



**MEETING OF PARENT COUNCIL**  
on  
**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019**  
at 6.15 pm

**AGENDA**

**Members of the Parent Council must draw any conflict of interest to the attention of the Chair when it is relevant to matters under discussion or when they are in any doubt that it might be relevant.**

1. Welcome, introductions and Apologies
2. Minutes of Meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019
3. Matters Arising & Action Points from the previous meeting.
4. Head Teacher's Report
5. Presentations
  - a. Pupil Support
  - b. Science
6. Staff Member's Report
7. Chairperson's Report
8. Senior Leadership Team Report
9. ELC Councillor Report
10. Active Schools
11. Any Other Business
12. Date of Next Meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020

John Wrinn  
Chair of the Parent Council  
[parentcouncil@knox.elcschool.org.uk](mailto:parentcouncil@knox.elcschool.org.uk)  
**All meetings will be held in the School Library unless otherwise specified.**

Future Meeting Dates: 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020, 24<sup>th</sup> March (includes AGM) , 26<sup>th</sup> May.

DRAFT/

**Knox Academy**

***Parent Council***



<http://knoxparents.org.uk>

MINUTES OF KNOX ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

DATE: 29 OCTOBER 2019 in the School Library

Present: John Wrinn, Chair  
Andy McBain, Vice Chair  
Louise Elder, Parent PC Member  
Katrina Booth, Parent PC Member  
Caroline McKinnel, Parent PC Member  
Colin Henderson, Parent PC Member  
Lesley Pirie, Parent PC Member  
Mhairi Brotherston, Parent PC Member  
Phillip Ross, Parent PC Member  
Janet Imrie, Parent PC Member  
Caroline Taylor, Parent PC Members  
Sue Langlands, Parent PC Member  
Jocelyn McKnight, Leadership Team  
Eve McBain, Leadership Team

In Attendance: Sue Cook, Head Teacher  
Hannah McBride, Staff  
Alice Clubb, DHT  
Calum Blair, Principal Teacher, Maths and Numeracy  
Nick Tait, Principal Teacher, Expressive Arts  
Allison Cosgrove, Clerk

Parent attendees:  
Deirdre Harte, Ian Galbraith.

Attending: Cllrs Shamin Akhtar and Tom Trotter, Elected Members

### **Attached documents circulated in advance of the meeting:**

- Agenda
- Minutes of Meeting of 3 September 2019
- Head Teacher's Report
- Chairperson's Report
- Staff Member Report
- Leadership Team Report
- Councillors' Report

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

John Wrinn (Chair) welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Cllr John McMillan and David Russell, DHT.

#### **2. Minutes of Meeting of 3 September**

The Minutes were proposed by Andy McBain, seconded by Caroline Taylor.

Andy McBain noted that the Minutes should have included a reference to an update on the Dux award, based on the Prelim results. With this amendment, the Minutes were agreed.

#### **3. Matters arising:**

A question was asked on the Show My Homework (SMHW) app, and Alice Clubb explained that the passwords had expired, and a reminder had been sent to all teachers to include these. Ms Cook advised that Google Classroom contained a lot of information which included notes from previous years as well and parents can also get an access code for this to be able to view their young person's work. Google classroom is our main platform and used much more by all staff than SMHW.

#### **4. Presentation on Expressive Arts**

Nick Tait, PT, began by giving the results of exams and trends in different subjects in the faculty – Music, Art & Design, Design & Manufacture, Practical Woodwork, Photography and Drama. He supported the use of Google Classroom and gave examples of Faculty Reviews using technology, including asking pupils for views on homework. Project based homework worked well over several weeks. Ms Cook added that a digital strategy was being presented to East Lothian Council on the Thursday of this week. While it was hoped that all pupils would be conversant with Microsoft and Google, not all parents were.

Andy McBain noted that a mix of learning styles was necessary.

#### **5. Head Teacher's Report and Budget Presentation**

In Mr Luke's unavoidable absence, Ms Cook took the PC through Mr Luke's prepared powerpoint on the school budget. This update to members was as follows:

Although £51k had been carried forward from year 2018/19, there was a projected overspend of approx. £75k for the year ahead. She explained that staffing costs formed 95-97% of the budget, and staffing levels were high in expectation of an increase in the school roll. Cllr Akhtar added that there was ongoing dialogue with schools on their budgets throughout the year. An Education Capital Project provided funding for 5 years for replacement and maintenance of equipment in number of subjects.

On a question from the Chair on the School expansion, Cllr Akhtar said that Ross High, North Berwick High and Knox were in the first phase of expansion, but this was being reviewed on an annual basis.

The Chair requested that any matters relating to the School expansion be included in future Councillors' reports.

The Fire Safety policy had been re-drafted and updated.

Mr Luke was happy to come to a future meeting.

On her HT Report, Ms Cook advised of the Prelims timetable which had just been issued to staff that day. Faculty Reviews would be on the agenda for December, and reviewers were currently in the school supporting the school's self-evaluation.

The Chair asked about Teacher Learning Communities and how parents might see improvements, and Ms Cook explained the purpose of these, which were now a requirement by GTCS (practitioner enquiry).

On a further question on the HMiE Inspection in December, Ms Cook advised that there were numerous points from the previous inspection were being annotated by SLT in terms of the school's progress. The two main areas of our improvement agenda have been Relationships and Climate for Learning and Learning an Teaching. Ms Cook also spoke about Mr Illingworth intending to start at Dad's Group (PEF). The Chair also asked how fathers could become more involved and Phillip Ross noted that fathers were involved in activities such as rugby. Ms Cook clarified this was more related to our PEF and family engagement.

On Achievement Ties, the first meeting of the Achievement Committee had awarded 12 ties from 14 nominations.

Louise Elder added that 47 Knox pupils were involved in community groups, involving 1800 hours of work, saying that the skills and engagement of the young people were exceptional.

#### **6. Staff Members' Report**

Hannah McBride explained the position on school emails, as well as advising on easyfundraising and the YPI project on Knitting for Premature Babies.

#### **7. Chair's Report**

The Chair spoke to his Report, advising that Janet Imrie, Colin Henderson and Caroiine McKinnel had attended the P7 information evening. It was felt it might be more useful to have Parent Council representation at Parents' Evenings where there could be a gap between teacher appointments. The dates of Parents' Evenings were given out, with 3-4 volunteers required for each evening. Lesley Pirie and Nicola Cunningham offered to cover the November evening with the Chair. Suggestions were also made for increasing parental contact at these evenings.

Two parents were involved in the Careers Evening and a document was being put together on employment in East Lothian to have representation across all workplaces.

The PTA Report was included, and next year's Burns Supper was discussed, as well as the School Dance and the Sports Awards.

#### **8. Senior Leadership Team Report**

Members of the Team spoke to the Report, informing members of the committees that had been set up as well as the first pupil parliament meeting, which had focused on UCAS applications, and involving 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years to the information evenings.

On a question as to how the Pupil Parliament was selected, Eve McBain explained that there was representation from the committees and the House Captains across the School, with representatives nominated by other pupils.

#### **9. Councillors' Report**

Cllr Akhtar advised that Fiona Robertson, the Head of Education, was leaving the authority, noting the good support she had provided to Knox. She spoke to an item within the report on Family Link Workers for schools, saying she had been lobbying COSLA for this additional resource which would greatly benefit the School, especially in the area of attendance. This was supported by Ms Cook, saying that

other schools could resource these posts through the Scottish Attainment Challenge funding, but this was not available to Knox. Cllr Akhtar would continue to pursue this.

**10. Other Issues**

There was no update on when Steve Wands would return to the School.

Phillip Ross advised that not enough games were being played in hockey, especially at senior level.

Katrina Booth said that senior girls often had other priorities at weekends, including employment.

The Parent Council Budget was explained.

Ms Cook clarified that there were no changes to Study Leave during the exam period, but that during Prelims, pupils were expected to attend school in the afternoon if they had an exam in the morning.

**11. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting would be on 3 December.

**Action Points for Next Meeting:**

Faculty Reviews	Ms Cook	3 December
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**Parent Council**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019**

**STAFFING**

New staff (started):

Music – Daniel Davis

Awaiting starting: Music teacher – worked overseas so paperwork delaying start

We have also appointed a Learning Assistant at Meadowpark subject to ELC's pre-employment checks

**Review of activities at the school between October and December:**

In-depth reviews with HT/DHTs meeting with Curriculum Leaders and subject members to review SQA results based on a deep dive of data in Insight. Areas of focus have been identified which will be taken forward at an individual staff/subject level and where issues are thematic, across the faculty/ Staff know exactly what areas need to be improved and will focus on these over the coming session and beyond e.g. in some subjects performance in assignments required more focus whereas in others this was strong. In some subjects that were extended writing (e.g. English and Modern Studies – pupils performed much better in one than the other so these departments were asked to link more closely to track pupils to ensure that they performed equally well in both and skills transferred between each to raise attainment).

Faculty Reviews of HWB, Pupil Support, Science and Communications took place throughout the month of October. Our self-evaluation of these faculty areas was validated by inviting external reviewers in to be part of our review team. The strengths noted were:

- Staff are reflective and able to have professional dialogue.
- **Positive relationships** between staff and pupils – goes beyond their learning.
- Staff know their pupils.
- Pupils very positive about staff e.g. staff know them and they feel safe.
- **School feels calm** e.g. lunchtime – positive ethos and aids learning.
- Pupils are well mannered and polite. Largely compliant.
- Pupils with ASN dealt with calmly and sensitively.
- **Commitment to restorative practice** is evident.
- Low-level disruption generally dealt with effectively and calmly.
- **Starts of lessons are calm and efficient** – Knox 90 and starter activities.
- Lessons in general were well 'chunked'.

Areas of challenge:

- Pace and challenge in some lessons
- Empowering pupils to lead their own learning
- Ensuring learning intentions and success criteria shared in all lessons and referred back to regularly
- Plenaries – to reflect on learning and link to next lesson (seen in some lessons)
- Career Education Standard – ensuring skills are made explicit in lessons

Events at Knox Academy between last Parent Council and December:

Achievement Ties awarded – 15 nominations and 13 awarded for a variety of reasons from volunteering, charity fund-raising, representation in sport at District and National levels, National award winner for Ornithology

Diligence Certificates launched at the end of this week – these will also count towards evening of achievement at the end of the year – those with significant multiple mentions will get an award on this evening. These will also go towards House points. Based on diligence and hard work/commitment to learning and not academic ability.

Pupil Leadership Team –pupils have attended the two Haddington Community Council meeting

Senior pupils led the Poppy Scotland fund raising for Haddington and Gifford and attended the Scottish Parliament. The Pupil Leadership Team also attended the Remembrance Service at St Mary's with HT and Mr Flood to lay the wreath on behalf of the school

We welcomed the Vice Principal, Teaching Assistant and six pupils from our link school, Tsung Tsin Christian Academy in Hong Kong. They spent two days in subjects with our host pupils. A huge thank you to some of our families for hosting and making this a memorable experience for our visitors. A reciprocal visit will take place when possible.

Three Senior Pupils attended a Mental Health and awareness raising about 'looking out for others' at University at QMU. Possible extension of this at Knox Academy at a later stage.

Rugby/Hockey/Netball/Football –matches both during the week and at weekends for these sports

Career Ready – we welcomed our Business Mentors for afternoon tea/coffee. Some parents of our four pupils engaging in this also came along to find out more about the programme.

Numerous trips to the theatre and a senior trip to Samye Ling

STEM trip for all S1 pupils

## **TLCs**

There are Teacher Learning Communities on:

The Growth Mindset; Feedback; Questioning; Literacy across learning (incl.Digital Literacy); Mental Health and Wellbeing; Professional Reading; Work Positive – these meet at various times and are focused on improving practice in the classroom or in relation to your role in the school

There are **School Improvement Groups** to take forward our School Improvement Plan and details of these are below:

### **QI 1.3 Leadership of Change**

- The results of the Vision questionnaire have been collated
- The top four words/ phrases were – respect, inspire, kindness and achieve

- The final vision for the school was agreed as ‘Always to choose kindness and create a respectful environment where staff and pupils can inspire each other to achieve their goals and become life-long learners’

### **QI 2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

- An updated Learning and Teaching Policy has been created with the working group and taken to the pupil learning team. This will be shared with all staff in the new year and includes statements including Knox 90 and 4 phase lessons (which we have been spending our whole school CAT sessions developing), and keeps restorative relationships at the heart of what we do.
- ***We can share a copy of the draft policy at the meeting too***
- In the new term, the group will be looking at embedding this policy in the classroom, with potential class observations by both members of the group, SLT/ CLs and pupils from the pupil learning team

### **QI 3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement**

- Associated Primary Head Teachers came in to Knox Academy in October to look at progress in S1 – they reported that they saw good progress and relationships were positive in and out of classrooms and the majority of pupils on task and engaged in learning
- Launch of diligence awards in December
- Achievement Ties awarded – nominations take place again in March
- Research on other schools on raising attendance – North Lanarkshire
- Work also being done on raising profile of school values

### **QI 2.7 Parental Engagement**

- The Home/School communications protocol has been published on the school website and all families informed of this.
- Dads’ group will launch in February. This is an opportunity for dads, step-dads, big brothers, grandads, uncles etc. to get together and discuss the trials and tribulations of raising children. This group will be supported by two staff (both Dads). Details to follow.

### **3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion**

- We have received very useful feedback from LGBT Scotland and the Diversity and Equality policy is now finalised and has been launched to staff. We will publish it on the school website by the end of November and launch to pupils in December through assemblies.
- The second part of Managing Distressed and Challenging behaviour will be delivered to staff on January 7. The focus of this session will be effective planning to support pupils.
- We will be offering a session run by St Columba’s on supporting young people through loss or change for Knox staff and other staff across the authority on the afternoon of January 7. We would like to invite any interested parents to join us for this event. Please contact the school for more details if you would like to attend.
- PT Health and Wellbeing currently undertaking a review of the impact of school counselling on outcomes for young people.

- We have given pupils who have caring responsibilities the opportunity to make themselves known and are in the process of working with our partners at East Lothian Council to develop a strategy for supporting Young Carers.
- We are about to begin a pre-Christmas campaign to encourage those eligible to apply for a clothing grant (£100) and free school meals. Both of these benefits are under-claimed and the school benefits in additional funding for every successful claim.
- Engagement with Cyrennians starting in January on anger management/conflict resolution
- CIRCLE document – looking at our environment and approaches to supporting pupils with ASN. Twilight session for staff on 5/12/19

### **Learning for Sustainability**

In the last term, the LfS group collected information from departments about how LfS is already embedded into subjects. Most subjects replied and we now have a vast amount of information. The group will be working on the following tasks moving forward:

- collating the information received from departments into a single document
- highlighting areas for increased ties to LfS
- discussing ways that subjects can more clearly connect to LfS and the goals underlying Eco-Committee projects

### **Work Positive**

The Work Positive Group is continuing with the following:

- Staff Recognition
- Parents' Evening refreshments
- Health & Well-being in-service
- Big Fat Staff Quiz of the year
- Christmas/End of Term Events
- Other varied team building/mental health support activities for staff - staff meals prior to after school commitments such as P7 Open Evening & the Christmas dance, 30 minute therapeutic massage etc.

Thank you to the PTA's continued support with funding of the first two bullet pointed initiatives.

**RRSA** – We continue to hold assemblies on RRSA, in particular to highlight the links between the valuable work of our whole school community and how this promotes Children's Rights. Assemblies will be held throughout the year promoting RRSA and focusing on the various rights of children from differing perspectives across the world.

RRSA Going for Gold Launch evening for parents and carers was held on Weds, 30<sup>th</sup> October.

Miss Fox is now receiving training and guidance on how to update the school website in order to be able to add general information on our RRSA bid. The Pupil Support Twitter page is also being used to promote events and to help raise awareness within the local community.

**LGBTQ+** - Aiming for silver charter.

A core group of pupils continues to meet fortnightly. We have discussed the possibility of offering a space on alternate weeks which is for a more informal opportunity for a bigger group to come along, eat lunch and play games / chat. Ms Stobie has offered her classroom. We have discussed possible

activities to offer. Everyone is keen to make this happen. Discussions have also begun about how we can create a vision statement which links to that of the school. The tuck shop was successful and we managed to sell enough to cover the costs. We hope that the remaining water and snacks can be sold at the Christmas Dance and this will provide a profit which can go towards the Silver Charter.

## **November 2019 Staff Report**

### **Aubigny Trip**

Miss Laudi and Miss McBride with leave for this year's Aubigny trip on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December along with 7 pupils. The itinerary is as follows :

- 12<sup>th</sup> December – Flight to Paris, Lunch in the centre and then train to Gien (Near Aubigny)
- 13<sup>th</sup> December – Day spent in local school (College Gerard Phillipe) and then going to see a film about the local area.
- 14<sup>th</sup> December – Visit Saturday morning market and the town of Bourges
- 15<sup>th</sup> December – Visit Chambord Castle and meal in the evening with all host families
- 16<sup>th</sup> December – Spent the day in Paris using the Hop on Hop off Bus and then Fly home

### **S6 Leavers Dance**

Deposits must be paid online (£20.00) before the Christmas Holidays. Any issues with online accounts should go through Emma Maguire in the office. Any dietary requirements should go to Miss McBride.

### **Christmas Dance**

Christmas Dance tickets will be on sale over the coming weeks so please look for this should you wish to purchase a ticket.

### **Prelims**

Prelims are in full swing and a timetable can be found on the school website

### **Revision Support**

Please check Google Classroom and the subject pages of the school website alongside Show My Homework for help/further information on revision support.

**Knox Academy Parent Council**  
**Chair's report for meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019.**

**1. HMIE report**

A further follow up visit by HMIE is scheduled for December 2019. The lead inspector will meet with the Chair and two parent members of the PC on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**2. Parent Council representation at school events.**

Thanks for those who helped at the S3 Parent evening in November.

The dates for parent's evenings are. All events start at 5.00pm

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> December (Wed)	S1 Parents Evening
9 <sup>th</sup> January 2020 (Thur)	S5/6 Parents Evening
15 <sup>th</sup> January (Wed)	S4 Parents Evening
4 <sup>th</sup> February (Tues)	S2 Parents Evening

Please let me know which of these events you'd like to support. We would still benefit one or two more parents for the S1 parents evening. You don't have to be a full member of the Parent Council to help at these events, what is important is a desire to talk to other parents to help make the parent council representative of the wider parent body.

**School Careers event** – The 2020 event will be held on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. We have our third planning meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. We're aiming to extend the range of sectors represented, and rely on the ongoing support from local businesses, colleges, universities and parents. As before this is a joint venture with Knox and DYW.

The link below provides estimated jobs openings between 2017 - 2027 alongside the skills required to enter the world of work now and in the future. This relates to Edinburgh, Mid and East Lothian.  
<https://www.dyw-edinmideast.com/regional-labour-market-insight.html>

**S6 Employability Interviews**

As part of S6 Employability Skills Programme, we have been asked if can assist in mock interviews. These take place on two further occasions throughout the year:

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March, and  
Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March.

If you're able to help with these interviews, or for more information, please contact Mr Flood, via the school office.

**3. Various Consultations- emails circulated by ELC – (summary since the last meeting)**

- Various PC training courses -29/10/19, (Recruitment & Selection, Clerk Training, Chair/ treasurer training, Elementary first aid, Risk Assessments). Dates available in Terms 2&3. Please contact Allison Cosgrove for more details.
- Informal Chairs meetings – 30/10/19 – meetings in Nov and March 11<sup>th</sup> 2020.
- ELAPCM meetings 30/10/19 – meetings on 5/2/20 and 6/5/20

#### 4. PTA

The PTA will be supporting the School Christmas dance in December. Unfortunately, due to unavailability of catering staff, the Burns Supper will not be going ahead in 2020. Historically this has been a great social event and good fundraiser. External caterers were used last year; however, this increased costs significantly, resulting in a very small profit.

If you'd like to get involved in trying to secure the Burns supper as an event for 2020, then please contact the PTA through the usual channels.

We need to continue to promote the 100 club. Please encourage friends, family and neighbours to get involved. This is a great way to raise funds and you stand a chance of winning £50 in the monthly draw (£100 in June and Sept as there is no draw in July and August). To join, email [knoxacpta@gmail.com](mailto:knoxacpta@gmail.com)

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

#### 5. Contact from Parents

The PC has been contacted to enquire about staffing/ support from Active Schools, particularly in respect of Hockey. I understand there may be a verbal update provided by Active Schools at this PC meeting.

#### 6. HLAP

The next HLAP meeting takes place on 28th November, a verbal update will be provided at the PC meeting.

#### 7. Special content for meetings 2019-20 session

Ms Cook and I have proposed specific items for presentation/ discussion/ review for each meeting. This was tabled at the May meeting, however is retained here to remind parents that these meetings are to meet our needs and wishes and this slot provides an opportunity to discuss particular issues. **These are provisional, and of course we'd welcome suggestions from the parent body.** Examples we might like to consider include safer internet use or use of digital technologies.

Suggested special content -	
3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Pupil Support/SfL (SI/VL) and Science (JT) (FiPs and progress)
28 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	Social Subjects (RF) and Post HMIE report/findings (SC and SLT)
24 <sup>th</sup> March	Numeracy and Computing (CB)
26 <sup>th</sup> May	Health and Wellbeing (JL)

**John Wrinn**  
**27<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

## **Senior Leadership Team Report**

**December 2019**

Since the last meeting:

We have ensured Prefects are present at breakfast club in the morning and at the front door, standing with the senior management staff, welcoming students into the building. We have seen a huge improvement with Prefect's relationship with pupils throughout the school since doing this and feel this has made Prefects more approachable.

We held our second pupil parliament meeting where we discussed the new diligence awards, achievement ties and the recognition of young carers.

We have recently finished Poppy Scotland where we handed out poppies in Tesco at weekends and held a Veteran's coffee morning which was very successful. We are looking to organise more occasions where veterans can come into school and share their experiences with history and english classes within school.

We have recently updated our improvement plan and are aiming to set up a paired reading program between our school and the primary schools, we will be meeting with head teachers in the weeks leading up to Christmas.

Finally, after 3 sixth year pupils attended a lecture and Queen Margaret University, we have been motivated to organise a speaker to come into school and talk to our sixth year about gender based violence as we feel this is an under discussed topic that is vital to learn about especially before leaving for university.