutes of Previous Parent Council Meeting

- 3.

AL thanked AT for the draft minutes of the previous meeting, held on 12th November 2013. It was noted that one amendment was required. Dawn Archibald's apologies required to be added. **Action RC**

The Minutes were then accepted as accurate. Proposed by SH and seconded by RS.

Matters Arising from Minutes of Last Meeting

Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

FA advised she had received a response regarding the Duke of Edinburgh programme.

Parental Involvement Event

AL circulated responses to the survey carried out at the S2 Parents' evening on 13 January.

Parents were asked if they would be prepared to speak to pupils about their work and career choices and also about their awareness of the Parent Council.

4.

A discussion took place on the responses and it agreed to try to organise a short series of career discussions for pupils involving parents during February. A meeting would need to be organised quickly with the relevant member of the senior management team. AL, MH, CJ and AT would try to attend on behalf of the Parent Council. **Action GH & AL**

The results of the survey show we need to promote the website and Parent Council at more events. It was noted that there was a perception that you had to be a member of the Parent Council to attend and that many parents were not aware they could come along.

Parents to be contacted and thank them for their input and advise them of the next steps. **Action AL**

There are more Parent Contact evenings coming up and AL asked for volunteers.

30 Jan (S3) – Phil and possibly Alice to attend

11 Feb (S4) – Rhona and Mary to attend

Parent Questions from the survey

It was asked if it would be possible for parents to be able to access information on tests/priorities for pupils. GH advised that this is not practical.

Several parents still have questions regarding CfE and are not clear on what is happening and what changes are involved. GH agreed that the amount of testing is excessive as the new system is introduced, and advised that teachers have the best intentions for the pupils. GH would welcome any assistance the Parent Council can give and it was agreed that AL would write to the National Parent Council Forum. **Action AL**

RG enquired if S4 parents were feeling the stress from their children? Most parents agreed. It was noted that pupils are picking up on teacher anxiety. GH provided his assurance that the staff are competent and that no child will be disadvantaged.

LS stressed how lucky we are and that this was a good school.

Head Teachers Report

Staff

5.

GH advised changes in roles and advised that Mrs Berry would be keen to come to a Parent Council Meeting to talk about co-operative learning. It was agreed to invite her to the next meeting.

A temporary extra support worker was now in place.

A parent had been appointed to a clerical post in the office

Other

GH hopes at some point to get the Duke of Edinburgh Award included as part of the curriculum.

S5/S6 are approaching prelims and will be on study leave the 2 weeks before half term.

Achievement

GH acknowledged Niamh Harper (S3) who has been selected for the UK national sailing squad.

Lateness Policy

GH advised that the school was tightening up on lateness. 28 pupils were late on the first day of term. Punishment is detention at break time. Lateness is down as there were 55 pupils who were late one day in December. GH stressed we are teaching pupils skills for work and arriving on time is important.

Traffic

GH reported the problems still persisted. He had been out in the car park moving cars on. There was also a policeman in attendance. Cleaners were asked to move their cars from disabled spaces.

GH commented on the article in the Evening Telegraph regarding the proposed barrier to the school car park. He had not been consulted about this and the article was not accurate. GH to meet with Neil Gellatly and Ewan Gourlay from the Council, and Gillian Knox (head teacher at Eastern) to try to come up with a solution.

GH is considering badges for staff cars and sticky labels for illegally parked cars.

CJ updated those present on issues in the car park and commented that there could be an assault, the way people were behaving.

DA enquired if we should close the car park and GH said he was considering this.

GH has the backing of the Parent Council for any measure which will help.

Events

Senior Citizen's concert went very well and GH had received many letters of thanks.

The Christmas Hampers were a success and pupils had been out delivering these. Again many letters of thanks received.

S2 parents evening – there was a 86% turnout, a record.

S3/S4 choice evening 15 January

Careers Convention on 21 January at Grove Academy. This is a joint venture with Morgan, Craigie High and Braeview.

In Service Day 13 February

Half Term 14-17 February

Minister's visit 14 February

Questions to Head Teacher

LB referred to the consultation re changes to timetable for National 4 and asked how that was working out? GH explained the transition between the old and new system.

LB advised his children did standard grades at 2 levels. Now the school has to decide which level and asked if pupils can move from level 4 to 5? GH said yes pupils could move both ways but there was a deadline for moving. GH advised it was very rare for pupils to move up and it was more likely pupils would aim high and staff would bring them down a level if not achieving.

AL asked if any schools or local authorities were starting 4th year courses in 3rd year to ease the pressure? GH advised that at Grove 4th year started in May and could not be any earlier due to the work involved in timetabling all the pupils.

RG asked how she could find out more information on the new exams. GH advised she should look at the SQA website.

AL enquired as to progress with interdisciplinary working as envisaged with CfE. GH advised this was not robust enough yet and he will be taking things forward later in the year.

DA enquired about the Baccalaureate. GH advised that a number of youngsters were doing this and he was encouraging it. Finding time is the issue.

Parent & Pupil Issues

AL said the subject of heating levels had been raised by a parent. There had been promises of a review and a report. Had this happened?

6. GH advised he was not aware of a review. He meets with Robertson's every month and finds them very slow to act on anything. A lengthy discussion took place and it was suggested that the legal agreement should be checked for the procedure for Robertson's to effect any repairs/amendment to the heating system.

AL is to attend a budget meeting for Parent Councils on 16 January and would raise the subject of money wasted on heating. **Action AL**

Consultation on Revised Guidelines on Enrolment and Placing Requirements

7. AL reported a consultation was taking place in Dundee regarding catchment areas. LD and CJ advised that the Council is proposing to check addresses again at time of moving from Primary School to Secondary School. Letters will be issued to parents after 17 January and a consultation meeting will be held at Grove on 3 February.

Reports on Other/External Groups

8. CJ advised the next Local Planning Partnership meeting is on 20 February at St. Aidan's. The Chief Executive will be in attendance.

CJ enquired if anyone knew the date of the next Friends of Grove Academy meeting date? She was advised to check with Mark Doherty.

Date of Future Meetings

FA advised that the next meeting on 11 March clashed with the Caird Hall Concert for pupils. AL proposed 18 March but it was thought this also clashed with a concert.

9

Wednesday 12th March or Tuesday 18th March possible options. **AL to check with GH and confirm.**

A discussion took place on which day of the week the meetings should be held. It was agreed that meetings could take place on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evenings in the future.