

**GRACEMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL
PARENT COUNCIL**

MINUTES OF MEETING
HELD ON 16TH OCTOBER 2008

Present:

Jim Cassidy	<i>Head Teacher</i>
Ken Gregor	<i>Parent Member (Chair)</i>
Ian Duncan	<i>Parent Member (Treasurer)</i>
Mohammed Alshami	<i>Parent Member</i>
Arthur Hopkinson	<i>Parent Member</i>
Gwen McLeod	<i>Parent Member</i>
Heather Boag	<i>Staff Member</i>
Bob Perry	<i>Co-opted Member</i>
Caroline Sanderson	<i>Clerk</i>

1. Welcome and Apologies

Ken Gregor welcomed everybody to the meeting and brief introductions were made around the table for the benefit of the new members. Apologies had been received from Susan Wilson, Gillian Fitzpatrick and Laura Kelly (formerly Laura Johnston).

A contact list would be circulated once all the new members' details had been received. The Parent Council had its own e-mail address, which was as follows:

ghs.parentcouncil@googlemail.com

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th June 2008 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

E-mail Address for Parent Council (Item 6)

Steven Whyte, Computing Studies teacher, was now responsible for the school website and Ken would get in touch with him about putting Parent Council information on the website.

Ken to contact Steven Whyte about school website.

Results of Parent Council Questionnaire (Item 6)

Ken had not yet analysed the results in graphical form but would do so at a later date.

Ken to analyse results of Parent Council questionnaire.

4. Report from Chair

Parent Forum AGM

Ken asked members for their views on the Parent Forum AGM held on 18th September. Ian felt that the letter to parents about the AGM should have been issued earlier, to give more notice. Jim explained that the mailing had been delayed to include the school newsletter and the autumn holiday was also a factor. A discussion took place about how to encourage more parents to become involved with the Parent Council. Gwen suggested that a social evening might attract parents.

Constitution

At present there was no time limit specified in the constitution as to how long office bearers would remain in post. One view expressed was that they should be re-elected on an annual basis in the interests of democracy, while another was that they should serve for a period of 2 or 3 years for the sake of continuity. This question would be considered further at the next meeting.

Edinburgh Parent Councils Network

A group of Parent Council members had set up an information-sharing forum across Edinburgh and to date 64 Parent Councils had joined. The purpose of the network was to share ideas and best practice.

Ken to circulate details of EPCN website to members.

Disclosure

An amendment to the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act in July 2008 had clarified the position that Parent Council members did not need to go through the Disclosure process because they did not have contact with children in the school.

Training

Ken asked if any member would be interested in undertaking Recruitment and Selection training. Gwen volunteered for this and Ken would send her the relevant information.

Visitors

Audrey Gillan, Principal Teacher of Home Economics, would attend the next meeting to talk about healthy schools.

5. Report from Treasurer

Ian reported that an allocation of £563 had been received in June from the City of Edinburgh Council. Since then £202.64 had been reimbursed to the school for postage and the current bank balance was £588.23.

6. Report from Head Teacher

Staffing

Mary Davidson, a secretary in the school office, would be retiring at Christmas. Her post was being advertised as a 1 year temporary vacancy as the funding was uncertain in the long term.

Budget

Jim would prepare a paper for the next meeting on the financial cutbacks the school was having to sustain this year.

HMIe Visit

An HMIe Good Practice Visit had taken place on 1st and 2nd October. This was in connection with the School of Ambition programme and the inspectors had praised the school's Transformational Plan. The Parent Council also wished to express its appreciation of the good work being done by teachers in the school.

Whole School Report

Jim presented the Whole School Report for 2008. This included background data (eg school roll, staying on rates) and statistics on attainment at the end of S4, S5 and S6. The Parent Council was pleased to note the increase in the staying on rate and the general improvement in attainment.

School Roll

The school roll was currently 620 pupils, which was approaching the maximum capacity of 650. Any increase in numbers would put pressure on the availability of general purpose teaching accommodation (80% occupancy at present).

7. Draft School Session Dates 2010/11

Draft dates for the school session 2010/11 had been issued for consultation. There were no objections to the dates as proposed. Ian pointed out that the date '2010/2011' at the end of Appendix I should read '2011/2012'.

Ken to point out the error to the Children and Families department.

8. Issues Raised by Parents/Staff/Pupils

Parents

A parent had commented that the S1 photographs were too expensive. However, the school had looked at other companies in the past and felt that Tempest offered the best deal in terms of cost and service.

Staff

No issues at present.

Pupils

Jim would find out if a senior pupil would come along to meetings in future.

9. Selection of Vice Chair

The position of Vice Chair was currently vacant, as Morag Clarke had now left the Parent Council. However, the vacancy would remain for the present, as it was too soon for new members to consider taking it on.

10. Any Other Business

Publicity and Promotion

Ken had a Parent Council information pack if anybody was interested in looking at it. Gwen suggested that information could be made available in school and Jim said that the Parent Council could have a display stand near the front door. This issue would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Pupil Behaviour

There have recently been uncharacteristic incidents among pupils. Jim had reminded the pupils at assembly about the school's expectations of them.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 4th December 2008 at 7.00pm