

# **Knox Academy Parent Council**

## **Chairperson's report for meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> October 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**

As previously indicated, this will be the main focus of this and future PC meetings when we will receive updates from Mrs Rodger and the School Senior Management teams

#### **2. 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.

#### **3. East Lothian Association of Parent Councils (ELAPC)**

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

#### **4. Communications**

Scott Sutherland from the PC and Mrs Rodger met to discuss Communication issues, below are the three main actions points for discussion in the Parent Council meeting

1. Agreed that there is an important distinction to draw between 'Need to Know' and 'Nice to know' comms. The intention is to simply comms overall. However, it is easy to 'fall into the trap' of considering comms from an internal school perspective. It will be useful to consider what parents want to know, and under which 'headings' would they look for that information.

**Action: What does the PC and wider parent body believe are the 'Headings' we need to use? Refer to current website headings. Can these be improved from a parent's perspective? What do parents really want to know and how do they refer to them?**

2. How to manage incoming comms from parents to the school is an open question. Parent may want to contact teachers direct, but how effective / manageable is this? One suggestion is to have one central email address for all incoming enquiries. If that is adopted, then it will be key to have accurate & timely dissemination, i.e. parents will only 'trust' sending queries to a central point is they believe it will be disseminated accurately and dealt with appropriately & timely. This brings up issues around resource, management and service levels. KA would need to address these.

**Action: Does the PC believe this would be a good way of handling incoming queries?**

3. PC to establish Comms Subgroup, to consist of 2/3 PC members + LR + Colin Dempster (as person responsible for KA website).

**Action: We need 1 or 2 additional members. Any takers?**

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.

The PC section on the school website links users to the PC website. All documents are now on the PC website. Hopeful this avoid confusion and ensure all info is up to date.

All parents are encouraged to raise any issue with the PC in advance of meetings. This will enable the PC and School to identify any trends and be in a better position to provide a response at the PC meetings. Please email issues to [knoxacademypsp@gmail.com](mailto:knoxacademypsp@gmail.com)

## 5. Fundraising/ PTA

The PTA is a subgroup of the Parent Council, whose main focus is raising funds for the school. The PTA have not met since the last PC meeting, however the Treasurer has provided a summary of the financial situation.

### Treasurer's report -Knox PTA

We raised £6400 over the school year from September 2016 to August 2017.

This was made up of:

Christmas disco	£2220	(profit £1700),
Burn's night	£1280	(Profit £400),
Easter disco	£800	(profit £480),

Ducks in the fountain	£480	(Profit £380),
Sports awards night	£600	(Profit £250)
Co-op chosen charity	£1032	

So our profit for the year was over £3200 which equates to a little over £4 per child!

### **Expenditure**

£4800 on equipment such as school badges, Staff room mugs, Printing kit for mugs, Young enterprise equipment, a defibrillator and finally the biggest outlay £3322 on books.

We spent far more than we raised because we had underspent the year before. The balance at the bank at the end of August was £6,100 so we are still in a very healthy position but will not have the support of the Co-op this year.

### **For Discussion**

**We are lacking in support as always but I saw that schools in England are asking if parents would be interested in making voluntary donations, either one off or as a monthly direct debit. Many parents understandably couldn't afford this however others may be very happy to do it as it lets them feel less guilty about not helping out!! What are your thoughts?**

We need more parents to be involved in the PTA. So would welcome any and all offers from parents to be involved. Andy McSwan, the current Chair of the PTA agreed to be the Chair for a year and alas the year has come to an end. Next meeting of the PTA is 15<sup>th</sup> November 6.30pm, please come along and volunteer your services.

<https://www.facebook.com/knoxacademysupportgroup?fref=ts>

## **6. Other issues raised by Parent**

- 6.1 Consistency in implementation behaviour management policy
- 6.2 Communication regarding recent incident reported in local and national press
- 6.3 Effectiveness of tracking reports
- 6.4 GIRFEC particularly in reference to ASN pupils adversely affecting Nat 4/5 classes
- 6.5 Reduction in teaching time for Advanced Higher classes
- 6.6 Comms in general (ref previously weekly updates from SI)
- 6.7 Re-marking requests (SQA Post Results Service)

## **7. 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 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017**