

Knox Academy

Parent School Partnership



MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY 5TH MARCH 2008 (6PM)

PRESENT: J Ramakers (Chair)
C Hall
T Holden
F McKenzie
K Robertson
I Smith
M Wyllie
K Anderson
L McInnes
N Davidson (Clerk)
L Ramakers

IN ATTENDANCE: H MacLeod (PT Support: Support for Pupils) (Point 1)

APOLOGIES: J Craig (Head Teacher)
S Ingham
R Cleat
A McDougal

1. Ethos Group Presentation

H MacLeod gave a short presentation on the results of the Guidance Questionnaire, which the Partnership was notified about by Sheila Grant (Guidance) last year. H MacLeod thanked the Partnership for their help.

H MacLeod summarised what action had been taken, the responses received and what action would be taken as a result of them.

A copy of the presentation is to be sent to C Hall to be displayed on the Parent Forum website.

Action: H MacLeod

J Ramakers thanked H MacLeod for her presentation. H MacLeod left the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

3. Matters Arising

Tour of the School

N Davidson distributed a copy of the programme for the tour of the school scheduled for Thursday 6th March.

Pupil Points System

It was confirmed that points are allocated for extra-curricular activities, both in school and outwith, where the school knows about them.

Roll Capping

J Ramakers summarised his meeting with Provost Richardson and her colleagues. General discussion re; roll capping. The Partnership is extremely unhappy about the situation and is to begin evidence gathering e.g. looking at other schools, their catchment area and housing development. The Partnership also discussed making contact with Iain Gray MSP to discuss further. General discussion re; capacity.

General discussion re; open course choice. J Ramakers advised that this has been discussed with J Craig, it is his understanding that this only takes place in one school within ELC, who are considering changing to a column approach.

Annual Conference

F McKenzie attended on behalf of the Partnership. There were no other ELC delegates. F McKenzie has registered for further information and summarised the content of the conference.

Data Protection

J Ramakers confirmed with V McIntyre that the Partnership do not need to register under the current circumstances, however this will be reviewed if any changes are made.

Communication

The issues regarding the Daily Bulletin will be on the Whole Staff Meeting agenda for 14th March.

4. Mail Received

Backchat Magazine

Hardcopies distributed – an email copy was received of the last issue, if this continues this will be circulated also.

Conference

Information received on a conference on anti-bullying and child protection. Whilst this would be an interesting event the cost is too high and the Partnership cannot afford to send a representative.

5. Action Plan

T Holden advised that the first draft is complete, and is to be displayed on the Parent Forum website. N Davidson to check with S Ingham for feedback from staff. The Action Plan will be a standing agenda item at future meetings.

6. Residential Trips

General discussion re; some negative feedback received from a few parents regarding a number of excursions offered by Knox Academy recently. The Partnership were appalled to hear this, and asked that it be noted how much they appreciate the efforts staff make to offer excursions, including residential trips, when they are not obliged to do so.

7. Chairperson's Report

Funding

V McIntyre has advised that an additional sum of funding (£30) is available for consultation with the parent body. J Ramakers to query how this can be carried out on such a small amount, this doesn't cover the cost of postage to the parent body.

Email Address

The Partnership will have a designated email address, which the clerk will administer. This is not yet in place.

SPTC

£45 to join per annum. F McKenzie to identify what the benefits of membership are.

Action: F McKenzie

8. Head Teacher's Report

N Davidson on behalf of J Craig.

Staffing

Continuing long-term absence in the Office (A Woodward).

Two members of staff are on maternity leave at present in RME and CDT. E Garwood (Guidance) has returned to work following maternity leave, initially on a part-time basis.

Budget

Papers from Finance department received today showing draft 1 of the budget for 2008/2009.

Whilst it would not be appropriate to discuss the figures in detail until they have been presented to staff, some broad facts can be noted:

- 1.5% cap on the carry forward from 2007/2008
- 1.5% efficiency savings to be made

The limit on the carry forward means that we have some funds to spend to ensure we do not lose any monies. The Equipment Group, chaired by K Milne, has been making purchases by working through the priority specification list drawn up earlier this session. The main purchase will be an interactive whiteboard for each classroom. A limited carry forward will mean there is no cushion for staffing next session.

The efficiency savings will have to come from staffing and will be approx £60k (equivalent of approx. 2 members of staff). Until the figures have been looked at in detail, we cannot confirm where the savings will be made. Will report to the PSP as soon as possible.

Session 2008/2009

At the information evening last night for S4/5 it was explained that we have not removed subjects and that some subjects have been added (e.g. Drama). Not all subjects will run where this is low uptake, this happens every year. The curriculum throughout the school will remain robust and extensive.

There will be no recruitment at this time, but the school has requested NQTs as per the East Lothian policy (Knox has to take 4 fully funded NQTs). The 4 requested are English, Maths, Computing or Business Education, and PE. Other NQTs will be requested at very reduced rates or 'free'.

Events

- ❑ Burns' Day activities, including 'Hunt the Haggis'
- ❑ Prelims for S5/6
- ❑ Various sporting activities
- ❑ St Valentines Day disco
- ❑ Holocaust Memorial Day assemblies

Future events include:

- ❑ School Concert (19th March)
- ❑ Swimming Gala
- ❑ ELC Showcase Concert (7th March)
- ❑ Visit from Swedish Teachers (6th March)
- ❑ PSP Tour (6th March)

9. Teacher Member's Report

Exam Preparation

S4-6 focus is on exam preparation at present, lots of assessments taking place at present.

10. Support Staff Member's Report

Single Status

N Davidson updated the group on the current situation regarding Single Status, which affects every member of support staff throughout ELC.

11. Parents' Matters

HMIe

General discussion re; leadership in S6. I Smith queried why this is restricted to S6 when a number of pupils leave before then. N Davidson advised that a number of opportunities are available throughout the school for example the School Council which has representatives from all year groups.

General discussion re; monitoring process of action points. L McInnes advised that departments are required to feedback to J Craig, a whole school report is produced which is issued to ELC and HMIe. Evidence is required to support the feedback.

Biology

Query re; staffing situation in Biology. N Davidson confirmed that the current staffing situation will remain until pupils begin study leave.

Lockers

Query re; lockers for S1. N Davidson advised that lockers have been ordered, no delivery date has been confirmed as yet. Forms will be issued to S1 when they arrive.

John Muir Award

General discussion re; the Big Lottery Fund grant.

STACS

J Craig to be asked to provide a presentation on STACS info as discussed at a previous meeting.

Football Trip

Concern raised that pupils attending the trip were not given adequate time to have lunch prior to departure.

12. Pupils' Matters

Health & Safety

L Ramakers advised that a number of glass shards are lying outside the window of M.3 and that despite being reported no action has been taken. N Davidson advised that she will have this resolved asap, this hadn't been brought to her attention previously under her remit of H&S.

Action: N Davidson

Prefect Duties

Concerns raised about the lack of respect shown to prefects by some junior pupils.

13. Any Other Business

No issues raised.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 30th April 2008 @ 6pm (Library)

Signed: _____ (Chairperson) Date: 30/04/2008

Signed: _____ (Clerk) Date: 30/04/2008