



AHS Parent Council Meeting Minute & Action Tracker

**Monday 08 February 2021
6:00pm**

Present:	Valerie Nicolson (Head Teacher – AHS), Kenny Pottinger (Chair), Marianne Clark, Carrie McDonald, Dawn Ratter (Clerk), Jim Anderson, Hollie Shaw, Hilary Burgess, Hazel Shearer, Jerry Edwards, Vicky Gowans, Nick McCaffrey, Edwin Irvine (Staff Rep), Patrick Robertson (Depute Head Teacher – AHS), Robin Calder (Executive Manager), Cllr Stephen Leask
Apologies:	Shona Manson, Ayesha Huda and Helen Kerr (Staff Rep)

Agenda No	Matters Arising	Information / Action	Person(s) Responsible
1	Welcome and Introduction by Chairperson		
2	Minutes of 18 November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minutes of meeting 17 September 2020 were approved by CM and seconded by KP. 	
3	Matters Arising	<p><u>Cashless Payment Update</u></p> <p>The parent council noted the report from Shona Thompson, SIC Executive Manager, and Neil Beattie, SIC Catering and Cleaning. It was noted that the local authority intends to have a new cashless system in place in AHS for August 2021. RC, Executive Manager, explained that the local authority is setting up a working group to support the implementation of cashless systems into schools and would welcome members from the pupil council, parent council and the school management team. If anyone is interested, they should get in touch with Neil Beattie at SIC. A couple of points were raised in relation to Young Scot Cards and how that will work in relation to children on free school schools. RC will take these points back to Shona and Neil.</p>	
4	Head Teachers Report	<p><u>Covid-19 Update</u></p> <p>There are around 40 pupils attending the school each day, a combination of key workers children and those that have been identified as having support needs and would benefit from being in school. The only support staff present in school are where it is essential for their role,</p>	

everyone else is working from home. All teaching staff have been asked to work from home by the local authority and no non-essential visitors are permitted on site. A team of staff supporting young people with specific complex support needs are now being vaccinated, in line with Scottish Government procedures. The Asymptomatic Testing Programme for School staff and Senior Phase pupils will become available over the next two weeks.

Scottish Government advice regarding return to school

The First Minister announced on 02 February, Senior Phase students who have essential practical SQA assessments to complete in school could attend from 23 February, if the virus is suppressed. This could be up to 8% of the school roll, but the number of pupils in school must not exceed this number. School transport, meals and halls accommodation will be provided for pupils attending school. VN said they are awaiting on the specific guidance from the Scottish Government on the possible phased return. The First Minister is due to make a further announcement concerning the possible return to school on 16 February.

Scottish Qualification Advice

SQA have moved the final date for provisional grades to be submitted from Friday 28 May to Friday 18 June. If Covid is suppressed, and health advice permits, the period from mid-March to June could support the assessment gathering for SQA pupils in S4, S5 and S6 in school. With no study leave in April/May, due to no SQA exams, there could be approximately the same teaching time in school for S4, S5 and S6 as normally provided, even with the period of closures. VN noted they need to begin considering when senior pupils will be able to leave school, on completion of all SQA coursework and assessments and when the new timetable for S5/6 can start in June 2021, given the changes to the SQA assessment deadline. Further information on how grades will be assessed can be found on the SQA website.

Learning and Teaching

Schools have to refer to National Guidance from the COVID-19 Education Recovery Group (CERG) and the SIC Remote Learning Strategy for the principles to follow for delivery of remote learning. This includes **core aspects** – offline tasks (eg work shared through booklets or emails) and online tasks (eg accessing websites, videos, pre-recorded examples). **Extended aspects** include remote learning (live teaching or catch-ups at an agreed time of day). VN said they are working away at developing a mix of approaches. A summary is set out in the Home

Learning Packs. VN is meeting weekly with colleagues from Kirkwall and Nicolson Institute to share and quality assure learning approaches. AHS has weekly online meetings with Principal Teachers as well as weekly departmental meetings to monitor learning and teaching. VN said the school are trying to provide equality of provision, taking into account pupils' different circumstances and different ways and times of learning at home. Pupil Support Teachers and Support for Learning Teachers pass information to pupils from subject teachers as required and Subject teachers communicate directly with pupils through Microsoft Teams. The school are trying to increase live contact, both chat and video, with senior phase pupils in S4-6, supporting SQA learning. Last week, on average about one-third to one-half of senior phase pupils participated in the live talk classes when offered. Moving into reviewing live contact with S1-3 this week. VN said they are currently surveying pupils and parents/carers in S4-6, with S1-3 to follow next week. The particular interest being what pupils are worried about with the return to school and what the school can do to alleviate the concerns. All teachers will be issued with the results of the surveys to help them prepare for the return of pupils. Home connectivity continues to be an issue for both staff and pupils and this is currently being monitored by the SIC. Other constraints include geography of catchment area, some parents not comfortable with permission for live lessons, reluctance with some senior phase pupils to join in live lessons, equity concerns and staff childcare commitments when working from home.

AHS School Calendar and reporting this term

Parent's nights are currently on hold, in line with local authority guidance, but the school will keep to its reporting cycle as promised ie

- S4 reports will be posted out this week along with into S5 Course Choice booklets.
- S3 into S4 Information 09 February on Vscene.
- S5/6 Monitoring reports to be posted out at the end of February.
- S4 into S5 Information Evening on Vscene 01 March.
- S3 Monitoring Reports to be posted mid-March.

Transition into AHS for 2021-22

AHS Primary Cluster head teachers met this morning to review plans for June/August 2021. Following on from the success of the individual school visits last year, each school will be given the opportunity for P7 pupils to visit AHS with the freedom to look around while the school is empty. The smaller primary schools will come after school a day each and the bigger primaries

will come on a Friday afternoon. Individual programmes are being devised to support pupils with additional support needs who will be transitioning into AHS from August.

Staffing Update

- Teacher of Biology (established) – currently advertised.
- Teacher of Support for Learning (established) – currently advertised.
- Teacher of Mathematics (temporary, maternity leave) – currently re-advertised.
- Principal Teacher of Pupil Support (temporary) – Kerri Redfern has started in this post today.
- School Management Officer (established) – currently advertised.

RC, Executive Manager: The local authority have reviewed remote learning provision in all schools, getting a stronger understanding of how remote learning is going, what's working well and what challenges are being faced. They are very interested in pupil engagement and feedback to pupils on their learning. RC noted he is quite comfortable with all the approaches that have been taken at AHS, there is clear evidence of very strong departmental working and a clear focus on the range of approaches to remote learning and following up with families who might be finding the whole experience very challenging. RC emphasised parents should not feel pressurised to replicate the school day at home but if they can manage short sessions of remote learning, mixed with exercise and a focus on health and wellbeing.

The following themes were raised by parent council members:

- Mental health of pupils and staff – Pupil Support are speaking daily with families who are struggling. Feedback from pupils is that they miss the social element of school and spending time with their peers. In terms of the staff, they have been quite remarkable in how they have approached remote learning but there is a general air of things being more difficult the longer this goes on. PR said there is genuine anxiety around returning to school for both staff and pupils.
- Pupil engagement – across Shetland improved engagement in remote learning during this period of closures compared to the first lockdown period. There are still challenges but on the whole the data suggests improved engagement. Every teacher is asked to report any pupil they have had no engagement with to pupil support who are phoning families to make contact.
- Return of Senior Phase pupils and Music – still waiting on final guidance from Scottish Government on the recommencement of Music. Trying to prioritise the SQA elements which pupils can't do at home. Music is on the list of subjects they will be looking to take pupils into school for. Further information is expected on 12 February.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>SQA Modifications to curriculum</u> – these are different per subject. Full details can be found on the SQA website.	
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DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 12th May 2021 at 6:00pm.