

Grange Academy Parent Council Meeting

Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 6.30pm

In attendance: Amanda McKinlay (Vice Chair), Morag Ross, Aimee Alexander, Dawn Fulton
Laura Sommerville, Dovile Connor (left meeting prior to end), Neil Sommerville, Julie
Work, Scott Robertson (HT), Mary MacKinnon(DHT/Staff Contributor)

Apologies: Alison Craven, Brian Clelland, Councillor Peter Mabon, Shirley Curran, Karen Rae,
Kirsty Clelland (Chair).

1. Welcome & Opening Remarks

AM welcomed everyone, in particular Mary McKinnon to this March meeting of the
Grange PC. AM advised that KC was not able to attend this evening's meeting and
therefore she would be chairing.

2. Approval of Minutes of meeting of 13th January 2026

DF approved and AA seconded

3. Chairpersons Update

Prepared by KC and read by AM:

"Easter Rainbow Hampers

With Scott's approval, Amanda and I have decided to run the Rainbow Hampers
again this Easter. All information is now live on the school app, Instagram page and
Facebook page. Scott has kindly confirmed that he will include this in his Friday
update, and it will also feature in next Monday's bulletin.

Morag, Karen and Dovile have very kindly offered to help, which is very much
appreciated.

Education Steering Group Meeting

I attended the Steering Group meeting on Tuesday, 3rd February. Graham McGinn
and Linda McAuley Griffiths delivered presentations on **Learning Visits/Inspection
Outcomes** and the **Strategic Education Update**.

I will email the minutes and presentations to you all at the end of this week.

Interim Parent Council Meeting - East Ayrshire Leisure Trust: New Operating Model

James Adams informed me that Anneke Freel, Chief Officer of East Ayrshire Leisure Trust, has offered her time to meet with community groups who are interested in hearing more about the new operating model.

With the recent movement of various services, I believe the council would benefit from gaining a clearer understanding of what is currently happening within East Ayrshire Leisure Trust and how this may impact our school community.

I have spoken with Scott and Amanda, and we have invited Anneke to attend an online meeting on Monday, 27th April at 6:30pm. This meeting will focus solely on our guest speaker, and no other Council business will be conducted.

I hope you are all able to attend, I will confirm this date as soon as Anneke responds.

Thank you,

Kirsty"

4. Councillors' Updates

No updates provided.

5. HT Update (SR)

Started with good news stories of what has been happening around the school.

- A targeted group of S1 pupils recently completed the "We are Killie" programme.
- A group of S3 pupils completed the Hackathon at UWS and the feedback was exceptional.
- Mr Baird is delighted to be all over the media following his appointment as Head Coach of the U18s Scottish Schoolboys Squad.
- We held another fantastic Future Fest evening in January with a wide variety of educators and employers present.

- We are exceptionally proud of Thomas Connor - star of Lord of the Flies.
- In early February Mr Aldridge organised leadership training for over 100 BGE pupils to bolster our Leadership Academy. It was an exceptional event and enjoyed by all.
- We held our first annual Art & Design exhibition in early February - feedback was superb.
- We held an exceptional S4 Tree of Knowledge event for targeted s4 pupils early in February - feedback was superb.

Staffing update

2 PT Guidance posts should hopefully to be filled by end of next week. After these interviews we will know whether backfilling is required. SR is also looking to appoint a Technical teacher. Hoping that a job will go out for PT English. Looking to appoint to music post(s). There are some other vacancies in mix but these may not be able to be advertised if other schools are surplus. There is a member of office staff currently off and it is hoped that that post will be filled on a temporary basis soon.

Options choice process

The new S5/6 process is almost complete. The new S3 process is almost complete and the new S4 process is underway. We are also looking to try to obtain SQA approval for some different qualifications such as Creative Thinking, Dance, Sports Coaching.

Additional Updates

At the Inset day in February there was a focus of digital learning and trying to assimilate the offer online from each subject. Attendance was also discussed.

The school are continuing to work on improving attendance. It is hoped that during the course of this academic year attendance can be improved by 3-4%.

Finally SR advised that he has been in touch with ARA about the roadworks due to take place on Beach Avenue during the Easter holiday. He has been advised that these are still scheduled and he has sought reassurance that any over run will not impact the exam diet.

6. Treasurer Update (Verbal) (JW)

£4764.28 current balance - ring fenced Mental Health £206.32; Magic Breakfast £320.83. Therefore the balance available to the PC is £4237.13. There has been no change to our financial position since our last meeting.

It was noted that we will need to look to start spending this money.

7. Mary MacKinnon, Depute Head Teacher - SQA update

MM introduced herself and noted that she is the school qualifications coordinator and also has teaching and learning within her remit.

The SQA is changing to Qualifications Scotland but operationally everything is the same. Qualification changes are still being discussed at national level.

MM advised that schools have recently received the 2027 exam diet dates. A change in relation to exam rules for the 2027 diet is that all watches of any kind are now banned from the exam room as it can be difficult to tell difference between smart watch and ordinary watch.

Successful SQA approval visits have recently taken place with PE staff. Verification visits have also been undertaken to make sure that PE, criminology, art and engineering all assessing courses appropriately. Teachers need to give pupils the best chance but this must be within the guidelines set.

L&T

A successful study skills event has recently taken place and following from this timelines for assessments subject by subject have been updated and are now on sharepoint.

By the halfway point in the year we have been wondering how much information that pupils have been given in relation to revision has been taken on board and so monitor this a mid year check point has been introduced, giving pupils an idea of where they should be with their revision at this stage. There has also been teaching input in relation to organising resources and study materials.

After the prelim we have been looking to see if there were patterns in drops in attainment across the curriculum in relation to question types. Own words questions and when to put things into your own words was an area that seemed to cause pupils to run into difficulty across the board. A grid to set out when pupils should use their own words in different subjects has been created and circulated.

How to answer command questions (explain, justify, discuss) subject by subject is also an area that staff are looking to focus on. We are analysing this across curriculums and aim to provide pupils with a ready reckoner on how to answer command questions subject by subject.

MM advised that staff also did some work during the inset day about assessment design. Going forward teachers will look to use information from previous units to check understanding is being retained rather than an assessment just focusing on the current topic. Across the school we are looking to incorporate the science of learning into assessments.

MM advised that as SR has mentioned we have been working on standardising the information and course content that is available to pupils on sharepoint.

MM has also been spending time with NAT5 historians to try to raise attainment in this area.

My Plans (the documents which set targets and interventions for certain children) are being looked at. The Council are working on trying to improve these documents. They are looking at versions that have been created by Grange, St Josephs and two primaries and are looking to try to amalgamate these and come up with a better version of these documents.

Easter school dates will come out soon for Senior Phase pupils.

Finally, another area MM is looking to focus on is trying to bring in the assembly hall experience in earlier in academic year. This is being progressed with the S3 science exams which are to take place soon

AM thanked MM for her contribution to tonight's meeting and members of the Council expressed their thanks to MM and her colleagues for the work that is being undertaken to prepare pupils for their exams.

8. PVG Discussion

LS updated members on the advice that we have received from EAC in relation to PVG's following Councillor Adams offer to secure guidance on our behalf. LS noted that we have been advised that voting in the way that we do on how we spend money raised by the PC does not constitute Power & Influence in terms of the legislation and therefore would not require a PVG.

Further, if we are supporting events organised by the school and there are teachers present then it would be for the school to determine if a PVG is required based on what we would be doing and this would be applied for through EAC.

Members discussed the issue of whether PC members would require PVG for helping at school events. SR will consider this but in the past this has not been required due to the way that events have been organised.

In light of the advice received SR will now start collating "bids" to be considered in relation to allocation of PC funds. A member of staff will be able to attend any meeting to discuss bids if that would be helpful.

DC asked about staffing levels on a recent music trip. SR will confirm appropriate arrangements were in place.

9. Easter Study School

Information in relation to this agenda item was provided by MM during her input to the meeting.

8. Easter Rainbow Hamper Fundraiser

As stated in KC's chairperson report we will be organising this fundraiser again.

10. Request for financial support for S5 & S6 Snowball

The request from Mr Adams for financial support for the Snowball was discussed. £500 or a £250 contribution is being requested. The issue that has arisen is in relation to the cost of hiring the DJ stage and equipment of the Kilted DJ which is *in situ* at The Park Hotel over the Christmas period. This cost had not been factored into the ticket price. If this equipment is not hired the event can still go ahead but the stage/equipment that can be used for the DJ will be of a lesser standard. Discussion took place in relation to whether this funding request should be granted, particularly as it is coming ahead of other bids, or whether the PC could support pupils to fundraise for this. Some members were happy to support this request for funding, other members felt that either PC funds should not be used for this purpose or that the leadership committee should be trying to fundraise for this in first instance and can come back to PC to request support as a last resort.

Scott Robertson agreed that the school would factor the Kilted DJ costs in for future years. It was agreed that the S5 Leadership Team could include their bid at the same time as the other departmental bids, which would then be voted on together.

AM closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.