

**Grove Parent Council
Ordinary Meeting minutes**

Virtual meeting, Thursday 20 September 2022, 19:30 to 20:55

Attendance

The following people were present at the meeting.

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| 1. Kulsam Ali | 11. Clare Jefferson, Clerk / co-treasure |
| 2. Tracy Bayliss, Member | 12. Selu Mdlalose, Deputy chair / co-treasure |
| 3. Clare Biggans | 13. Deepa Narayanan |
| 4. John Blicharski | 14. Matthew Robertson, Deputy Head Teacher |
| 5. Elaine Dawson, Member | 15. Pete Shears, Councillor |
| 6. Andy Fraser | 16. Danny Steel |
| 7. Karen French | 17. Hannah Steel, Member |
| 8. Jennifer Gallagher | 18. Zerqa Yousaf |
| 9. Graham Hutton, Head teacher | |
| 10. Tara Javed, Chair | |

Item 1 Welcome

Tara Javed, Chairperson of the Grove Parent Council, chaired the meeting. She welcomed everyone. She extended a special welcome to the newly elected members.

Item 2 Apologies

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| 1. Jackie Champion | 3. Fiona McLaughlin |
| 2. Kevin Cordell, Councillor | 4. Derek Scott, Councillor |

Item 3 Approval of the previous minutes

The minutes from the previous PC meeting of 16 June 2022 were adopted.

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| 1. Proposed: John Blicharski | Seconded: Selu Mdlalose |
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Item 4 Matters arising from previous minutes

There were no matters arising.

Item 5 Correspondence/meetings attended

There were no correspondence or meetings attended.

Item 6 Rector's Report, Graham Hutton

Graham Hutton delivered his report.

1. Achievements and Events since last meeting

Graham provided a detailed review of the achievements and events since the previous meeting. As follows:

- BBC – Employability – roles in the media – overcoming own challenges – opportunities do not always seem to be what they are. Also did a film, script, acting, sound, editing – of the local area.
- Tree of Knowledge – S1, S6 and Captaincy Team- Leadership
- Harvest Festival – 2 events organised by Senior Pupils a part of their courses – 300 pupils involved from primaries and Kingspark – part of the Dandelion School National event
- Trip to Edinburgh Zoo – Higher Biology – looking at social behaviour in monkeys

- Alexanders – S3 boys – Introduction to work – 2 afternoons per week - trades – great impact
- RRSA – Bronze Award

2. Future events

A summary of the future events was provided. As follows:

- SCEN Conference – Mandarin
- Partnerships Work – Via DU

3. Staffing

A summary of the current staffing was provided. As follows:

- 16 new staff
- NQTs 8 – PE, BS, Geo, Hist, MS, Mandarin, Eng, Drama
- Computing – Stephen Brown
- Modern Studies – Rebecca Moodie
- SfL (incl some temp Bio) – Emma Campbell
- Temp Biology- Asif Sadiq
- Sean Kennedy (temp PE)
- HE – temporary maternity cover post – J Stark (J Cosgrove acting PT)
- Elliot Robertson – Senior Pool Attendant
- Physics – Harriet Gilzean - here after the October Hols
- Office – Admin Officer – Megan Syme – leaving – so now have her job and her old job as SSSA – closing date Friday
- Acting DHT – LL (Maternity Leave) – interviews on Friday

4. Faculties

Mr Hutton outlined the ongoing issue of faculties. The implementation of the faculty system in Dundee is still on hold.

5. Cost of the School Day

Grove Academy will cover the costs of supplies for pupils in Home Economics, Drama and Technical Studies. There is still a prohibitive cost of school trips. Grove is reviewing the cost of trip including those to London, Berlin, Paris and CERN. The aim of looking at this is to make school trips open for all pupils regardless of financial background. One way to assist is to provide a calendar of trips in advance so there is sufficient time to pay in advance. The school is looking at how to subsidise these trips. One suggestion is to look to subsidies through fundraising outwith school.

6. School Improvement Plan

Mr Hutton delivered a presentation of the School Improvement Plan.

Mr Robertson explained that the SLT received training from Simon Breakspear on the Agile approach. The SIP was developed based on this approach.

Item 8 Parent Portal, Matthew Robertson, Depute Head Teacher

Mr Robertson spoke about the Parent Portals. He showed a short video which provided an overview of what the digital parent portal. It is a platform that parent, pupil and school can all access, share and store information. It is hoped that staff will start training on the Parent Portal and there will be data cleansing in preparation of the system in November, and that roll out to parents will occur in this 2022/23 session.

The parent portal should reduce the school administration. It will include, or replace, many functions which are currently operating as standalone features including the school twitter feeds, calendar, parentpay, school placement requests, and parent night registration. Some decisions on what will be included in the parent portal still need to be made including what will happen with the existing school apps. The parent portal was piloted at Forthill Primary School. It will also allow parents to see real-time attendance, and to submit handwritten notes and sicknotes. Parent portal will replace the school website.

There was a discussion. It is anticipated that 75% parent usage, although uptake at Forthill was estimated at 60%. A parallel system will be run to accommodate parents that do not have the capacity to use the system or do these tasks. It is intended that the portal will free up administrative time. Concern was raised as to whether this will cut jobs in the long terms.

Item 7 SQA Results, Graham Hutton, Head Teacher

Mr Hutton delivered a presentation of the SQA exam results.

The results do not reflect all achievements as they do not include attainment in college courses, non-SQA assessed courses such as the Advanced Engineering Programme or Foundation Apprentice Courses. Approximately 240 pupils are taking either 1 or 2 college courses.

Looking at the SQA results in the table across 2019 to 2022, it is invidious to compare the results across the last four years as the SQA assessment criteria have changed each consecutive year as impacted by the pandemic. Across 2019 to 2022 exams, the criteria for the exam results were based on different types of evidence required, the judgement of the teacher or the exam alone. There is more data due on the exam results which will better reflect results at Grove.

In the discussion that followed the presentation, John spoke about the various challenges of accessing students due to the pandemic. Universities are still most interested in the results of pupils in one sitting making the S5 results the most valuable. Due to the pandemic, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to do voluntary work. Personal statements which include volunteer opportunities, Duke of Edinburgh Award are useful. Although nowadays the advice given by universities is to undertake work shadowing. John provided many insights into how pupils can better prepare their applications.

Deepa asked if it would be possible to have John speak to senior pupils about university applications. Mr Robertson explained that the former Wellbeing Option on applying to university has now been included in the PSE Programme.

Item 9 Any other current business

Tara welcomed Councillor Pete Shears to his first Grove Parent Council Meeting.

Selu mentioned the volunteer registry has been created to capture interest from parents.

John spoke about the Dundee City Educational Trust and the opportunities it provides for funding for people who belong to Dundee. The website is as follows: <https://www.dundeeeducationaltrust.org/>

Item 10 Items for the next meeting

None

Item 11 Dates of next meeting

The next Parent Council meeting is on Thursday 17 Nov 2022 at 7pm.

The other Parent council meetings for the 2022/23 session are as follows: 24 Jan 2023, Tues; 23 Mar 2023, Thurs; and 13 Jun 2023, Tues.