



Parent Council

AHS Parent Council Meeting Minute & Action Tracker

**Wednesday 13 November 2024
6.00pm**

Parent Members:	Carrie Macdonald (Chair), Kenny Pottinger (Vice Chair), Amanda Hawick, Gowri Saravanan, Caroline Henderson, Sally Ferguson
In Attendance:	Robin Calder (Head Teacher – AHS), Dawn Ratter (Clerk/Treasurer), Cllr Gary Robinson, Joanne Fraser (Lerwick Community Involvement and Development Officer)
Apologies:	Carley Cheyney, Tracey Hawkins, Anna Moar, Cameron MacKenzie (Staff Rep), Helen Kerr (Staff Rep), Cllr Neil Pearson

Agenda No	Information / Action	Person(s) Responsible
1	Welcome CM welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	Election of Officer Bearers KP and RC explained the roles of Chair and Vice Chair. <u>Chairperson</u> – Carrie Macdonald Proposed by: Amanda Hawick Seconded by: Gowri Saravanan <u>Vice Chair</u> – Kenny Pottinger Proposed by: Amanda Hawick Seconded by: Kenny Pottinger	
3	Approval of Minutes – Thursday 10 September 2024 The minutes were approved by KP and seconded by AH.	
4	Review of matters and actions arising from previous minutes <u>Teacher Representative</u> Helen Kerr, Principal Teacher for English will replace Amy Sandison as Staff Representative.	

	<p><u>Wool Week Café</u> The Wool Week Café was a huge success and raised approximately £3,400 for school funds. RC thanked parent members for volunteering their time to help on the day. RC also noted thanks to the Home Economics department for all their time and baking. It was a really positive morning in the school.</p> <p><u>Climate Club</u> BG has been in touch with the school.</p> <p><u>School Uniform</u> No update. AH will contact CM to discuss before the next meeting.</p> <p><u>School Canteen</u> There is a preferred candidate for the Head Cook position.</p>	AH
5	<p>Head Teacher's Report, November 2024 (attached)</p> <p><u>Forthcoming Events</u> Parent members agreed to continue to provide tea and coffee at parent's evenings. CM will send a message on the WhatsApp group to ask for volunteers.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u> RC provided an update on the high level attendance statistics since the start of the school year. Pupil Support staff look at attendances daily and will be in contact with parents/carers where there are concerns around the level of attendance. The approaches will be individual, depending on the circumstances around the absences. RC said it is important for the school to have as much information as possible around the particular reasons for absence, in order to support the pupils as best they can. It is very important for the school to work closely with parents on this.</p> <p><u>Staffing</u> There is quite a lot of movement of staff within the English department, and with it being such a crucial subject, the school are working hard to ensure there is sufficient staff in place. Recruitment and selection continues to be challenging, both locally and nationally. RC added that there are not the same number of suitable applicants applying for posts.</p> <p>A parent member asked if there is any relocation support for staff who may be interested in moving to Shetland to take up a position. The Council do have a relocation scheme to support staff, however, there are practical barriers for new staff moving to Shetland, especially around the lack of accommodation available. This is a major issue. There have been staff appointed to posts who have had to withdraw due to no available accommodation.</p>	CM

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Joint School/Parent Council, Pupil Safety and Health and Wellbeing Plan

RC updated the parent council on the progress with the Pupil Safety and Health and Wellbeing Plan. RC stressed this document is confidential to the Parent Council and is not to be shared externally.

There are 14 actions on the plan which runs alongside the School Improvement Plan.

Action (a)

As part of the pupil voice and pupil leadership priority, on the 2024/25 School Improvement Plan, the school are continuing to roll out the 'See Me See Change' programme to support pupil voice, positive relationships and the health and wellbeing of the school community.

This has led to staff, on a voluntary basis, offering safe spaces/quiet rooms, available to pupils at lunchtimes.

Action (c)

The school are continuing to direct a portion of the Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) resources to expand the provision in the Social and Emotional Base (SEB). An additional, temporary, teacher of support for learning will provide extensive targeted support for a small group of identified young people, within SEB, who struggle with self-regulation.

Action (d)

Representatives from Shetland Substance Misuse and Recovery Service and Shetland Alcohol and Drug Partnership met with Pupil Support teachers during the October In-Service to provide a refresher session on the local context around substance use, including prominent current substances. This information will support the PSE programme and the topics on substance misuse.

A parent member asked why the Dogs Against Drugs dogs can't be used in a sniffer capacity in the school. RC explained that this topic has been looked into thoroughly over the last couple of year, and the decision was made not to use dogs in this capacity due to concern for vulnerable young people who may have come into contact with drugs due to circumstances out with their control.

Another parent member asked if there is work done within school to support young people who are already involved with this kind of activity. RC explained that this does happen in school and there are conversations with various organisations, including, Social Work, Recovery Service and Police Scotland. There is a lot of partnership working involved within this area and the work in school is very much about support and nurture for the young people involved. The school work closely with pupils, their families and other agencies to provide the necessary support to help young people.

Action (h)

The Student Representative Committee (SRC) has been relaunched and they have their second meeting later this month. RC would be keen to have SRC join the parent council in line with the constitution.

The SRC will be looking at three areas: Ideas for improving the indoor environment; Ideas for improving the outdoor environment; and Ideas for improving approaches to support for pupils.

Action (i)

The school would like to work with Joanne Fraser, Community Worker on this item. Despite being a relatively new school, there is a lack of outdoor facilities for pupils. Joanne would be happy to support the school and look into possible funding options to develop the outdoor area. RC noted he has had some initial discussions with Shona Thompson, Learning Estates.

Action (j)

The Safer Islander event held in September for all S1 pupils was very successful. The event will be replicated for S1 pupils in 2025/26.

Action (k)

The Peer Support programme has been developed this year with S6 Peer Supporters supporting younger pupils in English, Maths, Science and Additional Support Needs. This is a very valuable programme for the school.

Action (n)

The vaping posters will be displayed in school toilets shortly.

The school are continuing to explore the installation of vape detectors with SIC Estate Operations.

Action (o)

Children's Services have agreed in principle to additional CCTV cameras but this requires a Data Impact Assessment to be completed before it can be progressed.

Action (p)

This is a new action which has been added to the Plan following the last parent council meeting. The action involves looking at the school's approach to the use of mobile phones in light of recently published Scottish Government Guidance. The 'Guidance on Mobile Phones in Scotland Schools' says 'mobile phones can both enhance and detract from learning' and leaves it up to schools and local authorities to decide on any 'restrictions and limitations'.

It will be very important for the school to engage with the wider parent forum, the SRC and pupil body, staff and the local authority on this topic.

	<p>The current policy at the school is that mobile phones should be switched off and kept in school bags, or in phone pockets in the classroom, during class time. Phones should only be used if a teachers asks for research purposes. Phones are allowed to be used at break times and lunch times, but not in corridors between classes.</p> <p>There were some very strong views expressed from parent members on the negative impacts the use of smart phones have on children and young people, and their mental health. A parent member described smart phones as 'experience blockers'. Further describing smart phones as distracting and addictive. Children, young people and many adults spend a huge proportion of the day interacting with screens rather than having in-person conversations, making new friends and forming relationships.</p> <p>Some parents feel there is an expectation that children and young people should be given a smart phone when the start high school. Some parents explained circumstances where their children had been asked to use their phone in class to look up words on an online dictionary, or to use the timer function during a class exercise. The parent felt that children should be using a dictionary, or a stop watch to carry out these exercise, and not a mobile phone. Another parent explained that they had set up parental controls on their child's phone to limit what they can look at and use but this resulted in the pupil being unable to look up research when asked in class. The parent felt this could lead to pupils feeling isolated and create stigma around the use of mobile phones.</p> <p>RC thanked parent members for their comments on the topic and feels there was some very valid points raised during the discussion. He would be very happy to work with the Parent Council to move this item forward.</p> <p>It was agreed to write a letter to the local authority to express the concerns discussed tonight, in light of the new Scottish Government policy and to develop a survey to be issued to the parent forum, to gather as many views as possible.</p> <p>It was suggested that the SRC could do some work on balanced for and against the use of mobile phones in school in line with the UNCRC principles. Looking at topics like mental health and bullying. RC will raise the topic at the next SRC meeting for discussion with pupils.</p> <p>Joanne Fraser, Community Worker informed parent members that there are similar conversations happening with many other groups/organisations. She suggested asking for the item to put on the Parent Council bi-annual meeting for discussion with all Parent Council's in Shetland. It would gain more strength, if it had the backing of all Parent Council's/Schools in Shetland.</p>	SF/CM
7	Introduction from Joanne Fraser, Lerwick Community Involvement and Development Officer	

	<p>Joanne Fraser, Lerwick Community Involvement and Development Officer attended the meeting to introduce herself and see how she can help support the school. Joanne is the Community Worker for Lerwick and Bressay.</p> <p>Her role is to empower and help communities. She provides support as a bridge between community groups and the Council and other services. She would be happy to help the parent council find suitable funding, from both local and national sources. She would also be able to help build capacity around promoting the parent council.</p> <p>In terms of the Information Event, she would be very keen to help and support the parent council in any way possible.</p> <p>RC suggested Joanne would be a good contact for future discussions around funding for a multicourt/outdoor area.</p> <p>Joanne informed parent members that there is a Climate Café that happens in Islesburgh – this might be a good contact for the school regarding the Climate Club. Joanne will share the details with RC.</p>	
8	<p>Update on Information Evening for parents/carers</p> <p>The Information Evening will be held on Wednesday 12th February 2025 from 6pm to 8pm.</p> <p>The event will cover specific topics around Substance misuse, Vaping, Mental Health and Internet Safety. There will be a 15-20 minute presentation led by each of the guest speakers. The plan is to have all parents/carers in attendance organised into groups that will rotate around each of the sessions.</p> <p>There will also be a number of stalls set up around the School Hall for parents/carers to browse, including: NHS, Open, Anchor, Dogs Against Drugs, Active Schools, Compass, Developing the Young Workforce and Youth and Employability.</p> <p>The key to the success of the event will be ensuring it is promoted in good time to ensure all parents/carers are aware of the event. RC is happy to share any promotional information through the school, either by email to parents, on the school Facebook page or on the school website.</p> <p>There was a suggestion to invite all current P7 parents within the AHS catchment to attend the event.</p> <p>Another suggestion was to pull together packs with information/leaflets from all the organisations in attendance at the event and send these home to each household. Another idea was to see if the guest speakers would be willing to record their presentation to be shared on the school website.</p> <p>There was a discussion on whether stalls/tables from different organisations could be available at parents evening. It was felt that this would be a huge time commitment for organisations to attend all parents' evenings but might be</p>	

	<p>something that could be looked into for annual information evenings for year groups. Alternatively, the school and parent council could look to have an information stall available at parent's evenings with leaflets available from different organisations.</p> <p>The hope would be to continue this as an annual event, learning from the successes for the next event. There may also be the opportunity for follow up events during the year.</p> <p>There was a discussion on how to eliminate stigma around some of these topics. The key message needs to be 'It's ok not to be ok'. The stands will be there to help and inform parents and carers. Parent members are hopeful that by having everyone split up into groups and rotating around all the guest speakers that they will be able to hear the information without feeling uncomfortable.</p>	
9	<p>Parent Council Bank Account</p> <p>The current available balance in the bank account is £50.21. The Bank of Scotland are changing the account over to a Community account from 14th January 2025 which will incur a monthly fee of £4.25. DR will look into alternative banks to transfer the account over to.</p> <p>Parent members discussed some fundraising options. One suggestion was to hold a silent auction, and ask parents/carers to donate items e.g. parent who works in a salon could donate a manicure, etc. Another suggestion was to hold a quiz night, with each department in the school providing a set of questions. Other suggestions were a bonus ball or quiz sheets e.g. acronyms quiz. Parent members to email CM with any suggestions.</p>	DR
10	<p>AOCB</p> <p>None.</p>	

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 6 February 2025

Anderson High School Parent Council, Wednesday 13 November 2024

Head Teacher's Report

1. School highlights since the September Parent Council meeting

- The celebration of Maths Week Scotland during week commencing Monday 23 September.
- Secondary One Engineering Workshops on Tuesday 24 and Wednesday 25 September.
- The work of a group of young people, who are supported in the school's Support for Learning, Social and Emotional Base, who have been visiting Taing House weekly and supporting residents with games, activities and company.
- The S3 Anderson High School's netball team's progress in the Scottish Schools Cup.
- The S6 University Trip, Wednesday 02 October to Friday 04 October.
- The Anderson High School, Wool Week Café, Saturday 05 October.
- Visit of Olympian Paralympic table tennis player to the school on Friday 08 November.
- Shetland Science Fair, w/c 04 November.
- Remembrance Commemorations, Monday 11 November.

All lunchtime clubs and activities are available to view on the school website.

2. Forthcoming key dates/events

Date	Event
Wednesday 13 November 2024	S5/6 Reports handed out to pupils.
Tuesday 19 November 2024.	S5 Parents' Evening.
Thursday 28 November 2024.	S6 Parents' Evening.
Monday 02 December 2024.	S1 and S2 Beanfeast.
Thursday 05 December 2024.	S4 Reports handed out to pupils.
Thursday 05 December 2024.	S3 and S4 Beanfeast.
Monday 09 December 2024.	S4 Parents' Evening.
Friday 13 December 2024.	S5 and S6 Beanfeast.
Friday 20 December 2024.	S1 Monitoring posted to parents and carers.
Friday 20 December 2024.	Last day of the term.

3. School Roll, November 2024

The breakdown is as follows for 2024/25:

S1	181
S2	149
S3	167
S4	183
S5/6	342
TOTAL	1022 (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%	91.82%	91.57%	90.88%	93.59%	92.76%
18/Aug/24 - 24/Aug/24	93.31%	92.52%	92.04%	91.50%	90.24%	93.62%	92.00%
25/Aug/24 - 31/Aug/24	90.83%	87.01%	88.08%	87.24%	91.24%	92.19%	89.45%
1/Sep/24 - 7/Sep/24	89.72%	89.73%	88.32%	87.68%	89.81%	88.76%	89.07%
8/Sep/24 - 14/Sep/24	93.87%	88.99%	90.30%	88.40%	89.52%	93.02%	90.56%
15/Sep/24 - 21/Sep/24	94.09%	88.51%	91.14%	93.48%	91.34%	91.24%	91.77%
22/Sep/24 - 28/Sep/24	91.55%	86.82%	89.10%	87.18%	90.80%	95.11%	89.99%
29/Sep/24 - 5/Oct/24	89.67%	89.26%	89.82%	87.02%	87.40%	92.45%	89.09%
6/Oct/24 - 12/Oct/24	86.30%	83.04%	88.20%	83.30%	84.68%	86.69%	85.33%
27/Oct/24 - 2/Nov/24	91.80%	88.40%	90.52%	92.22%	91.30%	93.75%	91.35%
3/Nov/24 - 9/Nov/24	90.22%	88.72%	88.92%	89.67%	90.05%	95.78%	90.39%

5. Staffing

Subject	Staffing Update
English	Mrs Kerr has returned from her secondment in Sandwich Junior High School to resume her Principal Teacher of English role.

	<p>Miss Cluness has returned to her substantive Teacher of English post in the school.</p> <p>Miss Leeparis has moved on from the school at the end of last term.</p> <p>Mr Dort, Teacher of English, has moved on from the school. We are currently permanently recruiting to this post, which is currently being covered by probationer teacher, Mrs Johnson.</p> <p>Miss Burgess, Teacher of English, has resigned her post and will be leaving the school on Monday 25 November. We are currently advertising for her replacement.</p> <p>Mrs Leslie, part-time Teacher of English, has taken on the role of Acting Principal Teacher of Support for Learning during Mrs Harpe's secondment to Brae High School.</p> <p>Mrs Fullerton, part-time Teacher of English, is covering Mrs Leslie's classes.</p>
Maths	<p>Mrs Smith retired in October 2024. We have recruited a new Maths teacher, Mr Kingston who commenced in the school on Monday 28 October 2024.</p>
Support for Learning	<p>Mrs Maxwell and Mr Bourke have joined the school as new Support for Learning Teachers.</p> <p>Mrs Carroll, Support for Learning Teacher, left the school at the October holidays. We are currently working through the recruitment and selection process for her post.</p> <p>We continue to recruit new Learning Support Workers into the Support for Learning Department.</p>
Music	<p>We have a preferred candidate to replace Miss Nisbet who moved on from the school in February 2024, following a third recruitment and selection attempt.</p>
Art and Design	<p>We have welcomed Miss Wiseman, our new Art and Design teacher to the school, following Mrs</p>

	Kelly moving on from the school at the end of last term.
Modern Languages	Mrs McNicol has applied for a period of extended leave in 2025/26. We are working through a recruitment and selection process for her temporary replacement.

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

6. The Anderson High School Improvement Plan, 2024/25

Our School Improvement Plan sets out outcomes, actions and monitoring measures within our four improvement priorities:

- (a) Improving pupil attendance at school and in classes.
- (b) Developing approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in the school.
- (c) Developing the school's curriculum.
- (d) Enhancing opportunities for pupil voice and pupil leadership in the school.