

**Grove Parent Council  
Ordinary Meeting minutes**

Virtual meeting, Tuesday 23 November 2021, 19:00 to 21:00

**Attendance**

The following people were present at the meeting.

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|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Kulsam Ali         | 8. Graham Hutton, Rector              |
| 2. Clare Biggans      | 9. Tara Javed, Chairperson            |
| 3. John Blicharski    | 10. Clare Jefferson, Clerk            |
| 4. Jim Cochrane       | 11. Selu Mdlalose, Deputy Chairperson |
| 5. Elaine Dawson      | 12. Doreen Phillips                   |
| 6. Jennifer Gallagher | 13. Derek Scott, Councillor           |
| 7. George Gilvear     | 14. Hannah Steel                      |

**Item 1 Welcome**

Tara Javed, Chairperson of the Grove Parent Council, chaired the meeting. She welcomed everyone.

**Item 2 Apologies**

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|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Stephen Bain    | 3. Philip Scott, Councillor |
| 2. Deepa Narayanan | 4. Paul Wilson              |

**Item 3 Approval of the previous minutes**

The minutes from the previous PC meeting of 21 September 2021 were adopted.

Proposed: Selu Mdlalose                      Seconded: Jim Cochrane

**Item 4 Matters arising from previous minutes**

There were no matters arising.

**Item 5 Correspondence/meetings attended**

1. **Road safety:** Jim Cochrane provided background to the proposal to decommission the School Crossing Patroller (SCP) point at Church Street and Seafield Road commencing January 2022. Jim went to see Councillor Craig Duncan at his surgery at Brought Ferry library to discuss this issue. Jim will attend a planned site visit on 29 November to this crossing at Eastern PS crossing patrol (Church Street) regarding its decommissioning. Jim will prepare a letter to raise concern regarding the decommissioning of this SCP at Eastern PC. The letter needs to be submitted by 3 December. Derek Scott, Councillor, forwarded a letter with details about the proposal. A discussion was held outlining that this crossing point which is at a busy junction at the intersection of Church Street, Camperdown Street and Seafield Road. Road safety around both Grove Academy and Eastern PS is affected. Jim will continue to follow up on the issue.

Jim also contacted Wendy Cringle, secondary school representative on the Pupil Parking and Safety committee. There are no updates. The committee meet again on 9 December.

2. **Connect:** Parent Councils can access additional resources by registering at <https://connect.scot/register> . All parents on the Grove Academy PC can register via this link. They just need to select your local authority and school from the drop downs and then set up their own account.

3. **Consultation with parents/carers on Reform of SQA and Education Scotland.** Clare Jefferson attended this online research consultation led by Prof Ken Muir on 27 October. This was an opportunity for parents / carers to hear about the reform to Education Scotland and express their views on the type of education system they would like to see in Scotland. Mr Hutton provided more detail about the broader process in his briefing below.

#### **Item 6 Rector's Report, Graham Hutton**

Graham Hutton apologised for being unable to attend the previous meeting due to ill health. The main topics covered in the report are as follows:

1. **Reform of the SQA and Education Scotland:** The ongoing consultation on Education Scotland, led by Prof Ken Muir, focuses on the Inspectorate (SQA) being taken out of Education Scotland, and the latter being replaced with another body. Graham has been involved in three meetings with Prof Ken Muir on this issue. There are a wide range of views on this issue and it is critical time for Scottish Education. These changes will hold implications for the current BGE pupils. The report by Prof Muir will be published in January, and Prof Louise Haywood will take forward the implementation of the findings.

On Monday 29 Nov, Prof Muir will consult on this issue with four pupils from Grove Academy. Graham met with these pupils to provide them with background on the issue.

2. **Covid:** The mitigations against the spread of covid are still in place. These include masks, hand sanitising, desk wipes and staggered breaks and lunches.
3. **School start time:** There is a lack of urgency by pupils about the start of school time which is at 8:45. Graham will write to parents / carers to reinforce the need for punctuality and that lateness disrupts learning. The school building opens to pupils at 8:30 and pupils should go directly to class without congregating in the corridors.
4. **Achievements report to the Chief Education Officer:** Graham submitted this report. Although many activities have been curtailed since the start of the covid pandemic, some activities are starting up again. These include:
  - a. Anne Frank Trust exhibit. Four pupils will travel to London for the movie screening.
  - b. Cop 26 Mock Conference. Pupils participated in the Cop 26 virtual mock conference. Grove pupils appeared on STV and two pupils spoke on Radio Scotland talking about climate change.
  - c. Eco Group participated in the cyclothon and other events leading up to Christmas.
  - d. Mandarin Conference held many speaking opportunities for learners. The employment of a Mandarin teacher at Grove is well received by students. There is also a S1 Mandarin club.
  - e. Abertay Project
  - f. Women's FC
  - g. S3 Boys football match win over Levenmouth match
  - h. Presentation of three gold ties to two pupils, Kaelynn and Murray for their success in kickboxing and to Robbie for his participating the live World Music Competition.

5. **SQA:** There will be an exam diet in May/June. Graham is on the national working group dealing with the SQA exams. These will be the first exams since 2019 as the exams in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled due to covid. The prelim exam timetable will be published shortly. In order to prepare pupils, there will be prelim exams in the last week of December and January. Pupils will be placed on study leave for these exams due to the space requirements to host the prelims and also SQA exams. The social distancing rules for the SQA are extremely prescriptive (2-meter distance) as are the covid mitigations (no more than 30 pupils per classroom). Parents should contact Graham to volunteer as invigilators.
6. **Staffing:** Linda Marshal, Administrative Officer, passed away. She worked at Grove for 10 years. Two former teachers Phil Bolt and Frances Irons also passed. There is a vacancy for a temporary biology teacher. Mr Creamer has received a promotion to Education Scotland to develop Scotland's curriculum.
7. **School Implementation Plan:** Although Andy touched on the SIP in the previous meeting, Graham expanded on the detail by going through the final document. The document as available on the Grove website: <http://grove.ea.dundeecity.sch.uk/our-school/documents/school-improvement/grove-sip-covid-master-2020-21-nov-2020>
8. **School Improvement Report:** Graham provided a detailed review of the SIR (Standards and Quality). The document as available on the Grove website: <http://grove.ea.dundeecity.sch.uk/our-school/documents/school-improvement/school-improvement-report-grove-2020-21-1>

On the whole Grove Academy performed well in the attainment compared to the virtual comparator. In the questions that followed, Selu asked why are the results on the virtual comparison for the top two least deprived levels slightly behind? Graham explained how some of the courses / curriculum undertaken are not included in our figures such as the Advanced Engineering course or some of the Dundee and Angus college courses.

### **Item 7 Budget**

Graham provided a detailed breakdown of the Proposed PEF funding 21/22 and the DSN budget. Parents found this insightful.

### **Item 8 Constitution PC Working Group, Selu Mdlalose**

Selu undertook a presentation based on the document circulated to members last week. The purpose of reviewing the constitution is to allow the parent council to effectively carry out its various roles. One of the biggest changes to the constitution is to provide for a fundraising role. A discussion took place and Selu will discuss these with the WG, and include the changes in the document. Questions raised include the following:

- Who can be a member of the Parent Council?
- How is the membership determined?
- Who are office bearers?
- How are the accounts audited?

- What are the differences between the Parent Forum and Parent Council?
- What is the term of office?
- How are Parent Council members selected?

Graham suggested that instead of using the term school management, the constitution should use the term school leadership.

#### **Item 9 Prelims, Doreen Phillips**

Doreen sought clarification around the prelim exams. Graham confirmed that there will be prelims and the timetable will be issued as soon as the room allocation is finalised.

#### **Item 10 6<sup>th</sup> year social event, Doreen Phillips**

Doreen sought clarification around the 6<sup>th</sup> year social events. Graham said that unfortunately the mitigations which restrict the gathering of more than 30 pupils in a room are still in place. Hence many of the social events for 6<sup>th</sup> year pupils have been cancelled including the Halloween event, Winter ball and Final Fling.

John provided a link to a new article on an event in St Andrews where there was a covid outbreak following a charity event: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-59291530>

John also mentioned that the Cabinet Secretary wrote (on 15 November) to all universities and colleges to instructed them not to move to zero meters social distancing next year.

#### **Item 11 Medical Appointment Procedure, Clare Biggans**

Clare sought clarification around the procedure for obtaining a pass for medical appointments. Graham reiterated that an email to the pupil's guidance teacher is sufficient.

#### **Item 10 Any other current business**

Tara asked about whether there are gluten free cooking options for HE. Graham to report back on this.

#### **Item 12 Items for the next meeting**

The following items were identified for the next meeting:

- Constitution PC Working Group
- Decommissioning of the crossing patrol (Church Street)

#### **Item 12 Dates of next meeting**

The next Parent Council meeting is on 25 January 2022 at 7pm. The dates for the other meetings for the 2021/22 session are as follows:

- Tuesday 29 March 2022
- Tuesday 14 June 2022

Tara closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.