



## AHS Parent Council Meeting Minute & Action Tracker

**Wednesday 18 November 2020  
6:00pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Valerie Nicolson (Head Teacher – AHS), Kenny Pottinger (Chair), Marianne Clark, Carrie McDonald, Dawn Ratter (Clerk), Ayesha Huda, Jim Anderson, Hollie Shaw, Hilary Burgess, Shona Manson, Edwin Irvine (Staff Rep), Helen Kerr (Staff Rep), Barney Redman (Depute Head Teacher – AHS), Robin Calder (Executive Manager), Cllr John Fraser, Cllr Stephen Leask, Neil Beattie (Team Leader - Catering & Cleaning)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Hazel Shearer, Jerry Edwards and Nick McCaffrey

Agenda No	Matters Arising	Information / Action	Person(s) Responsible
1	<b>Welcome and Introduction by Chairperson</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HK joined as Staff Representative. HK is the Principal Teacher of English.</li> </ul>	
2	<b>Minutes of 17 September 2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minutes of meeting 17 September 2020 were approved by JA and seconded by CM.</li> </ul>	
3	<b>Matters Arising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No matters.</li> </ul>	
4	<b>AHS Lunch Provision: Neil Beattie, SIC Catering and Cleaning Manager</b>	<p>KP thanked NB for attending the meeting to provide an update on lunch provision and the progress with a cashless payment system.</p> <p><u>Hot Meal reinstated</u> Hot meals are back up and running, there has been an increase in the number of pupils taking school meals since the extra choices were reintroduced.</p> <p><u>Arrangements for SRT multi-use</u></p>	

S3/4/5 are using Clickimin Games Hall at lunchtimes on a 3 week rotation. NB said this is working well and they are seeing a steady increase in the uptake of meals as the 3 week period progresses for each year group.

*Cashless payment up-date & ParentPay*

The procurement exercise is ongoing by Scotland Excel and should be completed by April/May 2021. It was scheduled to be completed by October 2020 but due to the pandemic this was postponed by Scotland Excel. NB is on the Technical panel to make sure when the tender goes to potential suppliers it includes all the requirements we need in Shetland, to ensure there is proper support in Shetland to support any necessary repairs to equipment etc.

The advice NB received from SIC Contract Standing Orders was due to the value of this project it would need to go to tender but as Scotland Excel are currently running a procurement exercise on cashless catering they should wait for the outcome of that exercise.

NB has spoken directly to ParentPay about using some of the services they offer but due to the cost of this it would also need to go through a procurement exercise. ParentPay is available in other schools, but it wouldn't work in the way the AHS canteen works at the moment. ParentPay is used as an attendance based payment system in all other schools, where if the child is present in school and has opted in for meals, the parent would automatically be charged £2.60 per day. This would mean all meals would need to be charged at £2.60 and there would be no choice available for the children. This system has recently been implement in the secondary department at Brae High School where there is a roll of 141 pupils, with around 60 pupils taking school meals. However, there are issues around the monitoring of pupils who have opted in for meals and the number of meals being served each day. This would be unmanageable in a school with a roll of 935 with 6 till points.

In the last week NB has had interesting conversations with a representative from the National Entitlement Card (NEC) which also incorporates Young Scot Card. They are looking into a system which can be developed where the Young Scot Card can be used as a payment device through an App which is in development. This would link in with ParentPay and the cost to implement would be very minimal, taking away the need for a tender exercise. The benefits of



been instigated by Scotland Excel, the recognised national body for such a procurement exercise. The proper process is being followed, with hopefully the desired outcome which everyone shares. Cllr John Fraser acknowledged and understands JA's grievance that this has been discussed in excess of a year but we have lived in difficult times recently. NB has offered to draw this to a satisfactory conclusion by April/May where a full and proper, fit for purpose system will be in place for the start of a new school year.

RC agreed with Cllr John Fraser's comments and thanked him for his input. RC added NB has set out the current system, how it works and the discreetness in place for pupils on FSM. He has explained the pitfalls and weaknesses of ParentPay for a school of 935 pupils and has explained the procurement process. RC reiterated NB's points around a school the size of AHS and the lack of flexibility within ParentPay, the concerns around that it would lead to a reduction in the uptake of school meals and that has implications in terms of income for the SIC, implications on children's health and wellbeing and it could lead to a reduction in the number of catering staff in the school. There are challenges around ParentPay and that is why NB is looking for an alternative. JA asked why the introduction of this system would see any reduction in the uptake of school meals. NB informed the Parent Council that ParentPay is made up of different levels and the level the SIC currently have is not compatible with a cash cafeteria set up.

MC asked if anyone was aware of any pupils not taking up their FSM entitlement due to the current system. The school is not aware of any pupils not taking up their entitlement due to stigma around the current system. NB noted he is aware not all pupils who are entitled take up their allocation but this is Scotland wide.

SM asked if it would be possible to have the ParentPay system implemented temporarily until the procurement process has been completed. NB said by implementing ParentPay as an option alongside paying in cash, in the short term, you could end up in a situation where the only pupils using the ParentPay card system would be the pupils in receipt of FSM.

RC added the real concern is the lack of flexibility with ParentPay which would reduce the number of children taking school meals and therefore draws more attention to the children on

		<p>FSM which in turn increases the stigma. Everyone is united in that, no one wants any pupil on FSM to feel uncomfortable. RC confirmed they have received no complaints from any parents of pupils at AHS in relation to school meals or dining arrangements. SM can understand JA's frustrations but it seems like the SIC are quite far through the procurement process. NB confirmed had it not been for the COVID pandemic Scotland Excel procurement process would have been completed and ready for implementation in January.</p> <p>JA asked NB to set out what he sees as a deliverable timetable of having a system in place at AHS. NB confirmed, as long as Scotland Excel complete their project by April/May then there would be no reason a system can't be place for the start of the next school year. JA said he is disappointed no one is willing to push for this. Cllr John Fraser will speak to Colin Black and Helen Budge to ensure this is brought before the appropriate committees as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>To conclude this item, KP noted he fully understands where JA is coming from and would like to take Cllr John Fraser up on his offer and push ahead with implementing the procured system as soon as possible. KP added he would far rather have a contactless system in place, especially at the moment with the added health and safety issues around cash handling in the current COVID situation.</p> <p>KP raised concerns from parents over portion sizes of school meals. Some pupils are still feeling hungry after their lunch. NB said he would be happy to look into this and check the portion sizes.</p>	<p>Cllr John Fraser</p> <p>N Beattie</p>
5	<p><b>Head Teacher's Report</b></p>	<p>School website: <a href="https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sh/anderson/">https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/sh/anderson/</a></p> <p><u>Staffing Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher of English (full-time, established) – Mrs Bradley started in post after the October holidays. Currently fully staff in English.</li> <li>• Teacher of Music (temporary) – preferred candidate for an Instructor role in the department. Following 3 unsuccessful rounds of recruitment for a Music Teacher, permission was granted to advertise for an Instructor role instead to support the timetable.</li> </ul>	

- Teacher of Modern Studies (full-time, temporary) – Mr Gomez, current teacher of Modern Studies, will cover this post from December. Discussions are ongoing for further cover arrangements for Social Subjects.
- Principal Teacher of Maths (full-time, established) – currently advertised and hope to have a preferred candidate by Christmas.
- Principal Teacher of Pupil Support (secondment opportunity until July 2021) – currently recruiting to this post, in line with SIC Secondment Policy.

JE had expressed concerns in an email around how supply cover has been managed in relation to the recent staff shortages within the Art & Design department. VN said that JE's concerns were well expressed and VN explained the current pressures around qualified supply and trying to prioritise where you place any cover available. VN confirmed she has been in contact with JE to explain the school now has full provision of Art & Design back on the timetable this week and that includes teaching for the Support for Learning department.

#### Recent School Events/Information

- Internet Safety - Pleased to have Shetland Public Protection Committee provide some Internet Safety training with all S2 pupils. The training was carried out online and following this around 12 parents have signed up to an online parent/carer session.
- Armistice - Marked with a 2 minute silence in school and a small ceremony at the small broch at the school gate, co-ordinated by Jon Sandison. Images are available to view on the school website and the new Facebook page. VN thanked BR who has set up the Facebook page.
- SQA - John Swinney has announced there will be no National 5 exams for S4 pupils and by tomorrow schools should have all the information they need in order to assess S4 pupils for the remainder of the session. This means prelims have been cancelled to give more time to teach and assess pupils. The school is well placed to take this on board, with a number of staff who are closely associated with the SQA.

The current position with Highers and Advanced Highers remains, the government intends to hold formal exams in May. John Swinney is committed to review this position and has confirmed the latest point he will review would be mid-February. If exams are to go ahead, the school will look to run a prelim experience for S5/6 pupils in March. However, if the health advice nationally is not to assemble children in large groups and not hold final exams, the school will not put children at risk and hold prelims in March. VN confirmed they are waiting on their decision dependant on a decision on national exams.

HB asked if there was any update on Voice/Woodwind instruction. It is really difficult for pupils who have had no lessons since March. RC advised there was updated national guidance published on 30<sup>th</sup> October but there was no change around music provision, singing and woodwind at that point. They are working closely with music teachers and instructors to ensure risk assessments are in place. As soon as there are changes at a national level then these will be implemented locally.

- P7 Transition – At the recent AHS Primary Cluster Meeting discussions were held on P7 transition into S1 for August 2021. The biggest, positive feedback received last year was taking in each school on their own and giving the P7 pupils free rein to look around the school and ask any questions, without any other pupils in the school. In light of this, VN advised they have decided to change the transition programme and use these visits as the key aspect of the transition programme. The visits would be in April/May time ahead of the two timetabled days in June. In addition to this Youth Services are going to offer a 'Summer School' in May for pupils who may need a little more support with the transition. The Support for Learning department will also be continuing with their enhanced transition support for some pupils.

#### COVID-19 Update

Pupil attendance continues to hold up well compared to the national picture for larger secondary schools. AHS average weekly attendances this term are:  
Week 1: 95.5%; Week 2: 94.4%; Week 3: 95.1%, with the current week looking slightly lower. Staff attendance remains very good.

		<p>The recent national changes to safety measures mean any parents/carers on site must wear a face covering. VN has been in contact with Robertson FM, maintenance managers for the building, about the ventilation system and they are satisfied this exceeds all COVID requirements.</p> <p><u>Message from National Parent Forum Scotland (Fiona Nicholson, Vice Chair)</u>  VN will circulate an email from Fiona Nicholson to all S5/6 parents regarding Higher/Advanced Higher exams. VN encouraged parents to complete the survey to provide Fiona with information in order to represent the views of parents in Shetland at a national level.</p> <p><u>Future School Events e.g. concerts, beanfeasts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Information Evenings</u> – will look to holding these events online after Christmas.</li> <li>• <u>Parents Evening</u> – still waiting on national advice on these. Information on when reports will be issued has been shared with parents and VN advised any parent who has concerns to contact Pupil Support, at any time.</li> <li>• <u>Concerts, Coffee Morning, Beanfeasts etc</u> – unable to hold these events at the moment. BR has had conversations with S5/6 and hope to be able to offer something in the Summer term if health and safety advice permits.</li> </ul> <p><u>School Roll</u>  The school roll remains at 935 pupils.</p>	
6	<b>Promoting Positive Behaviour:  Barney Redman,  Depute Head Teacher</b>	<p>The Positive Relationships and Behaviour Toolkit (attached) replaces what used to be known as the Code of Conduct. During conversations with staff it became clear they would like more consistency with how things are managed, to ensure expectations are the same throughout the school. BR said they have been working hard with staff on their key concerns about the things they would like to see some consistency on, the main areas being: mobile phones, pupils being out of class between periods and general punctuality. The toolkit will hopefully provide a consist approach for all staff and pupils to follow. There are around 18 staff members on the working group with representation from all subject areas. There is also pupil involvement through the SRC and staff have shared the toolkit with some classes for feedback from pupils. There have been some positives from COVID with regards to punctuality with pupils arriving in</p>	



	<p>school and going straight to their first class. The one way system has also helped with moving around the school between classes.</p> <p>EI explained routines are very important to establish, especially with COVID this year and the extra precautions required. Consistency across the school is exceptionally important and that staff are consist with expectations they have of positive behaviours in the classroom and how to deal with situations which not meet these expectations. Pupils need to understand what the expectations of them are and the teachers need to teach them what the expectations of them are in the school. EI said they have tried to tie this altogether and have refreshed the policy and from that a staff toolkit was created and now a guide for pupils and parents/carers. EI said they would welcome any thoughts/comments on this.</p> <p>RC added from a Local Authority perspective, this is exactly the type of work they are looking for with positive approaches to building relationships, managing pupil behaviour and having a deeper understanding when things don't go well. It's great to see the values that have been recently updated and how closely the toolkit aligns with these values.</p> <p>SM (Manager of the local Mediation Service) advised they can come in and be the impartial person in any conflicts that may arise.</p>	
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**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 at 6:00pm.