

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 6 OCTOBER 2020 by Teleconference

<b>Parent Members:</b>	N Bradley (Chair) J Leslie L Gurney L Johnston K Dunwoodie V Crummy E Davidson L Forrest H Way N Meikle S Spring S Grant
<b>Other Parents:</b>	S Liddell, S Chard, J Maslen.
<b>Pupils Attending:</b>	J Price, L Smith
<b>Staff Members:</b>	Lauren Rodger, Head Teacher Lara Neri F McCallum R Jones J Waddell
<b>In attendance</b>	Allison Cosgrove, Clerk
<b>Apologies:</b>	E Clark

- Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. The Minutes of the AGM were proposed by K Dunwoodie and seconded by L Johnston.
- Head Teacher's Report:** On the Budget for the year, the final pupil figures on Census Day were 1009, resulting in a slightly lower budget than that anticipated. The forecast figures for increased numbers were not included.  
*School Extension:* Mr Jones explained that a new teaching block was to be created, and work should have started a year ago. However, some surveyors had been in the School recently. More details would be shared when they were known.  
On a question about the Drama and Library areas, the Library would be moving to the front of the School and Drama would be in the Library space. Only a small part of the social space would be lost, and initially no teaching space, to which solutions were being sought. The contractors would access the School from the south side, and would be isolated from the rest of the School.  
There was no information on the access from the North Berwick Trust land, and the Chair would follow this up with Cllr Goodfellow, as well as access to the Sports Centre. **Action – Chair**  
*Dog Mess on Playing Fields:* Mrs Rodger noted that there was a significant problem with dog mess on the playing fields, and asked if parents could help spread this message via social media, as dogs were present during PE lessons as well as out of School. Larger signs were needed, and she was consulting the Council on signage stating that dogs were not permitted on the playing fields.  
Mr Maslen advised that playing fields were not public spaces and should not be used by the public; they were also not on the National Greenspace listing. Mrs Rodger would include this in the weekly update.  
*Attainment:* the Insight data was not yet available from the Scottish Government.  
*SQA:* An announcement was expected tomorrow from the Education Secretary on the exam diet for 2021.  
*Common School Day:* Lesson periods were now 50 minutes long instead of the previous one hour; this was coupled with a longer time for pupils to get to classes and the wiping down of chairs and tables which had implications on teaching time. The two senior pupils present felt there were no ongoing problems, although Mr Jones thought a shorter lunch period might work better. Noted that an earlier finish to the day meant that twilight sessions for staff could be held Monday – Thursday.

*Parents' Evenings:* The first evening would be in November for S1. Mr McCallum explained the plans for this using GoogleMeet with parents: if the system worked well, it would be used for other year groups. A trial would take place in October for staff.

3. **HMI Report:** Mrs Rodger advised that the School Improvement Plan was linked to the HMI Report, outlining the Key Priorities and the Action Points in the Plan. On Leadership of Change, the Inspectors had noted that the Values were embedded, with an emphasis on leadership across the School. The Faculty Review process would be examined in January, and it was noted that careers education was an area for improvement. On Learning, Teaching and Assessment, Mr McCallum advised that this was a difficult area to get absolutely right, but he was delighted that the Inspectors had highlighted the professional learning and the way this was having an impact on the teaching of young people. Inspectors had also noted the pupil feedback process and had recognised the formative assessment strategies, as well as the use of digital technology as effective practice, which had worked very well during lockdown across all faculties. Mr McCallum also referred to the extensive wider curriculum of clubs and societies; the work being carried out on assessments for pupils moving to the senior school; and the tracking and mentoring at a whole school level.

Mr Jones spoke to the Curriculum Learning Pathways, and that the Inspectors had noted a lot of change to the Common School Day as well as the focus on Literacy across the school, where the Numeracy Strategy Group was working to bring this forward.

He noted that the School had been graded very good on Attainment, with the Inspectors impressed with the extra curricular opportunities for young people to achieve, and highlighting that these were accessible across all cohorts of pupils.

Mrs Rodger spoke to the Partnerships section of the HMI Report, which had considered parental engagement, staff, the PTA and the Parent Council.

Lara Neri, speaking to the Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion section, advised that Inspectors had seen and heard a lot of positive relationships across the School, noting support for the Registration period; the positive work being done on pupil anxieties and other issues; and the work of the pupil Wellbeing Group. They were also impressed with links with North Berwick Youth Project and work with the Prince's Trust.

Inclusion Ambassadors were looking at diversity and equality across the school body and the Inspectors felt this work could be rolled out wider.

The Support Base had had a strong result as well as work done with care experienced young people.

On a question about work on Black History Month, Mrs Rodger suggested that Georgie Brownlee could come to a future meeting to advise what is ongoing. Noted by J Price who was studying History that black history was part of the syllabus and not restricted to Black History Month.

In reporting on the examples of practice sharing more widely, Mrs Rodger asked for parents' comments and questions on the HMI Report and on the Improvement Plan.

Mr McCallum shared the three Key Priorities of the Plan – Learning & Teaching, Equity and the Curriculum, and Ms Neri explained Equity as knowing the pupils and families and providing support if necessary.

Mr Jones noted that more work could be done in analysing pupil achievement in terms of social deprivation and the Chair agreed, saying there were pockets of the school population not accessing achievement.

Mrs Rodger advised that she would like to return to one of the Key Priorities at a future Parent Council meeting, and the Chair suggested the Equity KPIs if it was possible to move to separate discussion areas electronically.

4. **Chair's Issues:** The Chair asked if there was any update on the bus issues, but the opinion of staff was that matters had settled down and space on buses was no longer an issue.
5. **Parents' Issues:** Parents asked that Mental Health Support and Girls' Participation in Sport be on the agenda for the next meeting. On a question concerning Careers Support in S5, the two Head Pupils present felt that the start of S5 required focus on Highers, and careers were better considered later in the session.

A question was raised concerning the lack of space at lunchtime; Mrs Rodger advised that break times were more difficult to manage as some students were in other rooms at lunchtimes. This would be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

Finally, Mrs Rodger asked that parents emphasise to pupils the environmental cost of using disposable face masks.

**Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 17 November 2020.**