

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF 17 SEPTEMBER 2020
HELD VIA TELECONFERENCE

Present: N Bradley (Chair)
K Dunwoodie
J Leslie
H Flanagan
L Gilchrist
L Gurney
H Way
E Clark
L Johnston
S Spring
P Lawley
A Entwistle
V Crummey

Attending: Lauren Rodger, Head Teacher

In attendance: K Edwards (Staff)
F McCallum (Staff)
Cllr J Findlay
Allison Cosgrove, Clerk

1. *Welcome:* The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the role of the AGM.
2. *Chair's Report:* The Chair spoke to his report (annexed to the Minutes), outlining the work that had taken place during the year, including the change of name, the start of the Common School Day, the HMI Inspection and the imposition of lockdown. He described the return to School as a great challenge and expressed thanks on behalf of the Parent Council to the Head Teacher and Staff, as well as East Lothian Council, for working to meet this challenge.
3. *Election of Chair and Parent Council Members:* Mrs Rodger took the Chair for this part of the meeting. Niall Bradley was nominated and seconded as Chair. There being no other candidates, Niall was confirmed as Chair. He thanked the Parent Members, and would try to enrol a Vice Chair during the coming year.

The Chair explained that all parents were members of the Parent Forum, and those who wished could be members of the Parent Council. Those who wished to join were L Gurney, S Spring, H Way, J Leslie, V Crummey, E Clark, A Entwistle, H Flanagan, L Johnston, K Dunwoodie.

4. *Head Teacher's Report:* Mrs Rodger reported on three key areas: *Teaching Practices for Effective Learning*, where all staff had worked together to produce this framework which focuses on "What Makes a Good Lesson". The highlight of the year was working with all the pupils. This linked with the Professional Learning as Critical Enquiry (PLaCE) initiative with Edinburgh University, a programme provided free of cost to the School. She noted that tutors were still happy to engage with the School on a consultancy basis at no cost. The second area was the HMI Report which was issued on 23 June. Mrs Rodger stated that she was very proud of this, with the Managing Inspector being very positive about their time in the School. It had been nine years since the previous Inspection. Thirdly was the work done during lockdown on remote learning, the work done with vulnerable families and the preparations for the return to School in August. Remote learning had been a big learning curve for all staff, with a lot of difficulties to be worked through. The Guardian Summaries had been very helpful. Teachers had not

reported large gaps in pupils' learning. It was important that any pupils self-isolating in the future received an education.

Mrs Rodger outlined some of the work that had been done with vulnerable families: there had been frequent contact with pupils and families.

On the return to School, a lot of Risk Assessments had been carried out by the Business Managers and she expressed thanks to them. There had been anxiety about returning, but pupils were pleased to be back in School.

On the Exam results, more details would be available for the next meeting. A huge amount of time had been spent by staff going over every piece of work produced by pupils, which had been very challenging. If exams did not take place next year, work was already ongoing for future assessments.

Fraser McCallum explained some of the work carried out, presenting a summary of results. Insight analysis had not yet been obtained from the Scottish Government, but was due out by the end of September. Staff had worked to reassure pupils and parents that all work produced towards exams had been considered, and more data would be provided for a future meeting. The SQA had said that more details on the 2021 National Qualifications would be provided, but these had not yet been given. He advised that teachers wanted to know what modifications would be put in place; and that parents would be reassured that the Faculty Leaders were working on the assessment timeline, which would be a key priority when assessments were taking place before Prelims.

He added that all attainment evidence mattered to build up throughout the school session and that all assessments were very important for pupils.

An SQA consultation had been issued to parents on guidance for Music and Home Economics, and this was available on the Education Scotland website. There would also be guidance on PE.

The Chair said that health and well-being was essential for senior pupils facing exams and also to new S1 pupils with an abnormal experience of starting secondary school. Mrs Rodger advised that social distancing had been a problem with some groups, although generally behaviour was good. Social distancing out of school required to be emphasised, and it was a challenge to pupils to meet these expectations.

5. *Other Issues:* There had been some problems with school buses, where the number of pupils from Aberlady had increased and sometimes there were not enough seats on the buses for them and pupils from Gullane. Mrs Rodger explained that S5 and S6 pupils were being encouraged to also use the public buses which left five minutes after the school buses. Noted that the School were not aware that the Council had not told families about the services. However the issues seem to be resolved.

Fraser McCallum added that digital learning must be a priority for the future: tuition on this would be carried out throughout the school session and also on Inset days, making the School better prepared for what the future might bring.

The Chair said that he would like to see the good work being done on digital learning being shared across the country. Fraser McCallum noted that more resources were being put on Glow and high quality seminars were available on E-sgoil.

On hygiene issues, Karen Edwards recommended that pupils wipe down desks when they arrive in class, noting that some teachers carry out spraying/wiping themselves.

Mrs Rodger advised that hygiene measures had been reinforced with staff and a very high percentage of pupils wearing face masks, with gel dispensers at every entrance and exit.

6. *Future Meeting dates and discussion topics:*
 - 6 October – HMI Report and School Improvement Plan
 - 17 November
 - 26 January 2021
 - 9 March
 - 27 April
 - 1 JuneOther discussion topics to be agreed.

Finally, the Chair thanked all for their attendance at the meeting.