

Grove Parent Council
Ordinary Meeting minutes

Virtual meeting, Tuesday 21 September 2021, 20:00 to 20:48

Attendance

The following people were present at the start of the meeting.

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| 1. Kulsam Ali | 9. Tara Javed, Chair |
| 2. Caroline Anderson | 10. Clare Jefferson, Clerk |
| 3. Stephen Bain, Treasure | 11. Gareth McWalter |
| 4. John Blicharski | 12. Selu Mdlalose, Vicechair |
| 5. Jim Cochrane | 13. Doreen Phillips |
| 6. Andy Creamer, DHT | 14. Danny Steel |
| 7. Karen French | 15. Hannah Steel |
| 8. Jennifer Gallagher | |

Item 1 Welcome

Tara Javed, Chairperson of the Grove Parent Council, chaired the meeting. She welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the 2021/22 session. As follows:

Welcome to our Parent Council and thank you for attending.

We have a few new parents this year, therefore, I thought it would be a good idea for me to just refresh what the role of Parent Council plays within the school.

The Parent Council is a group that is selected to work on behalf of all parents on educational matters that are of importance to all. We do not get involved in individual matters relating to pupils, families or school staff.

Parent Council is to:

- Support the school in its work with pupils
- Represent the views of all parents and carers
- Encourage links between the school, parents, carers, pupils and the wider community.
- Work in partnership with the school on many issues
- Provide a voice for parents in schools and within the council on issues that are important to them
- Improve the school's understanding of how to engage parents
- We will use the skills, knowledge and experience that parents can offer
- We get involved in the recruitment process as well.
- We get involved in school inspection process and members will be invited to meet with a member of the inspection team.
- Parent Council is designed to be flexible and to ensure that we represent our own school community and interests.

It is important to remember that everyone's contribution is important – and we work as a team.

We respect each other's point of view – even if you think they are wrong.

Also, a quick reminder, as these meetings take place virtually, within our homes. Some of us may not have a separate room to go into for the meeting.

We may just be sitting around family with kids around. So please have this in mind when sharing anything with the group as the children may overhear. If you feel that you have to raise an individual issue that is bothering you or your children, please share your concerns directly with the school as a first point of contact.

If you strongly feel that you have to raise it with the parent council then please feel free to email the parent council and we will be in touch.

If you are unsure of who to approach, then please email parent council to ask and we can put you in the right direction.

Item 2 Apologies

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| 1. Clare Biggans | 6. Pamela King |
| 2. Elaine Dawson | 7. Fiona McLaughlin |
| 3. Andy Fraser | 8. Deepa Narayanan |
| 4. George Gilvear | 9. Lucy Scott |
| 5. Graham Hutton | |

Item 3 Approval of the previous minutes

The minutes from the previous PC meeting of 23 March 2021 were adopted: proposed: Doreen Phillips; seconded: Karen French

Item 4 Matters arising from previous minutes

1. The progress of the Constitution PC Working Group was discussed in the AGM.

Item 5 Correspondence/meetings attended

1. Jim Cochrane provided an update on Pupil Parking and Safety Committee. Engineers will look at the issues at the bollards situated along Claypotts Road opposite the bus stop. Additionally, they will see if there are any measures that can limit school drop off within the school parking lot at the entrance of the school building. The next meeting of the Traffic Committee is on 9 December.
2. Clare and Tara mentioned that Forthill Primary School PC undertook an online survey on road safety around their school. It would be helpful to see the results of the survey.

Item 6 Report by Rector, Andy Creamer

Andy Creamer, Deputy Head Teacher, provided a report on key issues since the previous Parent Council meeting. Grove Academy maintained the mitigations to prevent the spread of covid including mask wearing as well as staggered lunch and break times to lessen congestion. There has been a reduction in the split of year groups so that mixing between groups are split into S1-S3 and S4-S6.

In August, Grove welcomed 260 pupils to S1 (compared to previous years where there are 240 S1 pupils). To accommodate the larger numbers, the timetable allows for an additional practical class of 20 pupils. An extra teacher has been allocated to Grove to assist with the larger roll of 1350 pupils.

In August, 20 new staff members were appointed at Grove. Some of the appointments staff retiring prior to the summer. Half of the new appointments are NQTs.

At the present time there are more pupils and staff staying off school with covid related issues.

Grove is looking at how best to provide for the needs of a mixed cohort of high needs pupils. Management is looking at options for this group of pupils and whether an alternative curriculum would be appropriate.

There have been some teething issues with the provision of transport to college. There are 200 pupils that attend college. The new rule is that no food can be consumed on the bus.

Item 7 Budget

The discussion of the school budget was postponed until the next meeting.

Item 8 SIRP – EDLM, Andy Creamer

Andy provided an update on the process of updating the School Improvement Plan. The SIRP-EDLM is progressing as a continuation of the previous year. The SMT have met with representatives of the strategic planning group. The focus is on the improvement of quality of learning and teaching. Grove want to see how to better involve pupils in the planning specially to focus on the review of the vision and values of the school. An area of focus is on how to nurture relationships with partners across all areas of the school. The SIRP-EDLM needs to be adapted to take into account the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Item 9 Bullying, Kulsam Ali

Kulsam Ali requested that the issue of bullying be placed on the agenda. The purpose is for parents to better understand how bullying is dealt with at Grove Academy, and at what point parents become involved. Andy Creamer provided an overview of the approach to bullying. Dundee City Council has an anti-bullying policy. SMT are looking at how best to tackle the issue of bullying which includes racism and homophobia. Grove has a working group that is looking at these issues. The current thinking is to run a survey to gain an understanding of the experiences of these issues within the school. Currently Grove is thinking of running a survey to gain insight into the experiences of pupils. John Blicharski shared the link for a survey run by the University of Dundee on bullying¹. Grove is required to keep a record all bullying, racist and homophobic incidents. The School Implementation Plan also includes action points on how to address bullying, racism and homophobia.

Grove tries to ensure there are repercussions for bullying within the school and try to update all parties, as appropriate, as to how the issue was resolved. There are data protection issues which sometime limit the extent to which all parties are involved.

There are a number of role players that are involved with bullying incidents including the DCC Anti-Social Behaviour Team, local community police as well as guidance staff. Grove ensure that pupils know they can talk to any member of staff about bullying. The SMT is looking at whether a Community Safety Panel would be appropriate for Grove. In other contexts, this panel has been used to good effect.

¹ <https://www.dundee.ac.uk/corporate-information/race-equality-survey-2021>

In extreme cases, Grove can exclude a pupil to a maximum of 10 days. In some cases, Grove will bring in parents.

Overall Grove try to be proactive and checking back on issues. This is often the crux of dealing with bullying to make it clear and open, and to make everyone involved aware of what is going on.

Within Grove there are a number of ways that proactive measures are put in place. The issue of bullying is part of the PSE programme. Bullying is also dealt within in assemblies (which have been on hold during covid) and within the houses, guidance discusses the issue.

In the discussion, it was outlined how there are many types of bullying such as name calling, taunting, physical abuse which all have a detrimental effect on pupils. Bullying is undertaken by both individual and groups. Communication with school and home is important, and parents need to know what signs to look out for.

Grove tries to ensure that pupils know that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. Teachers can take certain actions such as changing seating arrangements. In group bullying incidents, Grove try to break up the bullying dynamic.

Grove has a working group looking at these issues such as the Diversity WG. There are partners assisting grove including LGBT Scotland and Taught by Mohammed.

In summary, bullying is taken extremely seriously at Grove Academy. The SMT are looking at how best to tackle this issue. Grove records all bullying, racist and homophobic incidents. The school improvement plan has a number of action points around bullying, racism and homophobia.

Item 10 Any other current business

1. **IT updates:** Andy Creamer explained that the IT issues are still ongoing. The focus is currently on long term strategic updates to how wifi is provided with a focus on providing wifi through landlines. There is an ITC refresh to replace and install new equipment. There are two mobile networks which work within Grove Academy building these are 02 and Vodaphone.

Item 11 Items for the next meeting

The following items were identified for the next meeting:

- Constitution PC Working Group
- Parking
- Budget

Item 12 Dates of next meeting

The next Parent Council meeting is on 23 November 2021 at 7pm. The dates for the other meetings for the 2021/22 session are as follows:

- Tuesday 25 January 2022
- Tuesday 29 March 2022
- Tuesday 14 June 2022

Tara closed the meeting by thanking everyone for attending.