



APPROVED MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2015

PRESENT:	Caroline McKinnel	Vice Chair	PSP member	* Knox Academy Support Group
	Linda Bowen	Parent	PSP member	
	Kay Boylan	Parent	PSP member & (KASG* rep)	
	Amanda Herriott	Parent	PSP member	
	Janette Middlemass	Parent	PSP member	
	Derek Simpson	Parent & DHT	PSP member	
	Liz Syme	Parent	PSP member	
	Calum Blair	Teacher	PSP member	
	Colin Dempster	Teacher	PSP member	
	Steve Wands	Sports Co-ordinator	PSP member	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Fiona Dewar	Parent		
	Colin Henderson	Parent		
	Clare Hogg	Parent		
	Dave Neillans	Parent		
	Heather Stewart	Parent		
	Caroline Taylor	Parent		
	Harry Bowles	Head Pupil		
	Roisin Kelly	Depute Head Pupil		
	John McMillan	Local Councillor		
Mary Benson	Clerk			

1. Welcome and Apologies

Caroline McKinnel (Vice Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Louise Elder (Chair), Mrs Ingham (Head Teacher), Vicky Cole, Janette Fairgrieve, Gillian Greenshields, Alison Hunton, Andy McBain, Kim White, Provost Broun-Lindsay and Councillor Trotter.

Derek Simpson noted that although he is a parent member of the PSP, in Mrs Ingham's absence he would be representing her in his role as Depute Head Teacher at Knox.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 2 September 2015

The minutes of the last meeting were approved without change.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Points

Dropping off pupils - Mr Simpson noted that despite recent remedial work in the car park to reduce the problem, parents and carers are still dropping off pupils in the morning from cars in the newly cross hatched no stopping area at the front of the building. This is causing problems for school buses. Mr Simpson made a plea to the parent forum through the PSP to stop doing this. If the situation doesn't improve the school may have to involve the police or Community Wardens.

Councillor McMillan noted that a resident at Rosehall had contacted him with concerns about cars driving through their residential area and that he had asked East Lothian Council's Transportation department to have a look at the situation. Mr Simpson noted that despite signage to the contrary (which has now mysteriously been removed by someone), parents are driving through the half-open gate at the bottom of Rosehall Place. The gate is left half-open to allow pupils pedestrian access Rosehall Stores. One solution may be to alter the gate to allow pedestrian access only; however the school do not have funds for this.

S4/5/6 assessments booklet – Mr Dempster has made this booklet available on the school website.

Head Pupil document – Louise Elder has posted this document on the PSP website. One comment has been received asking for the impact of the change to be monitored.

4. Chairperson's Report

ELAPCM – Louise Elder, Linda Bowen and Colin Henderson all attended the recent East Lothian Association of Parent Council Members (ELAPCM) meeting. The main issue discussed was the required £600,000 budget savings, which may be met by reducing home to school transport provision and cutting free instrumental music tuition, however this is still under consideration. The next ELAPCM meeting is on 22 November 2015 at 7pm in the Brunton Hall, Musselburgh. Colin Henderson is the ELAPCM Chair, and can also represent Knox if required, but two reps can be sent from each Parent Council, so another volunteer to attend would be useful.

East Lothian Council Parental Involvement Survey – The results of the Parental Involvement Survey are now available. Only around 20 responses were received from Knox parents; however the school will study the results in due course to see if there are any points that need to be taken on board.

Youth Development Sub-group – Further to the discussions at the last PSP meeting, the Youth Development sub-group have had their first meeting. There was a discussion about the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme which will be continuing to run in the school. Caroline noted that the Youth Development sub-group would be happy to help with this if required. The PSP were delighted to hear that the scheme would be continuing to run in the school and Caroline thanked all staff involved.

S1 Settling-In Evening – The Head Pupil and Depute Head Pupils were thanked for their assistance during the recent S1 Settling-In Evening. Caroline noted that there had been some confusion amongst parents about whether they were to bring pupils with them or not. Mrs Simpson said the school would look to clarify the wording of the invitation next year. Although the school would prefer pupils to attend as well, it was not compulsory.

Knox Academy Support Group (KASG) – The planned 'Blingo' event has been cancelled due to a lack of support. There was a discussion about whether KASG is a sub-group of the PSP. It is believed that it is

run as a sub-group so that it benefits from insurance cover under the Parent Council. This will need to be checked in the PSP Constitution and if necessary clarified in the Constitution wording at the AGM in February. It was agreed that KASG Update would be added as an agenda item in future. There will be a further discussion about how KASG minutes will be made available to PSP members and other parents.

Action LE, KB, MB

5 Pupil's Matters – Harry Bowles, Head Pupil and Roisin Kelly, Depute Head Pupil

Harry and Roisin spoke about the school initiatives that they and the other Depute Head Pupils are concentrating on this year.

School Council – Meetings are held fortnightly – one meeting to bring up issues with a follow-up meeting to resolve them. Each Registration Class is asked to submit any problems as well as suggested solutions for discussion at the meeting.

Unsung Heroes Award – An end of year award for 5 pupils from each year group, as nominated by teachers, specifically chosen to reward youngsters whose achievements are often overlooked. It is hoped that a day at Foxlake can be organised as the reward, but this is dependent on costs and fundraising. Councillor McMillan said that a Whisky Tasting fundraising event was being organised on 30 October, which could help fund this award. Harry Bowles will discuss this with Councillor McMillan later.

Book Scheme – A book exchange scheme has been set up through the school library to assist pupils in buying and selling text books. Mr Wands also noted that this model could be used for sports kit.

S6 Pantomime – This year's S6 pantomime is being produced entirely by the S6 pupils with the help of a local East Lothian drama group.

Young Ambassadors – The Young Ambassadors have now been appointed and the Sports Council is up and running. Their focus is to increase participation in sports, particularly swimming this year.

Young Enterprise Teams – The Young Enterprise Teams are now also up and running. A Quiz Night is being organised by one of the teams on Wednesday 21 October. Anyone wishing to enter a team should contact Roisin Kelly for tickets and more information.

Media Club/News & Views – Mr Simpson congratulated Harry Bowles on his work on this project, which is run in the Learning Support Base and explores rights and responsibilities through the discussion of newspaper articles, looking at the rights and wrongs of various issues. This has not been an easy project to run, but has been immensely rewarding, both for those leading it and for those pupils taking part. Mr Simpson said that pupils are now self-referring themselves to the group.

6. Head Teacher's Report

Mr Simpson gave Mrs Ingham's Head Teacher's Report in her absence.

Staffing – Mr Simpson gave an update on staffing to the PSP.

News / Updates –

Theatre visit – Last Thursday staff and some S6 pupils attended a performance of "All My Sons" at the King's Theatre in Edinburgh.

Edinburgh Zoo Explorathon – Last Friday a group of Science Club members joined pupils from across Scotland for the first Explorathon at Edinburgh Zoo, organised by Heriot-Watt University.

Charity Abseil – S5 pupil Georgia Herriott abseiled down Barns Ness Lighthouse to raise money for The Bethany Trust.

East Lothian Orchestra – Mrs Ingham attended the concert that was the culmination of the East Lothian Youth Orchestra Intensive Rehearsal weekend, which she described as “brilliant”.

Auschwitz – Two senior pupils recently took part in the Holocaust Education Trust visit to Auschwitz in Poland. These pupils will in turn speak to classes about their experience.

Football – Jade Stenhouse (S3) is currently training with Hibs three times a week and with Scotland once a week. Harry Bowles (S6) has just been selected to play for the Edinburgh and Lothians Under 18s football squad. Both pupils are impressing staff with their hard work and ability to juggle their commitments.

School of Rugby – The School of Rugby is going well, with more pupils attending rugby now. Any other interested pupils should come along on Monday or Wednesday after school. This week Knox takes on Boroughmuir.

S1 Settling-In Evening – The recent S1 Settling-In Evening had been a great evening.

Twin Town French Link Up - Councillor McMillan noted that the Mayor of Aubigny-sur-Nere visited Haddington over the summer and suggested the possibility of using Skype for school pupils in each town to practice their verbal French and English with each other. This can be discussed further with Management Staff if required, although it may be something that is done outwith school in the local community.

Councillor McMillan left the meeting.

7. Curriculum

The Curriculum Group has met and will continue to debate what a curriculum is and what it looks like.

Mr Simpson posed the question as to how parents would feel about a reduction in the number of teaching periods set aside for Maths and English. He said that between S1 and S4 Maths and English have approximately double the amount of teaching time devoted to them than other subjects. Knox also devotes more time to these subjects than many other schools. He said that the perception was that the more time spent teaching a subject, the better results that are achieved; however this did not always happen.

There was a long discussion about this, with the general feeling from both parents and pupils being that they did not agree and did not want the number of teaching hours reduced in these subjects. Mr Simpson stressed that this was not something that Knox planned to do in the immediate future and noted that it was a big debate which could be discussed further in the future if required.

8. Staff Member’s Report

Learning Conversations – Mr Dempster said that the first round of formal Learning Conversations had taken place. This is the first time it has been done across the school. The school intends to look at the

pockets of good practice across the staff and use this to run a future workshop on Learning Conversations and Tracking & Monitoring for staff.

S2 Tracking Reports – S2 Tracking Reports went out today. A couple of targets have been set in each subject, which will be reviewed later in the year. Mr Blair noted that parent’s feelings on the new tracking and monitoring system will be gauged over the first year also. A sample of 60-70 senior pupil parents will be asked for feedback later in the year.

Sports Council – Mr Wands said the Sports Council is now up and running and he is very happy with the system.

Team App – Parents liked the new Team App method of communication for sports events, but said that they would appreciate more advance notice for events or changes to fixtures. Mr Wands acknowledged that more notice would be better, but noted that he often did not receive details for weekend fixtures until midweek, which delayed the information coming out to parents. Janette Middlemass had concerns about Under 18s rugby information on TeamApp which she will discuss with Mr Wands after the meeting.

Core PE Time – Mr Wands said he would like to see more time given to Physical Education (PE) and had discussed this with the Senior Management Team.

School minibus – Mr Wands noted how expensive and difficult it was to organise transport for sports fixtures and training, both with Knox and some more distant cluster primaries. There was a discussion about the possibility of obtaining a minibus for the school; however Mr Simpson thought this would be prohibitively expensive. It was agreed that Mr Wands would investigate how other schools organise this and put together an option appraisal for discussion at a later meeting. **Action SW**

9. Parent’s Matters - none

10. Any Other Business

Parent Council Health Check – Caroline McKinnel spoke about the Parent Council Health Check document sent out by East Lothian Council for Parent Council’s to check if they are fulfilling all their requirements. Louise and Caroline will look at this before the next meeting. **Action LE/ CMcK**

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is Wednesday 4 November at 6.15pm in the School Library. All parents and carers are very welcome to attend.

Action Points	Who	When
Add KASG Report as an agenda item	MB	For next meeting
Consult the PSP Constitution and amend if necessary to formally make KASG a sub group of the PSP.	LE/KB	For AGM (in Feb)
Discuss how KASG minutes will be made available to PSP members and the parent forum.	LE/KB	As soon as possible
Put together an option appraisal for a school minibus	SW	For a future meeting.