

Knox Academy Parent Council
Annual General Meeting
Chairperson's report for the year to March 2020.

The objectives of the Parent Council 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.*

In this, my final AGM as Chair, I'd like to reflect on the past three years

Main points of the year

HMIE report

HMIE inspectors revisited Knox in December 2019. The feedback shows the Knox has made further good progress and that under Ms Cook's leadership the senior leadership team are working well together and providing effective leadership for guiding and managing the pace of change. HMIE will make no further visits related to the initial inspection in November 2016.

Parent Council Meetings.

The Parent council meetings have consistently had 20-25 attendees, and it always good to see new faces at these meetings. It's also been great to have faculty reviews throughout the year so thanks to all members of staff who've taken part in those presentations, either in the preparation or making the presentation.

We introduced what became the standing agenda back in March 2017, which proved very useful to provide a structure to the meetings. However, Knox is on a much more stable footing now, so perhaps a new approach might be appropriate?

Parent Council support.

The Parent Council have continued to support Knox in a number of areas over the last twelve months, including:

- Careers event- thanks to parent supporters and the local and national businesses who supported the event. This year we had a wider range of sectors represented than in previous years. Lesley Pirie deserves great credit for leading this from the Parent Council. As before this is a joint effort between Knox (Mr Blair and Mr Flood) and DYW (Sophie Dawes). Work has already begun to find ways to improve the event in future years.
- Continued work between PC and Knox to get grant support from HALAP. Thanks to Andy and Phil for hard work in this area.
- In the last year the PTA spent c. £1200 supporting Knox with staff training and banners for the for the school values.

Knox PTA

The PTA is part of the Parent Council; however we've been fortunate in recent years to have a stand-alone PTA, rather than meeting as part of the Parent Council meetings.

This has been a challenging year, with the controversy around ticketing for the Christmas Dance making it to the local newspapers; and despite strenuous efforts, due to events outwith our control we were unable to hold the Burns Supper.

It's important that those behind all of the hard work in the PTA are recognised.

They are; Nicola Cunningham- Chair, Sally Cunningham- Treasurer, Mhairi Brotherston, Lesley Prentice lead the formation of the 100 club- Alison Munro, Mary McGavigan, Rhona Thomson, Alison Bannerman, Lana Borwick - Teacher Rep.

Special mention must go to Mae Ball - has supported the PTA for years and has been a wonderful link between school and PTA. Apologies if I've missed anyone out. All help is greatly appreciated.

The role of a PTA member can be wide and varied, from trips to Costco, selling raffle ticket and plastic ducts, to selling refreshments at various fundraising events. As with many activities related to Knox, you don't have to be member of the PTA to help out. Please get involved, any contribution, great or small will be appreciated.

Haddington Lammermuir Area Partnership 19/20

In the last year Phil Ross and Andy McBain have attended the HLAP meetings to support the schools applications and vote were appropriate on other requests for grants and assistance. Further Support and contributions at HLAP meetings has been provided by Sue Cook Calum Blair. In addition a strong presentation by a community led DofE gold group on the many benefits of DofE Awards programme.

Over the year the governance and consideration of education requests has been more centralised with the Education Department evaluating each applications appropriateness and merit. School applications have to be approved by the education department before the area partnership can vote on the application.

It has been pleasing to see the whole education budget has been allocated to appropriate requests over the year. In total over £100k has been allocated. Any unallocated money at the end of the year is returned to the Council for other purposes. There have been nine successful applications from Knox in the past year. In total Knox has secured 1/3rd of the overall education budget. In November an application for new Chrome books was successful with an award of £17,800 being granted. The new hardware will allow more pupils access to the internet to research topics within the school and support pupil led learning. At the same meeting a further £2,800 was allocated to support maths learning. This request for 'Manipulative Maths Ideas' to the Partnership was led by Mr Blair on the night which was appreciated by the wider Partnership group. The list of Knox projects which received support from HALAP is shown below.

Date Approved	Project	HLAP budget
21/06/2019	Cycle training	£800
31/10/2019	Knox STEM	£4,500
28/11/2019	Chrome Books	£17,888
28/11/2019	Manipulatives Support	£2,892
Feb-20	Residential outdoor activities	£2,569
Feb-20	Training for parental support	£1,075
Feb-20	Meadow Park/Knox - Art therapy	£5,925
Feb-20	Breakfast club	£850
Feb-20	Mountain bike maintenance	£800
	Total	£37,299

The HLAP offers invaluable support across the local community and it will be important for Knox Academy to look at early financial planning and identifying priorities early in 2020/21 to help maintain and secure funds.

Election to the Parent Council

Parents can stand as parent members of the PC. However, you don't need to be a parent member to take an active role.

A massive "thank you" to outgoing members, specifically Nicola Cunningham, Louise Elder, Andy McBain and Caroline Taylor. They have all being strong and active supporters of Knox and of the Parent Council.

As many of you will know, we also have Staff members of the Parent Council, Miss McBride and Mr Blair are the current members, Mr Blair will step down this year. Thanks to him for his support of the Parent Council over a number of years.

And remember any immediate concerns you have about your child should be raised in the first instance with their guidance teacher, please don't save them up for the next Parent Council meeting!

Looking ahead

It's been a real honour to have been the Chair of Knox Parent Council for the last three years. Despite the obvious cliché, Knox has been on quite a journey in that period, and now is on a much more solid foundation to continue the journey. The role of the Parent Council continues to evolve, and I wish the new Chair, all Parent Council members and all staff at Knox a successful future as you all evolve to meet future opportunities and challenges.

John Wrinn 19th March 2020