

Knox Academy

Parent Council <http://knoxparents.org.uk>



KNOX ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

AGENDA for MEETING of WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2020 at 6.30 pm

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 1 September 2020
3. Matters Arising & Action Points
4. Head Teacher's Report
5. Discussion – Exams 2021: Blended Learning: Mental Health
6. Chair's Report
7. ELC Councillor Report
8. Any Other Business

Date of Next Meeting – 3 December 2020

Lesley Pirie

Chair of the Parent Council parentcouncil@knox.elcschool.org.uk

DRAFT/

Knox Academy

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MINUTES OF KNOX ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

DATE: 28 JANUARY 2020 in the School Library

Present: John Wrinn, Chair
Mhari Brotherston, Parent PC Member
Lesley Prentice, Parent PC Member
Caroline McKinnel, Parent PC Member
Lesley Pirie, Parent PC Member
Elaine Towler, Parent PC Member
Lesley Pirie, Parent PC Member
Mhairi Brotherston, Parent PC Member
Donald Bathgate Leadership Team
Jocelyn McKnight Leadership Team

In Attendance: Sue Cook, Head Teacher
Hannah McBride, Staff
Alice Clubb, DHT
Calum Blair, Principal Teacher, Maths and Numeracy
David Russell, DHT
Robert Flood, Staff
Steven Illingworth, DHT
Thomas Salkeld, Active Schools
Adam Miller, Social Subjects Faculty
Allison Cosgrove, Clerk

Pupil attendees: Claire and Eva and ? YPI

Parent attendees:
Deirdre Harte, Kevin Rettie.

Attending: Cllrs Craig Hoy and Shamin Akhtar, Elected Members

Attached documents circulated in advance of the meeting:

- Agenda
- Minutes of Meeting of 3 December 2019
- Head Teacher's Report
- Chairperson's Report

- Staff Member Report
- Leadership Team Report

1. Welcome and Apologies

John Wrinn (Chair) welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Cllr John McMillan, , Andy McBain, Katrina Booth and Louise Elder.

2. Youth Philanthropy Report:

This item was taken first to allow the pupils concerned to leave afterwards if they wished. Robert Flood reported on YPI which focussed on Young Carers, and pupils Claire and Eva made a presentation, explaining some of the duties of young carers and the impact this had on their lives. The funds allocated to East Lothian Young Carers would go towards setting up a Family Moments Fund. The Chair thanked Claire and Eva for this presentation.

3. Minutes of Meeting of 3 December 2019:

The Minutes were proposed by Caroline McKinnel, seconded by Mhari Brotherston. There were no matters arising.

4. Presentation on the Social Subjects Faculty

Robert Flood made a presentation, advising that the subjects in the Faculty were Business Education, Geography, History and Modern Studies. The courses for each year group were explained, and he advised that three new courses offered were Retail, National 4 in Travel & Tourism and NPA in Business and IT.

Parents asked when the research projects in BGE subjects would be in place and whether the new courses were internal or external. Mr Flood advised that North Berwick High was already offering a Retail course, and he would work with them on developing Knox's course. There would be opportunities for parents to find out more. There were also some questions about numbers undertaking the new courses.

Mr Miller then explained the integrated approach to History, Geography and Modern Studies, so that the same teacher saw the same classes four times per week. This made the transition from P7 to S1 easier. He gave details of the three countries currently being studied, showing pupils how to apply skills across a set of subjects.

On a question as to what would happen in 2nd year, he advised that this approach helped pupils make more informed choices.

5. Head Teacher's Report

Ms Cook reported on feedback from the HMIE visit – they were happy with the progress of the school and would not be returning in the near future. There had been four areas of focus: School Vision and Values; Equality, Inclusion and Well-being; Teaching and Learning; and Monitoring and Tracking. Ms Cook explained the aspects that had been discussed with the HMI team and the steps the School had taken to address these.

Cllr Shamin Akhtar, as Convenor of the Education Committee, noted the significant improvement as good evidence of work done, and thanked all staff concerned.

The Chair remarked that it was good to have Senior Leadership Team members attending the Parent Council.

Ms Cook went on to discuss the issue of resilience of young people which she stated was a National discussion . This was an area of development at Knox Academy, and she discussed the recent assemblies that had been held to raise this issue with pupils and this would continue to be taken forward in the coming year. . There was a discussion on the use of phones and headphones in school and how this could mask children struggling with lessons.

The Chair suggested that a small group of parents and staff work together on this. He would email parents and ask for volunteers. Cllr Akhtar would look at ELC's mobile phone policy.

A staffing report was also made to parents. The challenges of recruiting the 2nd music teacher was noted.

6. Staff Members' Report

A report on various school activities had been issued. There were no further matters.

7. Chair's Report

The Chair had provided a comprehensive report. He advised that the Careers evening on 3 February had 42 organisations attending and should be a really good event.

8. Senior Pupils' Leadership Team Report

Members of the Team gave information on the paired reading scheme in which they were involved.

9. Councillors' Report

Cllr Akhtar thanked all involved in the Christmas concert. She noted that the Council's Climate Change Strategy team were involved with young people and would be running an event at the Brunton Theatre. The East Lothian Association of Parent Councils meeting was on 5 February at Preston Lodge HS.

10. Active Schools

Mr Salkeld advised that he was hoping to get an S6 pupil involved in hockey coaching, and would be meeting with parents. 26 pupils were in teams, which was a good uptake. The girls football was in the East Lothian League and a similar league was being introduced for Netball. 24 pupils were taking part in a cross-country event at Foxlake the following week, and the Sports Council was also being reinstated to support youth ambassadors. Currently 271 pupils were involved in sports across the school and he proposed to introduce the Friday Mile. Noted that the Active Schools post had just been advertised.

10. AOCB

Questions were asked on pupils requiring additional support, and the reason for the high number. Ms Cook advised of a rise in anxiety among pupils. Although the School had to improve on identifying this earlier, it was normal to have exam stress and learning coping strategies was important. She noted that the SQA was moving towards IT support rather than using scribes. Finally, Ms Cook advised parents that a former pupil had offered financial support for the school.

Date of next Meeting: 24 March 2020.

Action Points for Next Meeting:

Numeracy and Computing Presentation	Mr Blair	24 March
Resilience Group Update	Chair	24 March

DRAFT

Parent Council 24

March 2020

STAFFING

Recruited:

Science Technician – full time, permanent

ASN Auxiliary x 2 (one Meadowpark/one Knox Academy)

Paul McFadden – NQT in Chemistry appointed at RHS for August 2020 start

Activities ongoing at the school between December 2019 and February 2020:

February

Faculty Reviews of Pupil Support, RE, Communications, Technologies and Social Subjects took place and the findings were as follows:

Areas of strength:

Social Subjects:

- Positive climate for learning
- Starter activities and tasks
- High quality questioning
- Engagement of learners in tasks and activities
- Differentiation in some classrooms at all levels but particularly for those with ASN

Communications:

- High expectations
- Effective use of the Knox 90
- Pupils feel known, welcome and safe – really positive relationships.
- High quality questioning and high quality explanations
- High quality feedback

Expressive Arts:

- Regular use of GoogleClassroom across the faculty enables students to access their work from home and to store it all in one place.
- Relationships are strong across the faculty
- Pupils are getting a wealth of feedback - particularly in the senior phase.

Challenge questions:

Social Subjects:

- LIs and SCs to be less task based and to include CES/explicit links to skills
- More opportunities for pupils to lead learning
- Differentiated materials for pupils to progress learning at all levels
- Use of formative feedback in all lessons to support progress (beyond learner conversations)

Communications:

- Making skills more explicit
- Increase the number of opportunities for pupils to lead their own learning e.g. not just in terms of topics/ activities but co-constructing Success Criteria.
- Increased challenge, particularly in the Modern Languages BGE.

Expressive Arts:

- How are students aware of the success criteria for individual lesson/tasks?
- The use of Learning Intentions & Success Criteria need to be more consistent and explicitly discussed across the and referred back to at a variety of points throughout the lesson.
- There are few experiences of the written element of courses across the faculty in the BGE. How can you ensure pupils are prepared for senior phase?
- Consider embedding more of the four phase lesson into each class, as discussed at whole school sessions.

Careers Fayre – all year groups – took place on 3rd February and numerous agencies/businesses were involved. We had hoped for a higher attendance so HT, CL Numeracy and Computing (C Blair), R Flood and Parent Council members met to review the event and to consider how best to take it forward in the coming years to maximise the attendance of pupils/parents and to ensure they benefit from discussions with those agencies/businesses attending.

Communications – Drama programme – ongoing – working towards performance at the **Traverse Theatre which is taking place on March 26 at 7pm** – please come and support if you can

Duke of Edinburgh –community groups and school groups running, with a number of pupils attaining their bronze, silver and some now going on to the gold award.

Rugby/Hockey –matches both during the week and at weekends but some cancelled due to weather.

A number of our SoR pupils represented East Lothian Under 15s Rugby at Meadowmill on 11/03

Numerous trips to the theatre – English and Drama departments

TLCs

There are Teacher Learning Communities leading on:

The Growth Mindset; Feedback; Questioning; Literacy across learning (incl.Digital Literacy); Mental Health and Wellbeing; Professional Reading; Work Positive. Presentations on all these TLCs take place in May 2020.

Progress on our School Improvement Plan:

All faculties are busy reviewing their progress over the session with their improvement plans. The outcomes of their faculty review (areas of challenge) will inform some of the aspects they need to include for their next year's improvement plan. The collation of the Faculty Reviews (overviews) and our feedback from Education Scotland will inform the whole school's improvement plan (SiP)– specifically in terms of learning and teaching. Our focus for our SiP will continue to be around leading change and improvement to ensure improved outcomes for young people; high quality learning and teaching; inclusion; raising attainment and achievement. These priorities will be aligned with our school values of **Ambition, Respect and Community (ARC)** and our school vision: *"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." We will also focus on resilience, with the Parent Council leading on this.

PARENT COUNCIL STAFF REPORT MARCH 2020

ECO-COMMITTEE CLOTHING COLLECTION FOR ROCK TRUST

For the 3rd year in a row, the Eco-Committee is running a clothing collection for Rock Trust, a charitable organisation that works with young people aged 16 to 25 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. To help young people, Rock Trust also provides supplies like clothing. We're collecting donations of clean clothes in good condition (ages 16-25) from March 9 to 20. Rather than send those clothes to landfill, the Eco-Committee want to put them toward a good cause! Clothing donations can be brought to Miss Laudi's room. We look forward to seeing the Knox community come together for another good cause.

ACTIVITIES WEEK ABROAD TRIPS

Activities Week trips due to leave in May have had to be cancelled. Trips leaders are in contact with Tour companies regarding a plan moving forward. They will be in touch as soon as they can.

S6 LEAVERS' CEREMONY - CLASS OF 2020

We are delighted to invite you to attend our S6 Leavers' Ceremony at 11am, on Friday 24 April 2020.

Our ceremony will be led by our S6 Pupil Leadership and Senior Leadership Teams, and is an important day in the life of our S6 as they prepare to move on to University, College or Employment. This event allows us to come together to wish all of our S6 pupils the very best for their future and to thank you, as parents/carers, for your support of your young person throughout their journey at Knox Academy.

SPRING CONCERT 2020 - POSTPONED

The Knox Academy Spring Concert due to be held on Wednesday 25 March 2020 has been postponed.

Knox Academy Parent Council Chair's report for meeting of 24th March 2020.

1. School Careers event –

The 2020 event took place in February and was represented by an even wider array of organizations, businesses and parents there to talk out their career and career journey. Particular thanks to Lesley Pirie, Sophies Dawes from DYW, Mr Blair and Mr Flood for their enthusiasm and hard work to make this a success. We're always trying to find areas to improve the event and aim to have a short term working group including parents, pupils and staff to review a number of aspects to ensure everyone gets the maximum benefit from the event. Look out for more information in coming months.

2. PTA

Supporting Knox

The PTA have agreed to jointly fund Pivotal Relationship Training for staff. The Pivotal training is based on the principles of Paul Dix's philosophy of 'when adults change, everything changes'. Pivotal is Paul Dix's company and the training given by them to staff looks at how staff can build positive relationships with pupils, between pupils and staff between staff. Knox have had the first part of this training which has had a very positive impact at the school (reference Education Scotland's report and Faculty Reviews) and the second part of the training, which the PTA is kindly supporting, focuses on meaningful restorative conversations. This again should help cement the school's approach to continuing the journey of positive relationships at all levels and links well with work on trauma informed practice and the forthcoming focus on building resilience (which restorative conversations will also touch on).

The PTA have also funded banners to promote the School Vision and Values

Christmas Dance

As reported in January, it's proposed that we set up a small working party with staff and parents to look at the issues and look at options for the 2020 Dance. Given the closure of Knox from 20 March, it's expected this will be picked up next session.

We 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

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

3. Coronavirus and the closure of Schools.

This is clearly having a massive impact on all aspects of school and family life. The Parent Council will continue to support Knox and parents in these challenging months ahead.

John Wrinn
19th March 2020

Chair's report March 2020

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Knox Academy Parent Council

Councillor's Update

24th March 2020

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

[East Lothian Council](#) has established a multi-service resilience group including Education representatives, to advise and prepare for appropriate responses to the spread of the Coronavirus. The aim of the group is to ensure that the Council is prepared and ready to respond and local residents are kept informed. At the moment the Council continues to adhere to the advice and

guidance that has been received from the Scottish Government and Public Health Scotland in regards to prevention and infection control. Letters have been sent to parents and carers with the most up to date advice.

SQA examination timetable

On 12th March the SQA released a [statement](#) on the examination timetable indicating they are continuing to monitor the situation and at present there is no change to the timetable. Since the 12th there has been no other statement released by them. The Education Department will continue to monitor this situation and any updated advice will be placed onto the Council website.

Education Committee

The next meeting of East Lothian Council Education Committee will take place on 17th of March. The agenda items include an update on the Further Inspection Report of Knox Academy by Education Scotland and papers on reserved places in all our schools for catchment pupils and roll capping for all our six secondary schools for sessions 2020/21.

Music Showcase Concerts & Piano Festival

A huge thank you to the 200 young people who participated in the two Music Showcase Concerts that took place over the past few weeks. Special thank you to the young people from Knox Academy and their parents, carers and staff for all your hard work and support. The two concerts enabled over 500 parents, carers, family members and staff to enjoy two wonderful events.

Consultation on local transport hub

There is currently a pre-planning consultation taking place on a Transport Hub at Whittingehame Drive and to convert long-stay parking at Tesco into short-stay. The consultation is open until the 25th of March and I would encourage as many people as possible to have a look and make sure that their views are registered. To access the information boards that were made available at the consultation events visit www.eastlothian.gov.uk/haddingtonhub and to complete the survey visit www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk/infrastructure/haddington-hub/

East Lothian Youth Council – Climate Change

Following on the approval of the Climate Change Strategy I was particularly keen to see engagement with young people from across all our schools in ways of taking it forward. On 31st January, Jennifer Lothian, Officer for Sustainable Energy & Climate Change, organised an event to engage with young people to determine their priorities and ideas for action. She also organised visits to schools to meet with Eco-Committees to ensure that there was engagement with as many young people as possible. The Climate Change agenda is very much in the forefront of everyone's minds and this is due to young people raising this issue across the political spectrum. As Councillors we must ensure that young people are actively involved in setting the priorities and actions for the changes that need to take place across the County.

ELC Councillor's Report March 2020

1 National Parent Forum

East Lothian Association of Parent Councils are members of the National Parent Forum. The Forum is made up of Parent Council representatives from each of the thirty-two local authorities across Scotland. The National Parent Forum is a body that is well consulted by Scottish Government and other bodies on education policy. At the moment there is a vacancy for an East Lothian representative on the Forum and I wanted to raise this as I think it would be a great opportunity for a parent or carer from the County.

Foodbank AGM

I attended the Foodbank AGM and it was highlighted that over 50% of their donations are made by people across the County. During this it is important to highlight that the Foodbank continue to collect non-perishable foods that will go to support many families across our Ward.

If you need any further detail on the areas covered by this report then please do get in touch.

Councillor Shamin Akhtar

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