

Grove Parent Council meeting minutes

Grove Academy Staffroom, 7:30 pm to 8:50 pm, Tuesday 17 Sep 2019

Attendance

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| 1. Louise Abercrombie,
chair | 7. Tara Javed, deputy chair | 14. Selu Mdlalose |
| 2. Stephen Bain | 8. Clare Jefferson, clerk | 15. Deepa Narayanan |
| 3. Clare Clarke | 9. Ewen Jenkin | 16. Caroline Petrie |
| 4. Jim Cochrane | 10. Nicky McBean | 17. Doreen Phillips |
| 5. Elaine Hodge | 11. Alison McDervitt | 18. Cllr Derek Scott |
| 6. Graham Hutton | 12. Duncan McIntosh | 19. Hong Zhang |
| | 13. Fiona McLaughlin | |

Item 1 Welcome

Louise Abercrombie chaired the meeting. She extended her thanks to Doreen Phillips for her five-year service as Deputy Chair to the Grove Parent Council. During that time, Doreen was a regular attendee of numerous DCC meetings on behalf of the Parent Council.

Item 2 Apologies

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| 1. Natalie Mackland | 2. Kulsam Ali |
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Item 3 Approval of the previous minutes

The minutes from the previous PC meeting of 28 May 2019 were adopted without changes: proposed: Fiona McLaughlin; seconded: Doreen Phillips.

Item 4 Matters arising from previous minutes

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

4.1 Duke of Edinburgh

At the start of the 2019/20 session Grove Academy was awarded a DoE licence. This will enable Grove to receive direct support from Chris Wood of the DoE. Marcelle has taken a new permanent post at another school within Dundee and is working to assist the remaining two gold and two silver teams with the completion of their expeditions/award before October. Going forward, it is important not to leave all the responsibilities for the DoE to one staff member. Five staff members from Grove have shown an interest in being trained up on the DoE (by Rebecca from DoE). It is probable that this training will take place over the winter. It is also probable that each staff member will take on a different component of the award such as division along thematic issues expeditions, skills, equipment, or a division by levels (bronze, silver, gold).

In the discussion that followed, there were a number of issues raised. Pupils that have been unable to enter the award at the bronze level, are able to enter at the silver or gold level. Parents renewed their commitment to assist with fund-raising for the DoE. Hong mentioned that Scott Rodgers, Senior CLD Youth Worker, Manager Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Mitchell Street Centre is holding an open evening on 1 October for parents to discuss the DoE. Tara said that she will take the lead on the issue for the Grove Parent Council and investigate the issue further.

4.2 Former Pupil Network

Selu reported back on the discussions on the establishment of a former pupil network (FPN). He said that the group tried hard to engage with existing FP networks but there was not really any interest expressed. Many of the needs of former pupils are addressed via informal networks and there is no clear benefit for the individual to join/form the FPN. Graham said there was a huge amount of goodwill expressed by former pupils towards the school. Perhaps this issue could be revisited at the time of a major anniversary, or be taken up by S6 school leavers. Grove is currently stretched on resources and has never had a tradition of former pupil network.

Item 5 Correspondence/meeting attended

5.1 Appeals Committee

Selu provided an update on this role as a parent representative on the Appeals Committee, which is a committee which hears appeals on the outcome of catchment placement requests. He said that he is available if called to sit on a panel. Over the summer, many of the meetings involved appeals to get into Grove Academy and he was recused from these meeting as a parent of a Grove pupil.

5.2 Parking and traffic issues

Jim Cochrane provided an update on the traffic issues around Grove Academy, and some of the actions taken to actively pursue these issues. There are two major issues around Grove namely: 1) the entry of parents into the school parking lot to drop and collect their children, which is causing lengthily tailbacks up Claypotts Road and Davidson Street; 2) the placement of a traffic island, which is used as a crossing point, but pedestrians encounter a fence along the curb on Claypotts Road. There is dispute as to whether this was design as a traffic island or for another purpose. Graham suggested that even if Jim is not allowed to attend the Road Safety Committee, which has one secondary primary representative Wendy Cringle, and one head teacher representative Theresa Little, that he could send a written submission / letter highlighting Grove's concerns. Jim also reviewed the original 2015 Grove Travel Plan however he needs inputs from Grove to complete the document.

5.3 Friends of Grove

The next meeting of the Friends of Grove is on 28 October at 6.30pm in the conference room. Friends of Grove would like to thank Julie Lynch who chaired the organisation for three years. Friends of Grove drove the process of restoration of the war memorials. Currently Friends of Grove have a low number of attendees and the dwindling membership is limiting what the organisation can do. Its functions include to support music or drama events with refreshments, the archives, and to connect with past pupils, staff and the community.

Item 6 Report by Rector

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

Events

- Chris Rolfe ML Award
- YES Final – won a number of awards
- Sports Leadership Awards
- Long Service Awards – 3 staff
- War Memorials – Re-dedication on 12 June
- P7 Induction Days – 12-14 June

- P7 Parents Evening – Thursday 13 June
- Final Fling – June 14th
- Celebrating Achievement Event – June 18th
- McManus Award for Citizenship – June 25th - 2 nominees

Since Summer

- Pupils in Cats, Evita and 42nd Street
- Grove Academy now a D of E Licence Holder
- Tay Bridge Rainbow Walk – Equalities group
- Youth Sport Ambassadors
- RYLA – Chloe Hann
- 130th Birthday – 10 Sept
- Digital Schools Award – First Secondary in Dundee
- Cyclathon
- U16s beat St John's 5-1

Staffing

- 1.4 FTE Excess remaining
- vacancy for Science Technician – filled by redeployment – HTs not really consulted – 1.5 FTE – no experience of working in schools
- 4 NQT's plus 1 Freebie NQT - Modern Studies, Hist/Mod Studies, Chemistry, Physics, Music
- Maths Maternity cover - Alex Fyfe
- Acting Business Manager – Lynn Barry
- To advertise – Music Maternity cover

Faculties

- Postponed for a year

Graham provided a handout of the S4, S5 and S6 results. He spoke in detail about these. These results are good for N5 and Higher. Insight does not show the full range of subjects' pupils engage in such as the Foundation Apprenticeships and Advanced Engineering Project. On some aspects the virtual comparator is more useful than Insight.

Graham also provided a handout of the spending plans 2019/20 for the use of the Pupil Equity Fund.

Item 7 School Improvement Plan

Graham provided a handout of the Grove School Improvement Plan (SIP). The aims of the plan are set by the Dundee City Council Children and Families Service and are the same for all the schools in Dundee. However, Grove tailor their own expectations, actions, measurements, progress/impact and timescale/responsibility. This is a detailed 11-page document with five improvement priorities including: leadership and management; learning provision; success and achievements. The SIP is an annual plan which reflects where we want to take the school.

In the discussion that followed, Fiona said that the presentation was useful to see what Grove is doing. Graham said the overall aim is to close the attainment gap.

Item 8 Vision, Values and Aims

This issue will be held over until the next meeting. Graham asked parent to think about what the current vision and values of Grove, and what changes we would recommend. Graham to provide some text for parents to consider.

Item 9 Any Other Current Business

9.1 Selu asked whether there is a correlation between school uniform and school performance, and whether there is anything the school can do to reinforce the wearing of blazers. Graham said that there is no evidence to suggest that this correlation exists, but in the past, this was always believed to be true.

9.2 Deepa asked why Grove did not provide permission for their pupils to attend the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Qualifier 2019 hosted recently at Forthill Sports Club. Graham said that the opportunity just fell through the cracks.

9.3 Duncan noted the resurfacing work at Dawson Park was underway. He asked about when the resurfacing work at Dawson Park would be completed. Selu said the hockey club have been told that on 21 Oct.

9.4 Ewan asked about the school app, the school homework app and mentioned that it is currently available via the school webpage. Clare will follow up with Michael Charlton.

Item 10 Dates of next meeting

The date for the next meeting of the 2019/20 session is Tuesday 12 Nov 2019.