

**GROVE ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF PARENT COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT GROVE ACADEMY
ON TUESDAY 15 MARCH 2016**

Members in Attendance

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| 1. Cllr Laurie Bidwell | 6. Clare Jefferson | 11. Doreen Phillips |
| 2. Bruce Burnett | 7. Clare Leslie | 12. Karen O'Rourke |
| 3. Andy Creamer | 8. Penny Lewis, Chair | 13. Cllr Derek Scott |
| 4. Mary Holligan | 9. Julie Lynch | |
| 5. Graham Hutton | 10. Fiona McIntosh | |

1. Welcome

The meeting was opened by the chair, Penny Lewis. Everyone was welcomed.

2. Apologies for Absence

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| 1. Dawn Archibald | 3. Cllr Ken Guild | 5. Tara Malik |
| 2. Stephen Bain | 4. Elaine King | 6. Deepa Narayanan |

3. Minutes of Previous Parent Council Meeting

The minutes from the previous Parent Council meeting were reviewed. There were no corrections made to the previous minutes. These minutes were proposed by Doreen Phillips and seconded by Clare Leslie.

4. Proposal on the PE Kit, Bruce Burnett

Mr Bruce Burnett, teacher from the PE Department, asked our opinion on the introduction of a voluntary PE kit at Grove Academy. The proposal is for a unisex kit modelled on the existing sport attire and colours comprising navy shorts with a white top. A school logo will be attached to both the shorts and the top. The kit will be Nike. The PE department felt that the new PR kit promotes a sense of pride during PE lessons as well as a contributing to an improvement in the school ethos, and is crucial for pupils that represent the school at various sporting events. A discussion was undertaken on the pros and cons of the PE Kit Proposal. Some of the pros raised in the discussion were as follows: reasonable price, good quality brand, voluntary PE kit, locally based company with a good reputation. Some of the cons raised in the discussion were affordability to families, exclusion of families facing hardship, compliance rates of wearing a PE Kit. It was decided that although the Parent Council agree in principle, we would seek the views of the wider parent body by opening the issue up to consultation. The Parent Council will email parents to asking their views on this proposal for the PE kit.

5. Matters arising

5.1 Meetings attended: On behalf of Grove Parents Council, on 26 January, Doreen Phillips attended the city-wide meeting between Cllr Hunter and Parent Councils. At the meeting parents were briefed on the impact of the Dundee City Council budget on education. Cllr Hunter felt that the budget changes would hold minimal impacts on education in Dundee. Parents were also informed about the change in the administrative structure within Dundee City Council, with the education department now falling under the new Children and Families Service. The new Children and Families Service provide and manage the following service areas: children and families social work; integrated children's services; early years provision; primary education; secondary education; additional support needs; and community justice services.

6. Sustainable Development Education Report, Mary Holligan

Mary Holligan provided an overview of the activities undertaken by the Eco-club in the past three months. Full details of the other events are included in annex 1. The main highlight was the Fairtrade Big Breakfast which was coffee morning with pupils and staff, which raised £250 (<http://grove.ea.dundee.city.sch.uk/news/fairtrade-big-breakfast-success>). An upcoming event is the development of raised beds on a patch of land situated behind the YMCA on Brook Street. Parents

are also reminded that any second hand Blazers can be donated to the school for resale. We would like to remind parents to bring donations for the Rag Bag.

7. Report by Rector, Graham Hutton

7.1 Budget: Mr Hutton reported on the new budget for the school. The staffing formula has been reduced, although the per capita budget will remain as before.

7.2 Staff: There will be the opportunity for some staff to reduce hours in some posts, as well as redeployment to other Dundee schools. Some of the 'declared excess' will be used as supply cover in Grove, rather than bringing in external supply teachers. Grove Academy currently has no staff vacancies, although there staff on long term illness.

7.3 Achievements

- Amy Macleod won first place in the Burgess Short Story competition. Cara Kidd was also given an honorary mention.
- On 9 March S5/S6 had a very successful ceilidh at Grove.
- A Tree of Knowledge event was held within Grove to develop employability skills.
- Two pupils won awards for their hair dressing design skills.
- Five pupils were appointed as Sports Ambassadors for hockey.

Grove Academy performed well with the good higher results and demonstrated good attainment under the Annual Attainment Review by the Directorate. Mr Hutton explained about the new INSIGHT tool which is used for benchmarking and tracking attainment to demonstrate the school's performance. More information on INSIGHT is available at:

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/i/insightbenchmarkingforexcellence> A vibrant discussion about the utility of the INSIGHT tools and the accessibility of the statistics was undertaken.

7.4 Grove Academy would like parent volunteers for the Working Group focusing on Staff-Parental Involvement. The aim of the working group, amongst others, is to look at providing skills to parents to better support their children on the curriculum. The working group is led by Lesley Elder. The Parent Council will email a call for Parental Volunteers for the Working Group.

7.5 New timetable: Grove is in the final stages of developing the new timetable based on the 33 period per week. It has been decided that tutor time will be delivered by two 25 minute slots twice a week, rather than 20-minute daily slots.

7.6 Trips:

- Two pupils and one staff member are invited to an all inclusive conference in Kobe Japan.
- There is a trip to Berlin at the S3 level with 40 pupils who are taking German or religious education.
- There is a S1 football trip to Valencia FC.

7.7 Events:

- A prominent Auschwitz survivor will be visiting Grove Academy on 22 March to speak about his experiences.
- All Parent evenings are complete, and the school is busy processing the feedback gathered during these events.

8. Report on Information Technology at Grove, Andy Creamer

Andy Creamer, Deputy Head Teacher, provided an overview of the IT system at school. He confirmed that wifi infrastructure is installed across the entire school. A letter was sent to parents on 'bring your own device'. Grove has purchased 70 ipads. Mr Creamer explained that the ipads will maximise learning and teaching in the class room. Some of the other advantages include practical aspects such as teachers being able to use the ipads for learning materials without needing to book an entire ITC Suite and pupils being able to undertake group work more easily around an ipad than

a static computer terminal. Mr Creamer indicated that the ipads have the potential to have a positive impact on attainment. Training is being offered to staff to improve their use of ipads and educational technology in general.

In the discussion Penny Lewis felt that it was possibly too early to say for sure that the introduction of ipads will have a positive impact on attainment. Although technology is a useful tool, it cannot be seen as an alternative to reading and thinking, or teaching and learning. Mr Creamer agreed and indicated that these devices should not be seen an alternative but were aimed at enhancing learning and teaching. Mr Creamer indicated that a number of other local authorities have already implemented approaches making use of similar technologies and have indicated that initial evidence is that they have contributed to improved attainment, greater pupil engagement and motivation for learning.

9. Proposal on the House System

Mr Hutton handed out a document entitled 'Moving to a Fourth House: Consultation with the Parent Council, 15 March 2016' (see **annex 2**). Parents were asked our opinion on a proposal to change from a three House arrangement (where Houses are named after three local parks namely Dawson, Reres, Orchar) to a four House arrangement (with historical House names being namely Dalhousie, Grange, Balgillo and Craigie). There is strong administrative rational for this change, given that Grove has four Deputy Head Teachers and eight Guidance Teachers, which would work more easily with pupils divided into four, rather than three houses. After a brief discussion, the Parent Council decided to email parents to asking their views on this proposal for a change on the House System.

10. Scottish Studies, Fiona McIntosh

Fiona McIntosh provided insight into the Scottish Studies Award. The award aims to encourage different departments to think about their subject with a Scottish perspective.

11. Friends of Grove

11.1 The Friends of Grove provided and served the refreshments for the Easter Music concert, as well as the lucky chair award where one parent won a bottle of wine.

11.2 Doors Open Day: Friends of Grove aim to host an Open Doors Day in September. A letter related to this event has been drafted for engaging with the local community and an article will be placed in Broughty Spotlight. Friends of Grove are working closely with the school archives and want to use the open day to gather information about Grove through the ages. The Open Day will provide an opportunity for Former Pupils and Parents to visit the school, and share their memories about the life of Grove Academy. See **annex 3**.

8. AOCB

8.1 The Parent Council will contact the Grove to update the Parent Council website.

8.2 The Parent Council has a new email address. Parent will be notified via email, before migrating to the new account: pcgroveacademy@dundee.npfs.org.uk

8.3 Dundee City Council will be reducing the number of parental coordination meetings at which the parent council require a representative.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting is due to take place on 24 May 2016. This is the last Parent Council meeting of the 2015/16 Session.

List of Appendices

Annex 1 Sustainable Development Education Report (EcoClub), March 2016

Annex 2 A move to a Fourth House: Consultation with the Parent Council, 15 March 2016

Annex 3 Letter from Friends of Grove