

MINUTES OF MEETING

Dalkeith High School Parent Partnership

Location: Art Department
Date: Monday 31st March 2025
Time: 7pm-9pm

Attendees: Helen Beasley (Co-Chair), Joanne Arneil (Secretary), Karlyn Durrant, Heather Lovatt, Laura Diamond, Sara Scott, Aioibhe O'Callahan, Laura Saunders, Claire Thomson, Leanne Banks, Karen Chojnowska, Marie Mason

Apologies: Ed Jupp (Co-Chair) Julia Critchley (Treasurer), Zoe Orr, Susan Burrell

1. Approval of previous minutes - KD and LD

2. Treasurer update

Bank of Scotland is now charging us a monthly account fee. JC proposed that we investigate becoming a charity to avoid this fee and this would also allow us to apply for grants. LD and SS volunteered to be trustees of the charity along with JC.

Mr Duncan looking at outdoor learning equipment wish list. Get in touch with him and see what we can do.

3. Headteacher update

Staffing - Emma Ormerod returns 19 May and SI's last day is Friday 16th May.

2 vacancies in Maths dept being advertised

Pupil Care and Welfare Officer (full time)

2 maternity covers needed

2 retirements in SfL

Requested NQTs in English, Science, Music, Modern Studies and CDT

S5 induction day 2 June - Tree of Knowledge

S6 induction day 3 June - Dare to Lead

Polar Academy all came back safely. PUPils gave an excellent assembly to BGE pupils on it

Congratulations to the S2 YPI group who won £3000 for Child Bereavement UK

Common break and lunch time trial feedback:

- Number of pupils eating stayed consistent
- Serve approx. 900 pupils a day, not voted with their feet and queues no longer than previously

- Queue gone in 6 minutes, S1s out 5 minutes early. Staff are no longer split serving, all serveries are now open
- No issue with seating, not everyone comes at the start of lunch
- Lunch clubs have been a success with 50 pupils in PE a day
- Disruption in corridors for senior pupils gone
- Some senior pupils have reported they don't like being around BGE pupils - too noisy
- Uptake on classroom use at lunch slower than thought
- Sainsbury's have asked both schools to put a message out about shoplifting

Next steps:

- Keep it going during exam leave
- SI send out pupil feedback sheet and run a few focus groups
- SI write up findings as a paper and give to EO and she will make a decision by the end of May whether or not to keep new timings.
- More staff present in and outside at lunch with 8 staff volunteering every day for lunch duty
- Library is closed at break and lunch to work with a small group of pupils in a room elsewhere

4. Update on Toilets/Vaping

Vaping is a huge issue and many pupils leaving primary school are heavily addicted. SI been in touch with trading standards and health and safety team to see how they can support the school and how children get access to vapes. Posters up around the school highlighting the harm they cause. Snapchat is the biggest issue with children accessing/buying vapes via this way (especially THC vapes) and meeting dealers in car parks, paying with cash. DHS been told by Midlothian Council that they can't install the already purchased vape alarms as they have to be connected to the network and due to ongoing maintenance costs. DHS said they will cover the costs. SI will keep pushing the council on this. Place Directorate at MC makes the final decision.

SI wrote to the head of education about the issue of synthetic cannabinoid vapes and how it is now a public health issue. SI was referred to **Jim Sherbel** at NHS Public Health and is in touch with SI for more info. Jim is running a Problem Assessment Group after the Easter holidays to produce a multi agency approach at a national level to this problem. This group will be made up of a range of stakeholders - school, local authority, parents, police and trading standards have also been asked to be part of the group. Strong consensus that Midlothian Council need to take responsibility for the issue and not push back on schools. They are the ones that issue the licenses for vapes to be sold in the community.

Toilets- the PP emailed the Head of Place Directorate in Feb and again in March also to the Head of Education due to receiving no response. March email was also ignored by both departments and not even acknowledged. We wanted an update on the toilet renovations. Michelle Strong from MC and Ellen Scott, local councillor and Chair of the Education Committee

said they would take this on as it's unacceptable that we are not being responded to. They have requested a meeting with the council and this date is tbc.

DHS contract is 7 years out from being handed back to the council. Building needs to be in a fit state to be handed back, therefore SI has asked what is the future of the building and will BAM invest in it over the next 7 years.

5. Update on behaviour management

Concerns were raised over the number of fights taking place in school. There was a spike amongst S1 boys, wrestling matches that got out of control. Those boys are now at PE lunch clubs and have something else to do.

6. Communication from school

Concerns raised over texts being received for absences when the child was definitely in school. Admin staff need the registers to be accurate. Texts go out 10 minutes after the start of lessons. Problem occurs when pupils turn up later than 10 minutes and text has already gone out.

Parents asked if duplication of texts can stop as this costs money and also if it was possible to identify which child the information refers to.

SS - headteacher update not in news section of school website and receiving text alerts for this instead of free emails. Website also not accurate with dates - SI to look into this.

School trip communication - parents not getting timely information about them. Can there be a list at the start of the year of planned trips for each year group and all communicated via letter. At the moment pupils are asked if they are interested then those who are get a letter and many find out after the deadline.

STUSI brought back up - SI feels something needs to be done to bring attendance up in the last week of term.

LB - what's the procedure for contacting a teacher? SI - email the office who then passes the email on either to the Head of Department or the teacher depending on the email and what needs to be done. Guidelines are 7 working days for a response. Office are very good at forwarding emails on.

7. Role of campus police officer

An area in the playground called "The Wall", the council is going to put in more CCTV to monitor this black spot.

Campus police officers role is to be the link between school and Police Scotland, support the school e.g. child missing, suspicion of drugs and forge relationships with pupils. She is not based on site, it's a visiting service.

8. AOB

Ed Jupp (Co-Chair) and Joanne Arneil (Secretary) will be stepping down at the AGM and therefore these roles need to be filled at the AGM.

9. Date of next meeting

AGM Monday 2nd June 2025, 7pm-9pm in the Art Department