



APPROVED MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2014

PRESENT:	Louise Elder	Chair	PSP member
	Dave Neillans	Vice Chair	PSP member
	Vicky Cole	Parent	PSP member
	Caroline McKinnel	Parent	PSP member
	Derek Simpson	Parent	PSP member
	Kim White	Parent	PSP member
	Calum Blair	Teacher	PSP member
	Helen Brannigan	Teacher	PSP member
	Colin Dempster	Teacher	PSP member

IN ATTENDANCE:	Sarah Ingham	Head Teacher
	Christine Aylward	Parent
	Linda Bowen	Parent
	Kay Boylan	Parent
	Julie-Clare Paterson	Parent
	Liz Syme	Parent
	Elizabeth Vischer	Parent
	John McMillan	Local Councillor
	Mary Benson	Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies

Louise Elder (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Greg Cookson, Gillian Greenshields, Amanda Herriott, Jon Hunton, Annabel Jackson, Janette Middlemass, Calum Paul, Lucy Wrinn, Mark Wyllie, and Provost Broun-Lindsay.

2. Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership Update – S4 pupils

The four S4 pupils were unable to attend this evening, so Mrs Ingham gave an update. The S4 pupils will be leading the Area Partnership meeting on 12 November, with discussions focussing on the theme “Opportunities for Children and Young People” within this Council ward. The youngsters have carried out a survey of a selection of other pupils which will help to inform the discussions. Mrs Ingham noted that the pupils had put a lot of work into their preparations and had been supported by Kayla Smith (East Lothian Council). Attendance was encouraged at the meeting – further information on Area Partnerships can be found here:

http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7939/east_lothian_partnership_information_sheet_2014

3. Minutes of Meeting of 1 October 2014

After later discussions at this meeting (item 10), it was agreed to clarify item 7 of the last minutes by adding *“Prelims will still take place in other subjects under exam conditions, but will be taken within the classroom rather than the formal exam hall. The timing of individual classroom prelims will be decided by the teacher and will depend on the coursework for each different subject. Advance notice will be given to allow pupils time to revise.”*

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Points

Moderation of website comments – Louise has not yet been able to discuss this with Ian Smith. **Act LE**

Update staff information on website – Mr Dempster has actioned this.

Revision – Many pupils have chosen to use their 2 periods of enhanced curriculum to work on their organisation and revision skills. Pupils in S4/5/6 currently have lots of assessments going on and are under a lot of pressure. Staff are doing their best to support them through this.

Informal suggestion box – Mrs Ingham has not yet done this.

Action SI

Co-ordinate school and PSP website info - Louise and Kay Boylan have completed their Wordpress training and will liaise with Mr Dempster

Action LE/KB/CD.

China Expedition DVD – was screened at the end of this meeting.

“How to Pass National 5” books – ordering information is available on the school website and has been advertised on the PSP website and Facebook page.

5. Chairperson’s Report

Meet the Minister – Louise and Mrs Ingham both attended the ‘Meet the Minister’ event last month with Dr Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland’s Languages. Skills and employability and the opportunities for inviting industry into schools were discussed. The information from the presentations and workshops will be collated shortly and sent to delegates.

Careers – Kate Kelman, the new Chair at King’s Meadow Primary Parent Council is looking to organise a Careers Fair, with information for children about different jobs. It is hoped that this could be linked with Knox.

February PSP meeting – Angela Leitch, East Lothian Council’s Chief Executive, will be coming to the PSP meeting on 4 February 2015.

Request for funding – Mr Flood has requested help from the PSP budget to fund refreshments at a Question Time event that is being run for Advanced Higher Business Studies and Advanced Higher Modern Studies on 27 November. Kay Boylan said that this could be funded by KASG (Knox Academy Support Group). Louise will forward Mr Flood’s email to Mr Blair, as Kay will not be able to attend the next KASG meeting.

Action LE

6. Pupil’s Matters – No pupil’s matters were raised.

7. Head Teacher’s Report

Staffing – Mrs Ingham gave an update on staffing. Knox’s new Home Economics teacher started this week. Vicky Cole has agreed to help with the teaching observation part of the interview for the Teacher of Physics post on 13 November. A Teacher of Biology post has been advertised and a parent

volunteer would be welcomed for the interviews. Mrs Ingham will email parent reps when the interview date is settled.

Action SI

News/updates –

Poppies – Mrs Ingham thanked everyone who has been involved in the sale of remembrance poppies, particularly Mr Flood and S6. Mrs Ingham, Mr Flood and the Head Boy, Head Girl and their Deputies will be at the Remembrance Sunday parade in Haddington this weekend.

HMIe – will be carrying out a planned visit to the PE department on 6 November.

Sports' Young Ambassadors – have been presenting to assemblies. A "Sport Your Trainers" day will be held on 14 November, with funds raised split between Children In Need and the East Lothian Foodbank.

"Yellow Moon" – Drama pupils will be performing a production of "Yellow Moon" on 13 November at 7pm.

Nungate Study Group – has had to move to Knox due to a lack of janitorial staff at the Nungate Community Centre; however it is hoped to move back to Nungate after Christmas. Mrs Ingham thanked Councillors McMillan and Trotter for their help with this.

"Attitudes towards Education" – Mr Blair is working with East Lothian Council to develop an "Attitudes towards Education" survey in Haddington to support Knox's ongoing self-evaluation.

School counselling – the school counselling service is being reviewed. The school's view is that it has been a great success; however they would like to hear views from any parent or pupil who has used the service. Comments should be emailed to Mr Simpson (dsimpson@knox.elcschool.org.uk). The school are willing to continue to fund this service if it is felt by all to be worthwhile.

DECIPHer-ASSIST – is a smoking prevention intervention which aims to reduce adolescent smoking. Knox will be one of the first secondary schools in Scotland to compete this programme and pupils will be finished in the next couple of weeks. The school feels the scheme has been very successful, and it will be formally evaluated in three years' time.

8. Curriculum –

Curriculum for Excellence Nationals – The Scottish Government has provided funding for Local Authorities to give more information to parents of primary-aged children about the new National Exams. As a result, Knox will be running an information evening to which the parents of all P5, P6 and P7 pupils in the cluster will be invited. It is intended to run this event as part of the annual S2 Information Evening in March.

Information App – there was a discussion about how best to communicate with the Parent Forum. There was a lot of support for the use of a mobile app, such as the one used by Preston Lodge High School. Mr Dempster agreed to investigate this further and feed back to the PSP. **Action CD**

9. Staff Member's Report

Teaching & Learning Policy – No parental feedback had been received since the presentation at the last meeting. Louise noted that all parents at the meeting had been very positive towards it. There was a discussion about how best to communicate the policy home and how to implement it properly within school. The policy will be discussed at assemblies, during tutor time and will be embedded in lessons.

It was agreed that the homework diary/planner could have a section at the front setting out the policy to remind pupils about it. Another suggestion was to invite parents to come into the classroom and experience a lesson taught in the style of the policy, so that parents can see what happens in school these days, or perhaps to have pupils taking the lesson, instead of teachers. Any other ideas should be emailed to Mrs Ingham.

Self-evaluation within school – as part of the school’s self-evaluation, staff are trying to find out parent’s perceptions about the transition from primary school to Knox. A parent’s focus group on transition will be held on Thursday 13 November in the school for the parents of the current P7 and S1.

Website – Mr Dempster will liaise with Louise and Kay about the PSP and school website. Improvements have been carried out to the Contact Us section of the school website. Mrs Falconer, the new Acting Depute, has been looking at the website from a new member of staff’s point of view, to make suggestions as to how it could be improved. One idea is for a “Letters” section, where correspondence that should have come home in the schoolbag can be found by parents. This section is now in development for the Knox website.

Excursions –

KWN (Kid’s Witness News) – a group of 7 pupils, together with Mr Dempster and Miss Duff, went on a celebratory weekend to Alton Towers.

Duke of Edinburgh’s Award– Miss Brannigan reported that, all being well, there should be 28 S4 pupils gaining a Bronze Award by June. There are also 13 new S3 pupils doing the Bronze level and it is possible that they may also have finished by June. There was a discussion about the limited opportunities for youngsters to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme in East Lothian. In Knox’s case, there are not enough qualified staff at present. However, some staff members are currently going through their Duke of Edinburgh training and it is hoped to start a Silver Group next August.

Higher Maths Study Weekend – Mr Blair said that around a quarter of the Higher Maths candidates will be going on the Higher Maths Study Weekend in March, in preparation for their exams in May.

Rights Respecting School Award – The school are preparing for Human Rights Week and are in the process of forming the official steering group for the Rights Respecting School Award.

Vicky Cole left the meeting.

10. Parent’s Matters

Dress-Down Day – there was a discussion about Dress-Down Day with regard to fundraising. Mrs Ingham said she felt very strongly that while some Dress-Down Days could be used for fundraising, others should be used simply as a treat for youngsters. The December Dress-Down Day will be shortly after the school have done their Christmas Boxes, and therefore to ask for further charity contributions before Christmas would be unfair. However, the planned February Dress-Down day will be used as a charity fundraiser. The school may also consider a Dress-Up day during the year.

Rotary Table Top Sale – Councillor McMillan noted that there were still tables available at the Rotary Table Top Sale on Saturday 8 November, if the school wished to do any fundraising. Anyone wanting a table should email Councillor McMillan.

Blooming Haddington – Blooming Haddington are looking for volunteers to help plant bulbs along the river and near the Aubigny Centre on Saturday 8 November from 10am.

Councillor McMillan left the meeting.

Prelims – Parents had raised concerns about the decision to have formal prelims in only English and Maths in January. Mrs Ingham said that there may be a third formal prelim in Biology, but that this would be confirmed. Prelims will still take place in other subjects under exam conditions, but will be taken within the classroom rather than the formal exam hall. The timing of individual classroom prelims will be decided by the teacher and will depend on the coursework for each different subject. Advance notice will be given to allow pupils time to revise. Prelims are no longer used as evidence if something goes wrong within the exam and a pupil receives a lower grade than expected; however they can be used as evidence if something goes wrong prior to the exam (e.g. illness or bereavement). Mrs Ingham noted that pupils were currently getting experience in timetabling their study for several subjects at once as many youngsters had 4 assessments in different subjects this week.

Coursing – Mrs Ingham confirmed that coursing for S3 will begin in early January; however the S4 curricular work will start in June.

11 . Any Other Business

Mr Blair showed the China Expedition DVD to interested parents immediately after the meeting.

12. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 3 December 2014.

Action Points	Who	When
Discuss moderation of website comments with Ian Smith	LE	As soon as possible
Provide an informal suggestion box for pupils	SI	As soon as possible
Co-ordinate schools and PSP website information	CD,LE,KB	As soon as possible
Forward Mr Flood's email about funding to Mr Blair to pass to KASG	LE	As soon as possible
Email Parent Reps re interview date for Biology Teacher post	SI	Once the date is set
Contact Preston Lodge for more info on School App	CD	For next meeting