



APPROVED MINUTES

DATE: WEDNESDAY 13 JANUARY 2016

PRESENT:	Louise Elder	Chair	PSP member
	Caroline McKinnel	Vice-chair	PSP member
	Kay Boylan	Parent	PSP member & *Knox Academy KASG* rep Support Group
	Linda Bowen	Parent	PSP member
	Calum Blair	Teacher	PSP member
	Colin Dempster	Teacher	PSP member
	Steve Wands	Sports Co-ordinator	PSP member

IN ATTENDANCE:	Sarah Ingham	Head Teacher
	Andy McBain	Parent
	Katrina Booth	Parent
	Sally Cunningham	Parent
	Fiona Dewar	Parent
	Nicola Elliott	Parent
	Val Laing	Parent
	Kirsty Logan	Parent
	William Mackay	Parent
	Pam Montgomery	Parent
	Dave Neillans	Parent
	Caroline Taylor	Parent
	Elizabeth Vischer	Parent
	Harry Bowles	Head Pupil
	Roisin Kelly	Depute Head Pupil
	Liz Syme	Clerk

1. Welcome and Apologies

Louise Elder (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Amanda Herriott, Janette Middlemass, Jon Hunton, Kim White and Provost Ludovic Broun-Lindsay.

2. Minutes of Meeting of 2 December 2015

The minutes of the last meeting were approved without change.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Points

KASG Burns Supper

Louise Elder has organised a PSP table at the Burns Supper on Thursday, January 28th. If anyone else would like to attend, Louise needs to let Mrs Ball know the number of tickets required by January 18th.

4. Chairperson's Report

School Christmas Concert

Louise Elder said the school concert was outstanding. The audience had given a standing ovation showing their appreciation on how well pupils and staff had performed.

Katrina Booth pointed out that a petition has been set up on Facebook campaigning against the planned Council budget cuts for free music tuition in schools. This petition relates to Edinburgh schools. Mrs Ingham added, the East Lothian Pipes and Drums Trust funding is coming to an end, and Louise Elder asked if there was anything parents and carers could do to help? Mrs Ingham has met with representatives from the Trust who are willing to liaise with the school to help continue tuition, if possible. At present, there are no piping instructors. When the new Head of Education is appointed, Mrs Ingham will arrange a meeting to discuss this further.

Mary Benson, PSP Clerk

Louise Elder gave a very special thank you to Mary Benson for all her amazing work as Clerk over the years. Liz Syme has taken over the role.

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

UCAS forms

The final date for UCAS forms is January 15th, and these have all been handed in. Some 6th Year pupils have already received offers.

6th Year Pantomime

6th Year pupils organised the end of term Pantomime which was a great success.

Book Scheme

Text books can be bought/sold through an exchange scheme set up in the school Library.

KASG Burns Supper

Some 6th Year pupils are involved in helping to organise the Burns Supper.

Charities Committee Spring Dance

The Charities Committee are planning a Spring Dance with proceeds being donated to UNICEF.

Children in Need

Pupils raised over £1,000 for Children in Need.

Learning Support Base

Pupils in the Learning Support Base are learning how to debate issues encouraging them to become more confident individuals.

Seating Areas

Due to the lack of seating areas within the school, teachers have offered to open their classrooms to pupils during the lunchtime break. There are rules that need to be followed.

Curriculum Council

The Curriculum Council are focusing on what is the best way for pupils to learn.

LGBT

Ben Scott, Depute Head, is working with Mrs Ingham on the LGBT charter. A 'Purple Day' is planned for next month. The library has a LGBT section.

Events Committee

The Events Committee is holding a Tea Dance on 18th March in the Town House. Residents of Leuchie House have been invited.

Leavers' Dance Committee

The 6th Year Leavers' Dance is on 24th June and will be held at Pollock Halls, Edinburgh.

Exam Mentoring

6th Year pupils who have volunteered to help with mentoring for 4th Year pupils will be starting this soon.

Val Laing entered the meeting.

6. Head Teacher's Report

Staffing

Mrs Ingham spoke about staffing.

News/updates:

Head Teacher's updates are posted on the school website.

Christmas Concert

The concert was excellent and Mrs Ingham gave a huge thanks to everyone involved. She also thanked Donald Smith for the lovely review printed in the Courier.

S6 Pantomime

Mrs Ingham said the S6 Pantomime was outstanding and the pupils involved did extraordinarily well.

Benchmarking Assessments

Louise Elder will post the dates for the Benchmarking Assessments on the school website.

Action LE

Sally Cunningham and Kirsty Logan entered the meeting.

"Back Health"

Mrs Ingham met with an osteopath and discussed how youngsters are damaging their backs whilst looking at mobile phones and Tablets. During the next 'In Service' day the osteopath will be speaking to staff, and she is willing to come to a PSP meeting to explain how mobile phones and other devices should be held.

Registering to Vote

Pupils who are aged 16 should be registering to vote in Local and General Elections. The school will be putting out a guide and offering pupils the opportunity to sign up online in school.

Evaluation Visit

The school had an evaluation visit on 12th January, which went very well. There was positive feedback.

Communications Provision

The communications provision is on track and should be opening soon after Easter.

S4 Parents' Evening

S4 Parents' Evening is to be held on 20th January. Parents and carers who are unable to get an appointment with a teacher are welcome to contact the school to arrange getting feedback about their child's progress.

Benchmarking Assessments

Benchmarking Assessment priority fortnight commences on 25th January. Mrs Ingham explained that these assessments are to prepare pupils for their national exams in May, and are marked in the same way. In the past, pupils sat Prelims but it was felt that these took up too much time, with three weeks of teaching and learning being lost.

Different views were discussed regarding preparing for national exams. Some parents felt that giving pupils the experience of an exam environment should start in S3 and not S4, emphasising what is ahead in S4 and ensuring pupils learn to understand exam and revision techniques. This is already running successfully at another school. Sitting assessments in the same environment should help pupils get used to the exam etiquette over a period of time, but another view was that this may have the opposite effect. Pupils may become over familiar with this surrounding, becoming complacent and not performing to their full potential. Other pupils do become anxious during exams and strategies can be put in place to help. The school has provisions for pupils who find these situations difficult. Mrs Ingham agreed that future consideration could be given to S3 pupils experiencing assessments in an exam environment.

Some S4 parents pointed out that their children do not fully understand the strategies for revising for exams. They felt there is a lack of homework and no feedback to parents. Teachers are giving pupils information about what is needed to prepare for national exams, but some are not understanding this and do not have the confidence to approach teachers for help and information. Mrs Ingham said if parents and carers have concerns about their child, they should firstly contact the appropriate Head of House.

Mr Blair talked about the school's assessment policy and said that staff would value feedback from parents and carers. He will e-mail this to Louise Elder to forward on to members. At the next S4 Parents' Evening, information will be given on what happens at key stages leading up to national exams.

Action CB/LE

7. Curriculum

The Curriculum group are meeting soon to compile curriculum booklets.

Sally Cunningham, Val Laing and Kirsty Logan left the meeting.

8. KASG Report (Knox Academy Support Group)

Ongoing.

9. Staff Members' Report

Christmas Boxes

Mr Dempster said that the Christmas Boxes were a success.

S6 Pantomime

Mr Dempster praised Chloe Craig for her stunning work producing the show.

BBC News Day

S2 and staff members will be involved in the BBC News Day on 10th March.

Financial Education

Financial Education is part of Curriculum for Excellence. Schools are working with Education Scotland, looking at how this is being delivered to pupils and how much they are learning. S1 pupils will be involved in 'Money Week', a resource for financial education. They will plan and deliver presentations to different sectors. P7s will also be visiting the school during this time, as part of their transition experience.

Museum of Flight Partnership

Knox Academy is now in partnership with The Museum of Flight. Six S3 pupils will be working with retired engineers from the museum to rebuild a jet engine, giving them skills and confidence within this field. This project will run every six months.

10. Parents' Matters

A request from a parent was posted on the PSP Facebook page asking if the Active Schools list and lunchtime activities could be updated. Mr Wands suggested that a separate link for sports activities be set up on the school website, making it easier to access information.

11. Any Other Business

Louise Elder gave notice of the next AGM which will be held immediately after the meeting on 10th February. Items for discussion will be current members, Constitution and the change of names for the PSP and KASG.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is Wednesday 10th February in the School Library. All parents and carers are welcome to attend.

Action Points	Who	When
Post Benchmarking Assessment dates on website	LE	As soon as possible
Mr Blair to send school's assessment policy to Louise Elder to forward on to members	CB/LE	As soon as possible