

Grove Parent Council meeting minutes
24 January 2017

Attendance

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Dawn Archibald, chairperson | 7. Graham Hutton |
| 2. Stephen Bain | 8. Clare Jefferson, Clerk |
| 3. Laurie Bidwell | 9. Gopal Narayanan |
| 4. Lesley Elder | 10. Doreen Phillips |
| 5. Ken Guild | 11. Fiona Wood |
| 6. Marcelle Harper | |

1 Welcome and introductions

Dawn Archibald, the chair of the Grove Parent Council, welcomed everyone to the meeting. All attendees took it in turns to introduce themselves to the meeting.

2 Apologies

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| 1. Kevin Cordell | 5. Fiona McIntosh |
| 2. Mary Holligan | 6. Derek Scott |
| 3. Susan Kidd | 7. Alice Turpie |
| 4. Duncan McIntosh | |

3 Approval of the previous minutes

There were no changes made to the minutes from the previous meeting on 8 November 2016. The minutes were adopted.

Proposed: Doreen Phillips

Seconded: Laurie Bidwell

4 Matters arising from previous minutes

The chair guided the meeting through the previous minutes and addressed comments on matters arising from the previous minutes. The main items raised were as follows:

- a. Refreshments: We would like to thank Clare and Dawn for providing the tea/coffee and biscuits for the meeting.
- b. Grove App: Special mention was made about the new Grove App. The Grove App is used by Grove Academy to publicise meetings and events. Parents expressed extremely positive views on the app. Mr Hutton said that the app had been well received. The app filter settings for both sending out information and receiving information can be tailored to specific year groups, parents and staff. The versatility of this mechanism makes it ideal for communication within Grove Academy. There was a strong uptake of usage by pupils, parents and staff. Laurie Bidwell asked if there were any login requirements for the app usage. Mr Hutton explained there are no login requirements and anyone could download the app from the appropriate Apple or Google Play Store. Dawn Archibald said the app information distribution was very immediate which promoted effective communication. Laurie said the app enhanced Grove's digital profile and congratulated the school on its development.

Action points:

1. Clare to ask Michael Charlton to use the App to distribute Parent Council minutes and agenda. It was noted that the app had already been used to notify parents about the date and time of the Parent Council meeting.
- c. EcoClub report:
 1. Activity Report: The most recent EcoClub Report (annex 1) was discussed.
 2. Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI): Dawn reported back on her role as assessor at the first annual Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) at Grove Academy which was held on 21 December 2016. Dawn said that the YPI was a fantastic showcase of the skills of the pupils and the vast array of local charities in our area. The way the competition works is that pupils need to choose a local charity and give a presentation on the charity. Pupils undertake their research work in teams. The best team presentation is awarded YPI Grant of £3,000 to the winning local charity. Through the YPI, pupils learn about active citizenship and raise awareness about philanthropy amongst young

people. Ref: <http://ypiscotland.org.uk/>. Mr Hutton said that he received a letter from Jonathan Christie, the YPI Scotland Manager, praising Grove Academy for holding the event. The YPI Grant of £3000 was awarded to the Willow Centre. Mr Hutton said the presentations by the pupils were really heart-felt.

5 Correspondence/meetings attended

- a. Dawn Archibald attended and adjudicated the first annual Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) at Grove Academy which was held on 21 December 2016. A discussion on the YPI was held earlier in meeting. Refer to item 4cii.
- b. Taletta Jamieson, Parental Involvement Officer, is holding a meeting for all Dundee Parent Council office-bearers on 8 February at 18:30 at Downfield Primary School. Dawn, Doreen and Clare are to attend. Stephen excused himself from the meeting.

6 Rector's Report, Graham Hutton

- a. Tribute to Mrs Morven Mackenzie: Mr Hutton started his report with a tribute to Mrs Mackenzie, one of our Geography teachers, who died suddenly late November last year. Mr Hutton mentioned her skills and experience, and her dedication to learning and teaching. Mrs Mackenzie's impact on Grove Academy was valued and she is dearly missed by the school. She leaves a huge gap at Grove and made an indelible mark on the school, colleagues and pupils. Mr Hutton extended his sorrow for her loss to her husband Donald and their two children. In the discussion following the Rector's Report, Dawn Archibald articulated her sympathies, and those of the wider parent body, at the tragic loss of Mrs Mackenzie.

Action points:

1. Dawn asked that the school, where possible, to include the Parent Council in any planned tributes in remembrance of Mrs Mackenzie.
- b. Staffing and vacancies: Mr Hutton updated the meeting on the current staffing levels at Grove Academy. After a really strong start to the 2016/17 session, Grove is once more faced with a number of staffing vacancies. At the moment there are six post vacancies and the school is finding it difficult to find both permanent teacher and supply staff. All vacancies are advertised. There is usually a strong response to advertised positions. For instance, the recent vacancy for a Secondary School Support Assistant attracted in excess of 70 applications. Mr Hutton felt that across the Senior Management Team there was concern about these staffing challenges.
- c. Achievements and past events:
 2. Grove App: Mr Hutton confirmed that there had been a high uptake of the Grove Academy App. A discussion on the App was held earlier in meeting. Refer to item 4b.
 3. Cycle Fund Raiser: Six pupils from Grove Academy attended the Lord Provost Cyclathon Reception on the 8 November 2016. The Cycle Fund Raising group collected over £1200 for Marie Curie Cancer Care. This represented the efforts of approximately 20 pupils. The money raised was handed over at the Civic Reception where the pupils had a chance to meet representatives from the charity which added to the enjoyment of the evening and the excitement of winning the Fundraising Cup for the third year running.
 4. Business Breakfast: On 10 November 2016 staff hosted a Business Breakfast with 60 employers from across Tayside in order to gain knowledge about what makes pupils employable. This is part of Grove's employment strategy to ensure their pupils are employable when they leave school. Following the breakfast, there were a number of workshops at which staff obtained feedback from employers to better understand what will make Grove pupils job ready, to identify 21st Century skills and to develop a model for employability. The insights gained from the Business Breakfast will be fed into the curriculum.
 5. The Big Grove Away Day: On 11 November, teachers from Grove Academy visit 30 secondary schools across Scotland with the purpose of looking outwards to see what is working in other schools. Teachers were tasked with seeking out best, and emerging, practice to feedback into Grove Academy.

6. S1 Community Day: The S1 Community Day (30 November 2016) is an opportunity for various clubs and societies within Brought Ferry to outline their achievements and opportunities for S1 pupils at Grove Academy.
 7. S3 Safety Day (5 December 2016): Grove Academy invited in representatives from various bodies responsible for ensuring safety within Dundee and Scotland. These included experts on policing, anti-social issues, addiction and alcohol abuse. Some of the organisations involved in the Safety Day included the Tayside Police, Anti-Social Unit and AdAction.
 8. Christmas Fayre: On 3 December the annual Christmas Fayre was held. There were a number of stalls hosted by school groups along with 27 outside vendors. Funds raised: £1,200.
 9. Christmas Concert: The Christmas Concert was held on 15 December. This event showcased talented performers within Grove Academy and was organised by the music department. Friends of Grove kindly provided the refreshments for the evening. Mr Hutton thanked all those people who contributed to the success of this event.
 10. Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI): The Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) at Grove Academy which was held on 21 December 2016. A discussion on the YPI was held earlier in meeting. Refer to item 4cii.
 11. iGem: A team of six pupils (comprising 3 pupils from Grove Academy and 3 from St. Paul's RC High School in collaboration with the University of Dundee) were acknowledged at the Civil Reception for their co-school project. This was the first time a Dundee team had entered iGem. Ref. <http://igem.org/About>
 12. Parent Contact Evening: At the S2 Parent Contact Evening (11 January 2017) there was 85% attendance and at the S3 Senior Phase Information Evening (23 January 2017) there was 80% attendance.
 13. Senior Phase information Evening: The event was held to assist pupils (mainly S3) in the selection of options at the start of the new phase for senior pupils. It was held on 12 January 2017.
 14. Careers Convention: This event was held on 18 January 2017 at Grove to supply pupils with information on various career options. Pupils were able to take home copies of prospectuses and other course information.
- d. Future events
1. Valencia Trip: There are 70 pupils that have signed up to go on the football training trip to Valencia in February 2017.
 2. S3 Tree of Knowledge/Taste of the Industry Days (Hospitality) (25/26 January 2017)
 3. Mental Health and Well-being event: Parent, staff, pupils and the community will be invited to this event with a focus on mental health and well-being. This is the week commencing 13 February, with input from Polly Jones, educational psychologist, on Tuesday 21 February at 7pm.
- e. S2 Skill Force Trip: Lesley Elder provided information on the S2 Skill Force Trip (16-20 January 2017). This event comprised 22 S2 Pupils from Grove Academy who were selected to attend the five day residential trip at the Loch Eil Outward Bound Centre. The trip was focused on building determination amongst the participants, promoting leadership, team building and confidence as well as to give the pupils the opportunity to try something new. Participant selection criteria were provided to Grove Academy by the Skill Force Team and guidance staff made the final selections. The residential component of the course was part of a larger programme. For four consecutive Thursday morning, the Skill Force pupils undertook skills training and activities. Following the residential, the Skills Focus pupils will hold two more weekly sessions and then a 'tea party' with their parents/carers. At the start of the process pupils completed a self-evaluation to see the impact of the course, and this will be compared to a repeat self-evaluation at the end of the course. The Skill Force course was totally funded by a grant from the Robertson Trust to the Dundee City Council. Grove Academy views the course as beneficial to the participants. Grove would like to expand it to include all S2 pupils in future years.
- f. Includem: The Includem Programme is an early intervention programme. Includem to work primarily with S1-S3, but will also engage with S4 and above if the need arises. Starting in January 2017, Grove Academy will welcome an extra resource persons to the school in the form of an Includem Project Worker who is attached to the care of two young vulnerable pupils on a 24/7 basis. Grove is currently looking at the criteria and referral forms for the identification of the beneficiary pupils. The programme aims to support young people where compulsory social work intervention is likely. The Includem Project Worker will aim to support the young person to better engage with schools through reflection and one-on-one mentoring. Overall the Includem Programme will assist to improve pupil attendance and better

prepare young people for learning. The funding will be met from the Scottish Attainment Challenge and the Robertson Trust.

- g. Holocaust Memorial: Laurie Bidwell reminded the meeting that it was this time last year that two Grove pupils unveiled a memorial plaque in Windmill Gardens in Broughty Ferry in remembrance of the Holocaust victims. Mr Hutton said the Grove was unable to hold a memorial event on the Holocaust Memorial Day (27 January) due to the use of the hall for prelim exams. However a special assembly is planned for 15 February.

In the discussion following the rector's report, Dawn Archibald said that there was a great deal on offer at Grove Academy. Dawn attended the Senior Course options and felt the new format was really good and it aided the ability of participants to take in all the information.

7 Duke of Edinburgh, Marcelle Harper

It was great to have Marcelle Harper in to address the Parent Council on the Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) award programme. Ms Harper is responsible for the operation of the programme at Grove Academy. DoE is run after school. The last expedition occurred in June 2016 and the current one is planned for Aug/Sep 2017. Annually there are 10 expeditions involving 82 people. There is a small dropout rate at the Bronze level, but none at the Silver or Gold Level. The intake of new pupils occurs in January 2017. This entails the registration of Bronze candidates. There is a large update in DoE activities following the prelims in February. On the whole there is an upward trend in the intake of DoE candidates and the introduction of a DoE App has assisted in the coordination of the award which is only accessible online.

Looking forward, Ms Harper would like to develop an open-unit at Grove to support former pupils that were unable to complete the DoE while enrolled at Grove Academy. Pupils at the S3 level, aged 14 or even aged 13 as long as the pupil is in S3, can register for the DoE and it needs to be completed on or before their 25 birthday.

In a later discussion on the costs of the DoE, Ms Harper said that she is extremely aware of costs and she is making many interventions to reduce costs. For instance, she is purchasing expedition equipment for the Grove Academy which can be used rather than utilising external hire companies.

Action points:

1. In the discussion, Dawn Archibald identified a Volunteer Opportunity for DoE candidates at the Boys Brigade, New Kirk hall. Dawn to send details to Ms Harper.
2. Clare Jefferson to get details on the DoE FB page to circulate to parents

8 Discussion on how the Parent Council can help support Grove Academy

In continuation of a discussion held in the previous Parent Council meeting, Dawn led the meeting in a discussion on how the Parent Council can support Grove Academy. Dawn referred to some key points from the Parent as Partners folder.

- a. Working groups: Lesley Elder made the suggestion of including a parent representative in the various school working groups. At present some of the active working groups include the following:
- Promotion of Equity Working Group
 - Promotion of Mental Health Working Group
 - Working towards the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Charter
 - Parental Engagement Working Group

There was also a discussion on the school Hardship Fund and how this financial support should be equitably used. Stephen Bain expressed an interest in these mechanisms. Dawn Archibald expressed an interest in the Equity working group. Parents felt that attending day-time activities is difficult and Lesley Elder explained that there could be other mechanisms for inputting view to the working groups.

Action points:

1. Clare Jefferson to put out an email and Facebook message to ask if there are any parents that would like to represent the parent council on one of these working groups.
2. Lesley Elder to forward any working drafts from the Equity Working Group to Dawn for inputs.

- b. Pupil Equity Fund (PEF): From April 2017 Grove Academy will receive around £70,000 from the PEF to support action to narrow the attainment gaps in the school in line with Scottish Government Policy. The focus will be on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.
- c. Webpage flow chart: Dawn felt that the inclusion of a flowchart as a tool to direct parents when they have concerns on the school website may be a useful addition to the school website.

Action points:

1. Clare Jefferson to draft a flowchart and text in consultation with Dawn Archibald and Lesley Elder. The final document will be given to Michael Charlton to place on the Parent section of the Grove website.
2. Clare Jefferson to draft a mission statement text, derived from the Parent Council constitution to place on the web in consultation with Dawn Archibald. To be brought to the next meeting for discussion.

9 Bereavement and Loss Survey

Grove Academy was approached to participate in a study on Bereavement and Loss. The researchers aim to understand how young people are supported with bereavement and loss. The sample comprises of 60 respondents (20 parents, 20 staff and 20 pupils). The school Guidance staff will select 20 appropriate candidates to participate. Those interested parents can complete the survey (by 10 February) at the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Parents111>

Action points:

1. Clare Jefferson to circulate the Survey Monkey link via email and Facebook.

10 Any other current business

- a. Dawn asked Mr Hutton to please invite Michael Charlton to the PC meeting (23 May)
- b. Clare to suggest to Mr Charlton that a list of all official departmental Grove twitter accounts be placed on the website.

11 Dates of next meeting

The dates of the next meetings are as follows:

- Tuesday 14 March 2017 **(Please take note the change of date!)**
- Tuesday 23 May 2017

Annex

1. Eco Club Report (Jan 2017)