

Grange Academy Parent Council Meeting

Tuesday 13th January 2026 at 6.30pm

In attendance: Kirsty Clelland (Chair), Scott Robertson (HT), Mrs Cravens (Staff Representative), Julie Work, Laura Sommerville, Neil Sommerville, Karen Rae, Aimee Alexander, Dawn Fulton, Amanda McKinlay, Shirley Curran, James Adams (Councillor), Graeme Crosbie (Depute Head Teacher)

(N.B. Julie Work & Shirley Curran both required to leave midway through meeting)

Apologies: Peter Mabon (Councillor), Jayne Sangster (Councillor), Sarah McGovern, Brian Clelland, Doville Connor, Jill Hendry, Nicola Hutchison.

1. **Welcome, Apologies & Opening Remarks**

KC welcomed everyone to this January meeting of Grange Parent Council. In particular KC congratulated Mr Crosbie on his appointment and DHT and thanked him for attending this evening to let us know a little more about his new role.

2. **Approval of Minutes of meetings of 17th November 2025**

The minutes of the Special General Meeting held on 17th November approved by KR and seconded by SC.

The minutes of the Parent Council Meeting held on 17th November were approved by AA & seconded by KR.

3. **Chairpersons Update (KC)**

KC gave her report to the Parent Council

Depute Head Interviews

I was invited to participate on the interview panel to appoint two new full-time Depute Head Teachers. This took place on Friday 19 December. I'm pleased to report that Mr Crosbie and Mr Alldridge were successful in their appointments.

Christmas Fayre

This year's Christmas Fayre felt like our most successful to date. The atmosphere was magical, with a great selection of stallholders and a steady stream of visitors throughout the event. The school choir added a wonderful touch, along with the Senior pupils' Vinted stall.

Once again, I would like to thank all Parent Council members and staff for their support in the lead-up to, during, and after the Fayre. We raised a fantastic **£4,709.29**, which will benefit pupils and staff across the school.

Christmas Foodbank

With Miss Cooper unavailable, the Parent Council agreed to step in and help run the Christmas Foodbank. Thank you to the council members who were able to assist on Monday 15 December.

The Kilmarnock Rotary Club very generously provided a substantial donation. All food was delivered to the Crosshouse Foodbank, which also allowed us to thank them for kindly lending us tables for the Christmas Fayre.

Holly Jolly Christmas Campaign

The school ran a Christmas campaign called *Holly Jolly Christmas*, which Amanda and I felt was something the Parent Council could support. I spoke with Scott, and under the agreed PVG Power and Influence guidance, Scott allocated **£100** which increased to **£112.18** of Parent Council funds to support the purchase of items for this campaign.

4. Discussion in relation contributing a set amount of PC funds to hardship fund to support pupils to attend trips relating to their courses (SC)

SC noted that she had requested this item for the agenda due to diminishing resources for school trips and the financial pressures these place on families, particularly those close to eligibility thresholds for financial support. SC asked whether the Parent Council could allocate a set amount of fundraising income to support such families with the cost of curriculum-related educational trips, helping to avoid financial embarrassment.

JW asked how many such trips typically take place.

SR advised that he had consulted staff regarding which trips fall under curriculum-related educational activities. He confirmed that approximately 99% of these trips are free. Where payment is required and a pupil is unable to pay, the school can access the hardship fund. PEF funding may also be used, though this is restricted to SIMD 1-3 pupils. SR added that a Parent Council fund would be helpful, but in its absence the school can continue to use PEF where appropriate.

KR noted that if the Parent Council were to introduce such a fund, the constitution may need to be updated, particularly as some contributing parents may themselves fall into the group requiring support.

KC raised that establishing such a fund might imply a commitment to running the Christmas Fayre annually. LS felt it would not create a strict obligation, but acknowledged that without a Fayre the available funds would be significantly reduced.

KC noted that the council needs to be mindful of how this decision could impact future Grange Parent Councils. In particular, consideration should be given to the level of responsibility future councils might carry and how this could affect their fundraising efforts—especially if the school comes to rely on this funding. KC also highlighted that there is no guarantee as to how much the Parent Council will be able to raise each year.

NS suggested that an *ad-hoc* approach might be preferable to an annual commitment. He also highlighted the educational value of trips.

SC expressed a preference for the school having a guaranteed source of support rather than needing to make repeated requests.

KR commented that the principle was widely supported, but practical considerations remained, such as identifying eligible pupils while respecting privacy.

SR noted that the school would require clear criteria for allocating any Parent Council funds. He explained that for trips such as the recent Biology trip, parents and carers are invited to inform the school of any financial barriers, and requests for support are occasionally received. He confirmed that no pupil has been unable to attend an educational trip due to financial reasons, and staff will consider potential underlying causes if a pupil indicates they cannot participate.

LS suggested deferring any decision until PVG-related discussions are concluded.

JA raised whether establishing such a fund could inadvertently affect EAC funding allocations, given recent press reports regarding per-pupil spending. SR advised that his understanding was that the reported figure was inaccurate.

KC thanked members for the discussion and proposed revisiting the matter at a future meeting once PVG matters are resolved. It was agreed that this would be discussed further at a later date.

5. PVG's

Further discussion took place in relation to the most recent information that we have in relation to PVGs and the applications being made for PVG's by other EAC PC's based on advice from Volunteer Scotland that if PC's are voting on how money is being spent then there could be an element of Power and Influence in relation to the amended PVG legislation. LS noting however, that anything we are asked to fund comes to us from SR and even if the PC do not decide to fund this the school can look to other funding streams to allow the activity to take place or items to be purchased. In addition the legislation establishing parent councils states that PC's do not have managerial/operational decision making powers in relation to schools therefore seeking PVG's on the basis of Power & Influence would not seem to sit comfortably with this. In addition, as previously discussed there is also a lot of data to be handled here and we need to make sure we have policies and sufficiently robust data handling procedures in place.

JA noting that it seems that it would be helpful for us to get direct advice on this matter from EAC and in that regard he would be happy to approach that local authority for advice on how to proceed on our behalf.

Members gratefully accepted JA's offer of help in this regard and LS will liaise with JA in relation to the specific questions we would like advice on.

6. Treasurer Update

JW going over bank charges being incurred. We incur charges because the account we have is a business account. The only accounts that avoid bank charges are those of registered charities. The Christmas Fayre for example incurred £50 in bank

charges. JW reassured members that she was doing what she could to keep charges to a minimum.

Members thanked JW for the work that she has done in relation to this and noted that she was taking all steps she could to minimise bank charges as much as possible whilst making sure money is being banked and transactions attended to promptly.

JW asked SR to be aware that the Mental Health Fund & Magic Breakfast both still have money allocated to them.

In total there is £4,237.13 available.

7. HT Update

SR gave his update on the work of the school since our last meeting and following a request from JA this included good news stories.

SR outline that Leadership pupils are participating in a leadership award through Virgin Money's Make Money Grow scheme and are enjoying this experience.

SR also provided members with an overview of most recent ACEL data for BGE and noting the ongoing progress that is being made on attainment.

8. Presentation from Graham Crosbie, Depute Head Teacher

GC introduced himself to member and noted that in his new Depute role he would be the Depute allocated to Douglas House head. As his previous role was PT for English this means he already knew lots of families anyway and he has been enjoying starting to engage with more families.

In his role he advised members that he will be trying to improve quality of reporting to parents. There has been a concern about how useful parents find the current information provided is around CFE levels. To this end the school will be moving to Bronze, Silver, Gold model rather than making progress etc.

GC also advised that he has been involved looking at current tracking data. He is trying to find different ways to analyse and sort data to help identify how children

are getting on across the board for example helping to identify subjects that might be an outlier in terms of attainment to see if there might be any reasons for this.

GC also outlined how the school are trying to maximise the current curriculum offering, e.g. can different subjects be offered in conjunction with other partners.

Finally in relation to the subject choice process the school are trying to be more innovative with this and trying to get parents more involved with the process.

9. Review of School Stalls Christmas Fayre

KC outlined position with payments for school stalls:

2022 it was agreed that if a school department take a stall and retain profits they will pay the £25 stall fee.

2024 the pupil support stall didn't make much money. It was agreed the £25 fee would be reimbursed.

2025 - £25 was paid for the Pupil Support stall eventually, after some emails back and forward. The member of staff who dealt with the Pupil Support asked for the question of whether school stalls should be required to pay the stall fee to be put on the agenda for the PC.

There then followed discussion on this matter. There were a range of views amongst members with some members feeling that if departments take a stall and want to retain the funds raised they should pay the stall fee, other members taking the view that school stalls should not pay a fee and some members favouring a reduced fee. Noted that there were pro's and cons of each approach.

After discussion it was agreed that school stalls will get discounted rate, payable on the date of fayre and to be reimbursed if their income from the fayre did not cover the stall fee. The discounted rate to be applied will be agreed prior to the next Fayre.

10. Last Week of Term Expectations

KR raised the issue of expectations of the last week of term before a holiday in relation to the work being provided to children. It was noted that this continues to come up as an issue and SR read out again the email that he sends to staff in relation to the expectation that curriculum based work will continue until the Wednesday of the last week (or essentially until the last couple of days of a term). Members highlighting that from the experiences of their own children, from early on in the last week some classes were showing films, classes were being condensed, there was a relaxation of rules in relation to phone use. SR was clear that this should not be happening and that he would address expectations with staff again. He also invited members to advise him of any specific examples they have of this and this can be addressed with any staff highlighted.

Discussion also took place regarding the expectation for senior pupils to be in school during the prelim exam diet and the additional pressures this can create, particularly in relation to different studying styles - some pupils can study in a class with others around them, others need complete silence. SR acknowledging the challenges and will consider if there are any provisions that can be put in place to offer study spaces suitable for all types of learners.

KC closed the meeting and thanked members and school staff for attending.

Next meeting Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 6.30pm.