



Parent Council

AHS Parent Council Meeting Minute & Action Tracker

**Tuesday 10 September 2024
6.10pm**

Parent Members:	Carrie Macdonald (Vice Chair), Kenny Pottinger, Amanda Hawick, Anna Moar, Gowri Saravanan, Beverly Leslie, Tracey Hawkins, Carly Cheyney, Nikki Chambers, Brian Goddard
In Attendance:	Robin Calder (Head Teacher – AHS), Dawn Ratter (Clerk/Treasurer), Nick McCaffrey (Co-opted Member), Cllr John Fraser, Cllr Stephen Leask
Apologies:	Fiona Nicholson, Louise Milne, Susan Williamson, Amy Sandison (Staff Rep), Cameron MacKenzie (Staff Rep), Cllr Gary Robinson, Cllr Neil Pearson

Agenda No	Information / Action	Person(s) Responsible
1	Welcome CM welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	Election of Officer Bearers <u>Chairperson</u> – not appointed. There was a suggestion to write to the parent forum to explain that the parent council have been unsuccessful in appointing office bearers at the meeting and try to recruit new members. It was agreed to wait until a Chairperson had been appointed before electing a Vice Chair. CM will continue in the role until the position with the office bearers is reviewed at the next meeting. CM thanked FN for all her contributions to the parent council over the last year. RC echoed the thanks to FN from a school perspective, she has been a huge support to the school and parent council.	RC/CM
3	Parent Members Nikki Chambers, Carly Cheyney, Tracey Hawkins and Brian Goddard all joined as parent members.	
4	Teacher Representatives Cameron Mackenzie will continue as a teacher representative. Amy Sandison is standing down as she is due to go on maternity leave soon. RC will discuss with staff to recruit a new representative.	RC

5	<p>Approval of Minutes – Thursday 23 May 2024 The minutes were approved by KP and seconded by AM.</p>	
6	<p>Review of matters and actions arising from previous minutes None.</p>	
7	<p>Head Teacher's Report, September 2024 (attached) <u>School Roll</u> The school term started with a roll of 1,028 pupils and has settled around 1,018 with a few S5/6 pupils moving on following the exam results. A very healthy school roll, with particularly big S1 and S4 year groups.</p> <p>Cllr J Fraser noted that there is a significant reduction in the movement of the school roll following the return in August this year, compared to previous years. He asked if this could be due to the lack of alternative positive destinations for young people to move into.</p> <p>RC said he would like to think for the vast majority of pupils there is a meaningful pathway programme available for them in school. Some pupils might have received higher grades than expected which may have created more opportunities for them in another year of studying at school. While there are other pupils who might not have achieved the grades they were hoping for and have chosen to stay in school for another year. For some, the reality is that they would prefer to have an apprenticeship or employment. The competition for apprenticeships is quite intensive in many areas. There are some pupils in the S5/6 cohort who are continuing to look for potential alternatives.</p> <p>When it comes to S6 provision the school are trying to be more flexible in terms of expectations and expanding the offer for pupils. Traditionally, pupils had to choose 4 academic or practical subjects and this was quite rigid. The 4th choice can now include volunteering, strengthening the peer support programme, supporting younger pupils, work experience, etc. This could be contributing to more pupils staying on in school for S6.</p> <p>RC feels the school are getting better at promoting alternative positive destinations for pupils as well through local opportunities events, careers fairs, etc. There are also really strong partnerships between the school and UHI Shetland with significantly more pupils completing a college course as part of their school curriculum through the vocational pathway programme.</p> <p>RC advised that young people have an entitlement to be in school until they are 18, and the school need to ensure they are providing a broad range of experiences to support each individual to reach their goal.</p>	

	<p><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>Attendance is a key component of the School Improvement Plan this year. There has been a deterioration across the country since the pandemic. Attendance traditionally in Shetland was around 95-96% each day. It is currently sitting around the 90% mark at the moment. Last session it dropped as low as 85% some days.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u></p> <p>In addition to the staffing updates included in the Head Teacher's report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher of Science – Miss Sandison is due to go on maternity leave at the end of term. A temporary subject specialised teacher will start in post after the October holidays. • Principal Teacher of English – at this point, the plan is that Mrs Kerr will return to her substantive post after the October holidays. <p>In terms of non-teaching staff, Learning Support Workers, who are fundamental to supporting children and young people with a range of additional support needs, the school have recently recruited two Learning Support Worker posts but there are other posts which are having to be re-advertised.</p>	
8	<p>SQA Attainment, 2024 (Mr Barney Redman, Depute Head Teacher)</p> <p>Mr Redman provided an overview of the attainment following the recent SQA exam results. There have been various different SQA Examination models over the last 5 years therefore the statistics are difficult to compare to previous years.</p> <p>Anderson High School are aspirational in that they always try to ensure pupils can attain as much as they possibly can within a year, which can ultimately result in statistics being slightly lower. Mr Redman feels it is important to give pupils the chance to try National 5. The pass rates recorded only show passes from A-C but do not include a D pass.</p> <p>The pass rates for 2024 are slightly below the national average with the National 5 pass rate 0.5% less and the Higher pass rate 0.7% less. The pass rate for Advanced Higher is 6.2% less than the national average which has been trend change for the school this year. The main priority for the school is to ensure that pupils are achieving what they need to achieve, rather than the statistics. It is important to remember that every year group is different, every child is different – you can't compare one year group to another. Over the next few weeks, Principal Teachers from each department will be attending School Management Team meetings to look at the results and explore the successes and areas for development. RC added that the self-evaluation has to be rigorous and robust but also needs to consider the broader experience for individual pupils.</p>	

	<p>The Appeals process will be the same as 2023. SQA will re-look at the exam and any assignments already submitted but there is no longer any opportunity to submit new information to be considered. Over 60 appeals have been submitted and these results are expected in October.</p> <p>The priority for the school is to ensure they are meeting the needs of every young person, and ensure they are achieving the best they can.</p>	
9	<p>2024/25 Anderson High School Improvement Plan Overview (attached)</p> <p>All the priorities in the School Improvement Plan have been identified from the self-evaluations completed over the last academic year by pupils, parents/carers and staff.</p> <p>RC will share updates on the progress of the School Improvement Plan at each Parent Council meeting. The full School Improvement Plan is published on the school website for parents to view.</p>	
10	<p>Joint School/Parent Council, Pupil Safety and Health and Wellbeing Plan</p> <p>RC updated the parent council on the progress with the Pupil Safety and Health and Wellbeing Plan which was collaborated jointly with the parent council. RC stressed this document is confidential to the Parent Council and is not to be shared externally.</p> <p>There are 14 actions on the plan which runs alongside the School Improvement Plan.</p> <p><u>Action (a)</u></p> <p>The 2023/24 School Improvement Plan has now been concluded. The full review of the impact is included in the Standards and Quality Report 2023/24.</p> <p><u>Action (c)</u></p> <p>The school are continuing to direct a portion of the Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) resources to support pupils accessing the Social and Emotional Base (SEB).</p> <p><u>Action (d)</u></p> <p>It is really important to the school to address some of the concerns raised by parents and demonstrate that they are committed to supporting the Dogs Against Drugs and how the programme and the staff involved support the school and the work they do with pupils.</p> <p>Following on from the last meeting, the school have made a commitment to make contact with other organisations and services to support the drugs' education programmes, across the curriculum, and support young people and their families. Some of these organisations include: The Scottish Drugs Forum, Public Health Scotland, Scottish</p>	

Recovery Consortium, Faces and Voices of Recovery, Shetland Substances Misuse and Recovery Service and Shetland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. RC informed parent members they are committed to ensuring the PSE programme is relevant, as fit for purpose for young people and expanded based on the trends, developments and concerns around illegal substances.

Cllr J Fraser encourage the school to further explore these other organisations who have a vast amount of experience in a holistic approach to the education and consequences of the use of illicit drugs and addiction. A further suggestion would be the 12 Step Fellowship.

This is a huge and relevant area which will continue to be on the plan and further explored.

Action (h)

One of the concerns raised by parents/carers previously was that pupils didn't feel confident speaking up about incidents of bullying. There was a specific question included in the survey to ask pupils: 'How can we improve, how we as a school deal with bullying?'. The majority of responders said they had no ideas, or did not know how the school could improve how it deals with bullying. However, there were some very powerful ideas from a minority of pupils in response to the question. These included, more regular check-ins for pupils, spending more time with pupils experiencing bullying, trying to understand why pupils are displaying bullying behaviours, more sanctions and punishments and increasing CCTV. When the Student Representative Council (SRC) is up and running, one of the areas of focus will be around support for pupils and to explore these suggestions further.

Action (i)

The school are keen to work closely with the parent council on possible funding streams to help improve the outdoor environment e.g. a multicourt, additional outdoor seating.

Action (n)

Feedback from the survey identified that some pupils found it a little intimidating going into the pupil toilets due to some anti-social behaviour and also issues around vaping. The school are in discussions with SIC Learning Estate Operations and Robertson Facilities Management (FM) to progress proposals around vape detectors in school toilets and the installation of vaping posters in school.

If installed, the vape detectors would sound an alarm on an App to identified staff member's phones/devices, however, it would not alert the pupils.

AH asked what the implications would be for the pupils if they were caught vaping in school. The school would make sure pupils are aware of the risks and dangers of vaping. The consequences of vaping on school premises

would involve speaking the situation through with the pupil, involving parents/carers and ultimately making a judgement call on who else may need to be involved. This would depend on the individual circumstances of the pupil e.g. social work, youth work, etc.

There was a discussion on the use of mobile phones in school and if this should be included as an action on the plan. CC said she felt huge pressure to give her child a mobile phone when starting S1, particularly as the school enrolment form asks for the pupil's mobile number. RC and BR acknowledged this is an issue and would welcome conversations around the use of mobile phones in schools.

Recent guidance has just been published and RC noted that if there were to be changes in the approach to the use of mobile phones, the school will need to work closely with pupils, parents/carers and staff. Mobile phones should be kept in school bags or in mobile phone holders when pupils are in class. There are arguments for the use of mobile phones for learning and teaching in a controlled environment, with the teacher very much leading on when phones should be used for research purposes. There are further complexities with the use of smart watches becoming more popular. Some schools on the mainland are restricting the use of mobile phones at break and lunch times in school. To get to that point, the school would need the parent council and parent forum involved, as well as young people understanding the reasons for a change in the approach along with a clear strategy from the local authority. Although Anderson High School is very different from every other secondary setting in Shetland in regards to size, RC feels there would need to be some consistency across the school estate.

There was some concerns expressed regarding pupils having no access to mobile phones in school if they have a medical condition and there are some children who may be experiencing challenging circumstances and need to have that reassurance that they can send a message to their parent/carer.

AH informed the parent council that the press have been in contact with her for comment on the use of mobile phones in schools. Following the press release, AH was contacted by a parent who wanted a note to be made at the meeting – 'If you were to ask the pupils, they would say teachers are using mobile phones during class time too. Any rule implemented should include both pupil and staff use of mobile phones during class time'. RC was in agreement, he would be very disappointed if staff were using their phones during class time.

BR would also be interested in the Student Representative Council viewpoint on the use of mobile phones in schools.

Cllr J Fraser asked if it would be beneficial for the parent council to write a letter to Chair of Education & Families and the Interim Director of Children's Services for some guidance on their position with regards to the use of mobile phones in schools in Shetland. RC noted that they were asked to share their approach to the use of mobile phones prior to the guidance being published.

	<p>AH noted that the plan that has come to purpose over the last year is absolutely exceptional. It is really incredible that this has been produced as a result of the parent council and supporting the parents and their children at the school. RC thanked AH for her comments – the plan is very much a team effort. The partnership working with the parent council has led to the plan and that's really important for the school. It is important for both the school and the parent council to continue to develop the plan, and ensure it is expanded as necessary. It is very much an evolving plan.</p>	
11	<p>Fundraising</p> <p>The school are organising Wool Week Café again this year, on Saturday 5th October. This is the main fundraiser for school funds. DR will email all parent members to see if anyone is willing to volunteer on the day.</p> <p>There is general pressure on the school fund with challenges with resources and a rising school roll. The school fund, while relatively healthy, is a little more stretched than it used to be. When the parent council is more settled and a new Chair has been appointed, the school would be delighted if the parent council can support them with fundraising. RC said they would be happy to organise a joint fundraising event.</p> <p>There are approximately 400 pupil's accessing the local activities programme on offer in May each year. The school are keen to expand the offerings to include trips within Shetland but this would require additional fundraising to cover the cost of transport and accommodation. Traditionally, the school have never charged for the local activities, however, the cost last year was approximately £3,000 from the school fund.</p>	DR
12	<p>Dates and Format of Future Meetings e.g. online, in person, hybrid</p> <p>The parent council meeting dates for 2024/25 were set as:</p> <p>Term 2 – Wednesday 13 November 2024</p> <p>Term 3 – Thursday 6 February 2025</p> <p>Term 4 – Wednesday 14 May 2025</p>	
13	<p>Information Evening for parents/carers</p> <p>CM explained that the Information Evening has not progressed as they hoped and asked for suggestions on the best time of year to hold the event. CM will contact AnnMarie Jamieson, Depute Head Teacher to discuss further.</p>	CM
14	<p>AOCB</p> <p><u>Parent Council Communication</u></p> <p>BG asked if the Parent Council have every used software applications to communicate/discuss ideas e.g. Google Docs. There is nothing in place at the moment. Generally, any discussion points are raised at meetings, over emails or on the Parent Council WhatsApp group but this is something that the Parent Council look into further.</p>	CM

	<p><u>Climate club</u> BG asked if the school have a Climate Club. There is not currently a specific club related to Climate in the school but pupils are involved in the topic through specialised subjects and some groups are becoming involved in national events. Some pupils have active involvement in environmental issues locally. BG will arrange to meet with RC to discuss this further and see how they can possibly implement a club in the school.</p> <p><u>Parent Talks on Experiences/Aspects of Life</u> BG asked if there are any opportunities for parents to come into school and give talks to pupils on their experiences and aspects of life. RC said this could be part of an assembly or a specific theme with a smaller group of pupils.</p> <p><u>After School Clubs/Homework Club</u> A parent asked if there is any opportunities for pupils to stay in school between the end of the day and before any clubs/activities to do homework. There are some departments that offer after school activities and revision classes and there might be opportunities within these existing clubs for pupils to attend and work on homework. RC advised the parent to contact the Pupil Support Teacher in the first instance.</p> <p><u>School Uniform</u> AH asked what stage the discussion on school uniform is at. RC advised that if this is something the parent council are keen for the school to look at, they would be happy to explore this further with them and ask the Student Representative Council for their views. AH suggested setting up an online meeting with parent members to discuss the topic. AH will contact CM to organise a meeting.</p> <p><u>School Canteen</u> A couple of parents mentioned some items of food running out in the canteen. RC noted there are more pupils staying in the school to eat with the poorer weather and they will need to ensure there is enough food for everyone with the increased uptake over the winter months. He also noted that they have a couple of vacancies in the canteen and currently have no head cook, following Hazel's retirement at the end of the last school session.</p>	BG/RC AH/CM
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DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 13 November 2024

Anderson High School Parent Council, Tuesday 10 September 2024

Head Teacher's Report

1. Term one highlights to date in the Anderson High School

- Settling 1018 pupils back into the school.
- Welcoming new staff into the school.
- The recent John Muir, S2 Activities Days.
- S5 and S6 Give Blood 4 Good Assemblies, Friday 30 August.
- S1 Disco, Thursday 05 September.
- The school's involvement, through the Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) with the Compass Centre, with YPI funds supporting the Compass Centre's new building.

2. Forthcoming key dates/events

Date	Event
Friday 20 September 2024.	S3 Monitoring information posted to parents/carers.
Tuesday 24 September 2024.	S1 Parents' Evening.
Thursday 10 October 2024.	S3 Parents' Evening.
Friday 11 October 2024.	Last day of term one.

3. School Roll, August 2024

The breakdown is as follows for 2024/25:

S1	181
S2	148
S3	167
S4	181
S5/6	341
TOTAL	1018 (includes 28 placing requests)

4. Week to week overall school attendance information

Week	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
11/Aug/24 - 17/Aug/24	96.87%	91.93%	92.22%	92.50%	90.59%	93.59%	92.94%
18/Aug/24 - 24/Aug/24	93.43%	92.52%	92.57%	91.94%	90.14%	93.62%	92.16%
25/Aug/24 - 31/Aug/24	91.38%	87.01%	88.44%	87.73%	91.10%	92.19%	89.67%
1/Sep/24 - 7/Sep/24	89.83%	88.99%	88.68%	88.40%	89.33%	88.99%	89.10%

5. Staffing

Subject	Staffing Update
English	<p>Mrs Kerr continues to act up in Sandwick Junior High School for this term.</p> <p>Miss Cluness continues to act up as temporary Principal Teacher of English during Mrs Kerr's secondment in Sandwick.</p> <p>To support the backfill around this acting up arrangement, Miss Leeparis continues as our temporary teacher of English this term.</p> <p>We have also welcomed two new staff to the English Department at the start of the term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr O'Nions, replacing Mrs Tylsar who has moved to the Support for Learning Department. • Mrs Johnson our probationer English teacher this session.
Maths	<p>Miss Tough is our new Maths probationer teacher.</p> <p>Miss Risk is our new temporary part-time Maths teacher.</p> <p>Mrs Renaud is now on maternity leave with her classes mostly being covered by Mrs Grant and Miss Risk.</p> <p>Mrs Smith retires in October 2024. We have recruited a new Maths teacher who will commence in the school on Monday 28 October 2024.</p>
Support for Learning	Ms Tylsar has replaced Mrs Smith who retires in the summer.

Music	We have a preferred candidate to replace Miss Nisbet who moved on from the school in February 2024.
Craft, Design and Technology (CDT)	<p>We have welcomed our new Technical teacher to the school, Miss Morrin, who replaces Mr Armstrong, at the start of the term.</p> <p>We also have a new technical probationer teacher, who will be with us for three days a week, Mr Kirkwood.</p>
Art and Design	Mrs Kelly moves on from the Anderson High School at the end of this term. We have a new Art and Design teacher commencing in post on Monday 28 October 2024.

Further updates on staffing are shared in the regular updates to parents and carers.

Anderson High School

School Improvement Plan (SIP), 2024-25 - Overview of the SIP priorities and actions

Priority 1: Improving pupil attendance at school and in classes.

The roll out of the daily text message alert system to parents and carers to notify them of unexplained pupil absence.

Explore the reach of SEEMiS , the school's Education Management Information System provider, to support attendance and absence monitoring in the school.

Formally sharing, termly, information with parents and carers about their child's attendance.

Continue to address barriers to pupil attendance and engagement in discussion with young people, parents and carers.

Priority 2: Developing approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

Develop our shared understanding of what high quality learning, teaching and assessment looks like in the Anderson High School.

The establishment of learning and teaching networks for interested staff to support opportunities to share practice around learning and teaching.

Focus on supporting pupils in the Senior Phase with revision and study skills.

Explore whole school approaches to literacy and numeracy.

Priority 3: Developing the school's curriculum in the Broad General Education and Senior Phase.

Confirm a shared ambition for the Anderson High School's curriculum.

Working with our partners, broaden the school's Senior Phase curriculum offer by 2025/26 at all levels.

Explore personalisation and choice and the wider achievement programme in the Broad General Education.

Continue to strengthen the school's links with Developing the Young Workforce and local employers.

Priority 4: Enhancing opportunities for pupil voice and pupil leadership in the school.

Re-launch the school's Student Representative Council (SRC), referring to the recent whole school pupil survey feedback.

Further develop S6 pupil leadership opportunities.

Continue to roll out the "See Me See Change" programme to support pupil voice, positive relationships and the health and wellbeing of the school community.