

Grove Parent Council meeting minutes

Grove Academy Staffroom, 7:00 pm to 8:45 pm, Tuesday 19 Nov 2019

Attendance

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| 1. Louise Abercrombie, chair | 6. Graham Hutton | 12. Caroline Petrie |
| 2. Clare Clarke | 7. Tara Javed, deputy chair | 13. Doreen Phillips |
| 3. Jim Cochrane | 8. Clare Jefferson, clerk | 14. Chris Woods |
| 4. Andy Creamer | 9. Alison McDervitt | 15. Hong Zhang |
| 5. Elaine Hodge | 10. Selu Mdlalose | |
| | 11. Deepa Narayanan | |

Item 1 Welcome

Louise Abercrombie chaired the meeting. She welcomed everyone with a special mention to Chris Woods and Andy Creamer.

Item 2 Apologies

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| 1. Stephen Bain | 3. Cllr Craig Duncan | 6. Fiona McLaughlin |
| 2. Cllr Kevin Cordell | 4. Ewen Jenkin | 7. Fiona Wood |
| | 5. Duncan McIntosh | |

Item 3 Discussion with Chris Woods, Duke of Edinburgh

Chris Woods, from the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, was our invited guest. His role is to provide DofE Centre Support in Dundee and Angus. This includes recruiting new volunteers and getting them on path, building their capacity to ultimately bring in a new cohort of DofE participants.

Chris delivered a presentation about the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) award. The DofE is available to anyone aged 14 to 24 years and is described as a 'voluntary, non-competitive programme of activities'. It helps young people to learn and grow. A presentation slide looked at the many benefits to those engaged in the DofE Award. The DofE Award is beneficial for inclusion on CVs, job and UCAS applications. The DofE comprises of four aspects: volunteering; physical; skills; and expeditions. Parental / carers support is essential to assist young people achieve this award. The focus of the discussion looked at how parents / carers could assist in the delivery of the DofE award programme at Grove Academy.

A new model of delivery of the DofE award has been adopted by Grove Academy. Essentially Grove Academy is starting with a clean slate by training up a new team of staff. Chris will help the team set-up, provide training and operate the DofE system. The personnel training is modular looking at issues such as: the background of the DofE award; how to use the online eDofE to track the pupils aims, programmes and evidence of achievements; and systems to guide pupils through a year of delivery. The final structure of how the roles and responsibilities of staff engage in the programme is still to be finalised. At Grove Academy, Chris Woods said he had received great support from Graham to get the DofE programme moving within the school.

There were a number of questions raised by parents, and responded to, as follows:

- Pupils can enrol in the DofE Award aged 14, or the year they turn 14 which is their S3 year.
- The intended start date of the first cohort of new bronze pupils is in early 2020/2021. This will occur when the DofE management infrastructure is set-up in Grove to take in a new

cohort of pupils. Intake numbers will be limited due to the capacity and experience of staff with the DofE Award.

- The current priority for Grove Academy is to assist those pupils already enrolled in the bronze or silver DofE Award to complete it.
- There is a group of pupils that have not been given the opportunity to enrol in the DofE award in their S3 year at Grove Academy; pupils from the current S4 year group. Some parents / carers have independently of Grove Academy enrolled their children in the Dundee City Councils' Open Award. Other parents / carers have been waiting on the new system to be rolled out at Grove Academy. It was noted that pupils can enter the DofE Award at the Silver or Gold level, and do not necessarily have to progress from bronze to silver to gold.
- The DofE Opportunity Finder, within the online eDofE, provides resources for pupils that want to engage of the DofE independently of Grove.
- There are a significant number of roles for parents / carers to help in the development of the DofE programme. These roles include:
 - providing skills training to pupils.
 - as DofE volunteers, which is suitable for anyone that likes the outdoors to accompanying expeditions, or those accredited to drive the minibus
 - as fund-raisers to keep the costs of the expedition down, for example, to cover the cost of the minibus usage, payment of camp sites, equipment, etc.
 - to assist in the recruitment drive.
 - to verify evidence uploaded onto the online eDofE.
- However, many of these aforementioned roles require training. For instance, to accompany an expedition at a bronze level, a group of 4-7 pupils need one adult as an accredited/qualified as a 'low land terrain' leader. For silver and gold level expeditions, leaders require more experience and it is unlikely that this expertise will be developed within Grove.
- There is a DofE App which can be downed from App Store.

There were a number of events over winter to assist in the launch of the DofE award at Grove, as follows:

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| 21 Nov | Drop-in session for any pupils already enrolled in the DofE (existing candidates) |
| 4 Dec | Managers Induction Course (in Edinburgh) |
| 5 and 9 Dec | Introduction to the DofE Course. The course will run from 15:30-18:30. Parents / careers are invited. |
| 25 Jan | DofE Scotland Leaders Conference (at Stirling University). Cost of £25 per participant. |

Tara expressed interest in the DofE verifier role. This requires a half day training. There is no cost for this training.

Item 4 Approval of the previous minutes

The minutes from the previous PC meeting of 17 September 2019 were adopted without changes: proposed: Jim Cochrane; seconded: Selu Mdlalose.

Item 5 Matters arising from previous minutes

There were two matters arising from the previous minutes. The discussions are summarised below.

5.1 Parking and traffic

Jim provided an update on the issue of parking and traffic in and around Grove Academy (as outlined in an email from Garrie Watson, Community Constable, Community Policing). The traffic wardens and police are trying to establish a rota for monitoring all four schools in Broughty Ferry. There are some powers that the traffic wardens hold, and some powers that the police hold, and visa versa, which makes coordination necessary to provide effective intervention. There is nothing that can be done by either the traffic wardens or police about parents / carers entering the parking lot in front of Grove Academy. However, there is enforcement that can be taken outside the schools. Jim will continue to follow-up on the issue for the next meeting.

Item 6 Correspondence/meeting attended

6.1 No meetings were attended by the parent council members. Grove sent apologies to the city-wide meeting for chairpersons of Parent Councils (for 19 Nov).

6.2 Doreen was appointed as a Community Councillor on 5 Nov. This is a 4 year appointment. Under this appointment, Doreen will look at any overlap of issues affecting Grove Academy. Doreen provided an overview of the role of the Broughty Ferry Community Council.

6.3 Clare noted that the Grove Parent Council is on the mailing list of the Natalie Mackland, Communities Officer (The Ferry). Only relevant items to Grove Academy will be forwarded to parents / carers.

Item 7 Report by Rector, Graham Hutton

Graham Hutton, Rector of Grove Academy, presented his report on achievements, events, future events and staffing since Sep 2019. The main items discussed are as follows:

Achievements and Events

- Moira Stewart Trust - money for D of E Training: The Moira Stewart Trust will pay for six people to be trained as DofE leaders of Lowland Terrain Expeditions.
- Visit from Audrey May, CEO: The Chief Education Officer, Audrey May, visited Grove. Graham was able to show her how Grove had worked to narrow the attainment gap particularly amongst S6 pupils.
- Budget: Grove has worked to adjust the budget according to the latest round of cuts.
- Grove Equalities Group at DundeePride: The Grove Equality Group attended Dundee Pride.
- Eoin Simpson silver medal at Scottish swim U19 Water polo team in Cardiff
- Schools Digital Award: Grove received a school digital award. Currently waiting on the approval to use the set of ipads. Just waiting for two different user profiles for staff and pupils to be set up so as to safe guard learners, while allowing staff greater access. There will be four blocks of training for staff.
- Scottish Learning Festival (SLF): Grove and Calderglen seminar on curriculum - videos from Education Scotland on our curriculum are on both the ES website and the Grove one.
- Learning Partners - Royal High in Edinburgh and Madras College in St Andrews– very good meeting with HTs to discuss SQA results: All three schools had similar exam results.
- S1 Pupils at Royal High School Pupil Conference
- Visit of EO - Angela White
- Launch of the Grove Garden Apps
- History trip to Industrial Museum at Summerlee: S3 history pupils

- Maths week was held. The S2 pupils built a number of Sierpinski tetrahedrons.
- The advanced higher biology Assignment work in Millport
- Mr Creamer China's Trip.
- S6 held their Halloween dress up. The S1 disco was cancelled as only 25 tickets were purchased the day prior to the event.
- Prince's Trust Cookbook
- Visit of Papal Astronomer, Brother Guy Consolmagno: He spoke about science and theology coexisting. Pupils found his talk very engaging.
- Pupils have excelled in a number of sports including:
 - U16 football beat Monifieth 6-1;
 - S1/2 Netball Team beat Forfar.
 - Grove HockeyGirls in Aspire Cup won 4/4 games
- ESU Scotland Mace Debating Ella and Thomas beat Strathallan
- Remembrance Day Commemorations were held in the assembly hall
- Improvement Partnership with Morgan Academy moving forward
- *Humanutopia* - S3 pupils to shared event at Royal High: Seven S3 pupils attended the anti-bullying event called Humantopia. There were 18 different schools at the event which aims to build self-reliance and resilience amongst pupils. Graham hopes to bring the programme to Grove in the future.
- Inset Staff Away Day to 26 venues across Scotland, from Cults to Dalkeith, from Arbroath to Renfrew, including RHS, Madras and Larbert: On Friday 15 November, staff had their away day to visit 26 venues around Scotland. The aim of the outing was to look at how other partners approach learning and teaching to enhance at Grove Academy.

Staffing

- SLS conference and Presidency – Mr Creamer is acting HT (0.4): On Friday 15 November, Graham was elected as President of Schools Leaders in Scotland. This is huge accolade. Mr Creamer will act as head teacher two days per week while Mr Hutton attends to this role.
- Staff Leaders - 1 communications, 2 L and T, 3 Raising Attainment, 3 pupil leadership: A number of staff working groups have been established to look at various aspects of the schools. These include communications (website); learning and teaching (led by Mrs Berry); raising attainment in S1-S3; raising attainment amongst senior pupils; raising attainment in pupils that need more support. Some ideas emerging are to introduce S3 Prefects to enhance pupil leadership.

There is currently a city-wide freeze on jobs. A vacancy in the music department (due to maternity) and Mr Martin in Business Studies has moved to a new post. The cover/replacement status are as follows:

- Music - process of negotiating someone for 2 days a week to cover coming maternity leave.
- Business Studies - awaiting advert.

Future events

- Grove Signposts - Mental Health with Tina McGuff: 20 Nov, 18:30pm to speak to parents on Mental Health Disorders
- Engineering the Future for Girls event in Grove
- Christmas Music Concert, Wednesday 18 Dec

- Cost of the school day handout: Clare and Deepa will co-share the role of parent participant on the school working group
- Vision and Values: Mr Hutton provided a handout for the review of the school vision and values. Due to time constraints, this will be held over to the next meeting.

Item 8 BGE Curriculum, Andy Creamer

Andy provided a handout of how the 33 periods allocated to each learner from S1 to S5/6 are allocated. He indicated that there is a national debate over the number of subjects pupils take in S4 and there may also be movement on this by DCC in the near future. This would have implications for the shape of S3.

In addition the staff Curriculum Working Group have met over the last 18 months and have also identified proposals for changing S3 to increase time allocation for most subjects. This has also been supported by the heads of 17 of the 18 departments in the school during recent curriculum meetings with the timetabling team. Consequently, the school will move to reduce the number of subjects at a S3 level to lead into S4. In this manner, allowing pupils to start their pathway to the senior curriculum during their broader general education. This also fits in with emerging advice from Education Scotland

There were a number of questions raised around whether this would reduce the number of options for pupils, or restrict their options. Andy explained that at Grove pupils are able to take any subject at any level in S4-S6, and they do not necessarily need to follow on the previous year. Similarly, pupils can take subjects in S4 even if they did not do the subject in S3, which is already current national policy.

Item 9 Any Other Current Business

9.1 Doreen asked when the prelim timetable would be available. Graham said it should be released next week. The prelims will fall over 15 days and follow the SQA format. The prelims will start the day that pupils return from the Christmas holidays.

9.2 Doreen asked if it was possible to turn the heating down within the Grove building. Robertsons are responsible for the heating. The parent council can get the email for Robertsons from Graham, and send them a request to reduce the heating.

9.3 Graham reviewed the school attendance reporting procedure. As follows:

- Texts are sent home: 1) when the event that a pupil is not in tutor time and period 1; and 2) if a pupil is late, text is sent in the afternoon.
- Letter are sent home: 1) when a pupil is late 4 times or more in that week; and 2) if a persistent absence is to be confirmed.
- Parents are expected to phone in each day a pupil is absent.
- The purpose of these school attendance reporting producers is to safeguard the pupil and to know where they are.

Item 10 Items for the next meeting

Due to time constraints, the following two items will be held over to the next meeting:

- The presentation on Mr Creamer's Visit to China was held over to the next meeting.

- The discussion on vision and values.

Item 10 Dates of next meeting

The date for the next meeting of the 2019/20 session is Tuesday 21 Jan 2020.