



APPROVED MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY 21 MAY 2014

PRESENT:	Vicky Cole	Chair	Parent	PSP member
	Louise Elder		Parent	PSP member
	Amanda Herriot		Parent	PSP member
	Jon Hunton		Parent	PSP member
	Caroline McKinnel		Parent	PSP member
	Janette Middlemass		Parent	PSP member
	Dave Neillans		Parent	PSP member
	Derek Simpson		Parent	PSP member
	Ian Smith		Parent	PSP member
	Kim White		Parent	PSP member
	Mark Wyllie		Parent	PSP member
	Kath Anderson		Teacher	PSP member
	Colin Dempster		Teacher	PSP member

IN ATTENDANCE:	Sarah Ingham	Head Teacher
	Helen Brannigan	RE Teacher
	Linda Bowen	Parent
	Lucy Wrinn	Parent
	Tom Trotter	Local Councillor
	Mary Benson	Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Greg Cookson (Vice Chair), Calum Blair and Councillor MacMillan.

2. Ms Brannigan – UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award

Ms Brannigan gave a presentation about the school's progress in working towards achieving Level 1 of UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Award. This will be a whole school initiative.

"The Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. A rights-respecting school not only teaches about children's rights but also models rights and respect in all its relationships: between teachers / adults and pupils, between adults and between pupils." (UNICEF UK website)

The Award fits in well with the ethos of Knox and the school's three core aims of wisdom, engagement and respect. It also fits into existing school themes and practices.

It is likely to take around two years to achieve the Level 1 award. Although some primary schools in East Lothian are working towards RRSAs, it is believed that Knox is the first secondary school in the Authority to do so. A pupil committee has been formed to take the lead in this. A wider steering group will also be formed involving staff, parents, pupils and the wider community. Ms Brannigan will be looking for parents volunteers for this in future, so any parent interested in being involved or wanting more information should contact her directly.

Vicky Cole congratulated the school on their work on this and thanked Ms Brannigan, who agreed to update the PSP on progress next year.

3 Minutes of Meeting of 26 March 2014

The minutes of the last meeting were approved with one minor change – a space was to be added between paragraphs one and two of item 12.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

UCAS tariff proposals – Mrs Ingham confirmed that Knox have submitted comments to UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) on their proposed changes to their tariff, (the system whereby youngsters wishing to enter university are awarded points for their qualifications and experience to enable universities and colleges to grade applicants).

Mr Simpson will email a copy of his Powerpoint presentation to the Clerk for circulation to PSP members.

Action DS/MB

Vicky Cole thanked Mr Simpson for his work on this and for his presentation to the PSP at the last meeting.

5. Chairperson's Report & Action Points from the last meeting

Former Knox pupils who have died in combat - Janette Middlemiss has contacted the army, navy and airforce veterans associations to check to see if there are any former Knox pupils who have died in combat that are not already known about by the school, and is awaiting a response. Mrs Ingham thanked her for doing this.

6. Pupil's Matters – Senior pupils are now on exam leave. There were no pupil's matters to report.

7. Head Teacher's Report

Staffing – Mrs Ingham gave an update on staffing. Five members of staff will be retiring this session, including one of the Depute Head Teachers. Mrs Ingham would like a parent volunteer to help with the Depute Head Teacher interviews in due course. Parents must have undertaken East Lothian Council's Recruitment & Selection training course to be eligible to take part. Mrs Ingham will email out the details once she has them.

Louise Elder and Janette Middlemass were thanked for their help during the interview process for the recent appointments for teachers of Modern Languages, Art & Design and English.

A further parent observer is sought for the Teacher of PE interviews on 4 June. Anyone interested in becoming involved should let Mrs Ingham know as soon as possible.

News / updates –

Library – the school library was refurbished during the Easter holidays and is looking much more colourful. Mrs Ingham thanked Ms Skirrow, Mr Plain and the pupils for all of their input.

Exams – The exams have gone well so far. Pupils seem to be coping. The mixture of Study Leave arrangements have been satisfactory and will be discussed with other Head Teachers and reviewed in due course.

In-service on 6 May – the in-service day on 6 May was very good, with workshops presented by six members of staff on Growth Mindset, Active Learning, and Assessment is for Learning strategies. These were well received and the learning from those workshops should form a major focus for Improvement Planning this session.

Activities Week – will be held next week. Thanks were noted to John Taylor and his team for putting together the programme for the week.

Communication Provision – East Lothian Council have announced that a new Communication Provision Unit, which will be part of Knox Academy, is to be developed in the old Haddington Infant School building. This unit will be for youngsters with communication difficulties and autism. It is hoped that the unit will be opened in August 2015. Mr Simpson is taking the lead on this at Knox. Mrs Ingham noted how delighted the school were with the announcement of this new provision and how she was looking forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure that it is a first class provision.

Coursing – Mrs Ingham thanked all parents and pupils for helping to make the coursing go so smoothly this year. The school are in the process of finalising the timetable ready to start the new courses on 2 June.

Commonwealth Games, Queen's Baton Relay – comes to East Lothian on 17 June and will pass through Haddington after the end of the school day. The school plans to be involved and there will be three baton bearers from Knox.

Awards Ceremony – This year's Awards Ceremony will be on 3 July and the speaker will be Michael Cavanagh, Chair of Commonwealth Games Scotland. The PSP Award will also be presented at the ceremony. (See also item 12).

Strategic items –

The school are in the process of pulling together the School Improvement Plan, focussing on:

Self-evaluation

The Curriculum

The Learner's Experience

Values, Vision and Ethos

Mrs Ingham noted her personal thanks to Vicky Cole for her help and support during her time as PSP Chair.

8. Curriculum

Work on the new Curriculum is going on apace, but staff have not had as much time available to them for this as anticipated, due to the demands of helping pupils to prepare for the new exams. Both Vicky Cole and Mrs Ingham noted their thanks to staff for their hard work in this area.

The school are looking for ways to improve things for next year's pupils. Staff have now seen the first final exam papers, which will help in the evolution of courses and in planning for next year.

Mr Simpson said that the school felt they had made the right decision in reducing the number of courses on offer next year from 8 to 7. Mrs Ingham noted that this would be reviewed next year.

9. Staff Member's Report –

Miss Anderson will be standing down as Staff Rep due to other commitments. She was thanked for her extraordinary commitment to the PSP over the last ten years. Mrs Ingham will advertise the vacant position to school staff in due course.

Action SI

10. Parent's Matters

NPFS (National Parent Forum of Scotland) survey – It was agreed that the recent NPFS survey on the first year of the new Curriculum for Excellence qualifications (specifically targetted at S3 and S4 parents and pupils) would be made available to the parent forum on the PSP website and advertised via the school.

Action VC & SI

PSP website – Vicky asked if any parent rep was willing to take on the role of updating the PSP website. Anyone interested should contact Vicky.

Action All

PSP Award – The candidates for this year's annual PSP award were considered and the winner agreed. The award will be presented at the Awards Ceremony on 3 July. Mrs Ingham will arrange for the award to be engraved with this year's winner's name, using PSP funds.

Office Bearers – Vicky Cole (Chair) and Greg Cookson (Vice Chair) are both standing down. Louise Elder agreed to be the new Chair and Dave Neillans agreed to be Vice Chair. Louise was proposed by Vicky Cole and seconded by Ian Smith. Dave was proposed by Derek Simpson and seconded by Kim White.

Kim White thanked Vicky on behalf of the PSP and the parent forum, for her commitment during her time as chair. Those at the meeting noted how very positive, inclusive and approachable she has been. Vicky was presented with a card and a gift of thanks from the PSP. The PSP also proposed a vote of thanks to Greg Cookson for his commitment during his time as Vice Chair.

It was agreed that Vicky and Louise would both attend the P7 Parent's Evening on Monday 16 June to give a joint talk about the PSP.

Councillor Trotter and Kath Anderson left the meeting.

11. Correspondence – has been emailed to all parents.

12. Any Other Business - none.

13. Date of Next Meeting: To be arranged. Mary Benson will compile a list of possible dates (based on the meeting dates this year) and will circulate it for comment. Once agreed, the dates will be booked with FES Facilities Management and advertised to the parent forum.

Action MB

Action points	Who	When
Circulate copy of UCAS Tariff Powerpoint presentation to PSP members	DS/MB	As soon as possible
Advertise vacant PSP Staff Rep position	SI	Before next meeting
Put National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS) questionnaire on new National exams on PSP website and advertise to parents	VC/SI	As soon as possible
Find a new parent rep to take on the role of updating the PSP website	All	As soon as possible
Circulate, agree, book and advertise PSP meeting dates for next year	MB	As soon as possible