

Knox Academy Parent Council

Chairpersons report for meeting of 30th August 2017

The objectives of the PC are:

- **To enable parents and school staff to work together to ensure the best possible educational experience and outcome for the pupils of Knox Academy.**
- **To promote the involvement and responsibility of parents in the education of their children.**
- **To identify and represent the views of parents on all matters affecting the education and welfare of the pupils.**
- **To develop and engage in activities which promote the education and wellbeing of the pupils.**
- **To provide school staff the opportunity to consult with parents on school policies and decisions.**
- **To enable parents to participate in the appointment of school senior management.**

Current issues for the Parent Council

1. HMIE report

This has resulted in a revised School Development Plan, which was issued on the school website on August 20th. As previously indicated, this will be the main focus of this and future PC meetings when we will receive updates from Sarah and the School management teams

Areas for consideration/ update to include

Attainment levels from 2017 exams

Behaviour management issues,

- **Knox 90**
- **Mobile Phone policy**

Differentiation in classrooms

Development of strategies to engage with and listen to the views of all staff.

3-6-12 month look ahead at meetings

2. Pupil Senior Management Team

Following consultation, the school recently made a slight change to the pupil senior management team, by appointing two head pupils and three depute head. The PC had explained that it would have preferred having a Head Boy & Head Girl. The following parental feedback was received on the matter.

.....“Girls in S6 and below will need to be taught that leadership is possible and the glass ceiling is a myth. They already have enough to work with in their curriculum, without working out how to overthrow the regime. I ask you [the HT] to do them a favour and make that decision for them. One head boy with a deputy boy and one head girl with a deputy girl would be sufficient.”

3. Haddington and Lammermuir Area Partnership (HAL AP)

Louise has indicated that she would like to step down from HALAP in 2018, so we will be seeking a new representative early in 2018, or earlier if anyone is interested in getting involved.

4. East Lothian Association of Parent Councils (ELAPC)

Minutes are circulated following meetings. Any significant issues can be raised during this meeting.

5. Communications

The parent members of the PC are assisting with reviewing and developing the existing communication policy. The PC are particularly focussed on the external interfaces of the policy, i.e. effective communication with parents/ carers and the wider community.

Parents on the 26th April indicated a strong willingness to get involved in consultation. The SIP requires consultation on several fronts. We need to ensure those consultations are clearly identified and we seek involvement from as wide a parent group as possible.

6. Fundraising see separate report from the PTA

7. Toilets CCTV.

In considering how to manage behaviour in toilets, which last session led to the temporary closure of toilets outside break time, it's been established that:

1. FES take the risk of damage to toilets
2. Some 3-5 years ago FES proposed the introduction of CCTV to the public areas of the toilets (door and Basins)
3. This proposal was rejected either because parents objected to CCTV in toilets (or a perception that Parents would object?)

From a recent discussion with FES, it would appear that FES no longer think there's a benefit to them to install CCTV, but perhaps a further discussion or an offer to contribute to the cost is worthwhile.

Action required. Does this group approve

1. In principle the use of CCTV in toilets to control behaviour, and
2. Negotiate with FES to have these installed at the lowest possible cost to the school.

8. Other issues raised by Parent

- 8.1 Support for learning**, I've received an email raising the question of how well focused SFL is for individual pupils. This relates to an S5 pupil, who was diagnosed with Dyslexia in P7, yet appears to not have had any tailored support in terms of vision and reading. This particular pupil had poor exam results.

Whilst not specifically about Paired Reading, which was raised at the previous meeting, this is part of a wider SFL matter and how Knox is working towards Getting It Right For Every child.

8.2 University Open days. In early June it became apparent that there had been little advanced notice of early university open days, especially Edinburgh Uni which clashed with the Seniors Inducation day. Whilst some pupils will have had elder siblings who are at or have attended University, so may be more aware of the University application process, there will be many pupils who may be the first in their family considering university.

As a PC we're keen to support the school in raising attainment for all, especially at the high performing end of the school. We'd like to see more focus in this area.

9. Targets for the Parent Council

It's been suggested that the Parent Council should have their own targets, such as increasing the reach for parent/ carer communications and input. All suggestions for SMART objectives for the PC are welcomed.

John Wrinn 26th August 2017