

NORTH BERWICK HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING OF 26 JANUARY 2021 by Teleconference

Parent Members: N Bradley (Chair)
D Edmondson
A Clark
H Way
K Dunwoodie
L Johnston
S Grant
S Spring

Other Parents: A Lothian, D Jones, M Hay, R Stevens, Z Lovell, W Ford, G Knape, H Massie, E Vischer,
L Forrest, J Bagg, A Smart, C Ryan

Staff Members: Lauren Rodger, Head Teacher
F McCallum
J Waddell
L Neri
R Jones

In attendance Cllr J Goodfellow, Cllr J Findlay
Attending: Allison Cosgrove, Clerk

1. **Welcome:** The Chair welcomed all to the first meeting of 2021. He invited staff members to update parents on recent events.

Mr McCallum first spoke, advising of a survey on remote learning that had been issued to parents – a similar survey would follow to pupils. Some dissatisfaction had been expressed by parents at work given out to pupils. There had also been different views on teacher feedback and discussions would be held on this.

The Chair noted that he had received positive feedback from parents of a child with special needs on the support they were receiving.

An update was given on the numbers accessing Guardian Summaries, which were between 71% and 78% in S1-S4. These were seen as a really important mechanism.

A parent noted that pupils were learning to manage time for lessons well, and Mrs Rodger added that some pupils needed guidance and help throughout the week, but others were learning how to organise and manage themselves.

On exams, Mrs Rodger advised that there was still no definite information from the SQA on these.

Mr McCallum added that the School wanted to provide an assessment calendar and was keen to get this in place, so that pupils would know the timing of assessments. Some subject papers would be split over more than one assessment and others done in one sitting: the position was not yet clear. The Prelim timetable had already changed three times, so extended assessments were likely to happen.

In response to a query about work currently being handed in going towards assessments, Mr McCallum advised that there were no formal assessments taking place during the period of remote learning. Although this work was important, it would not be assessed in a formal way. When pupils returned to school, assessments in school would go towards their eventual results.

On whether pupils should be revising or doing new work, he re-iterated that assessments would take place when pupils returned. A parent noted that guidance staff had said that all work was counted, and Mrs Rodger explained that although not every task was being assessed as part of the final provisional grade, all work covered was important and may be included in final grade assessments.

The Chair added that the algorithm used in 2020's results would not be used this year.

He asked about face to face contact with teachers, and how best to keep pupils motivated, as lack of social interaction was a worry for some parents, as was pupil engagement. Mrs Neri responded, saying that the school was very aware of the pupils not engaging; some who may have found it difficult to engage had been invited to

the Hub. Mr McCallum added that using GoogleMeet for live lessons was a problem for some pupils, and some pre-recorded materials were being used successfully by 50-60% of teachers, using Chromecast and other applications. It would be good to have pupil feedback on these methods of teaching. This will be included in the pupil remote learning survey to be issued next week.

Mrs Rodger noted that she had concerns about 1st year pupils as their P7 year had already been disrupted and they had not been able to build the usual relationships with peers and with teaching staff, and the Chair advised that he had received a lot of questions from parents on the subject of stress and isolation.

A parent queried if one teacher could provide lessons for all classes in the year, but Mr McCallum indicated that teaching staff were trying to strengthen relationships with their own pupils.

Although there were huge amounts of resources available, including some issued by the Scottish Government, some could not be used on ELC devices, and the Chair questioned why this was happening when other schools could use them. The School has also raised this with the Council.

**Action – 1) The Chair to contact the Scottish Government and the SQA on information about assessment dates
2) The Chair also to liaise with Cllr Goodfellow over the issue of access to software allowing certain applications to be used.**

(Post Meeting Note – a revised Provisional Results date had now been provided to schools, allowing more time to spread out assessments for NQ. Specific subject guidance for Higher/Advanced Higher had also been released for most subjects)

The Chair also asked about outdoor exercise, saying that pupils were allowed to go for a walk, but there was no time to schedule this into the day. Staff advised that it was up to pupils to plan this as part of the day. A whole school Walkathon was being organised in February with more details being available soon.

On course choices, Mr Jones said that he was keeping in touch with colleges on what they could offer senior pupils. More information will be coming out about this soon and school will share it with pupils as soon as they receive it.. A session on foundation apprenticeships for parents was being held the following evening.

On a question of increased work next year for Higher pupils if National 5 content was reduced this year, Mr McCallum noted that modifications were in place next year to take account of this, and there was a three year process to take account of remote learning procedures.

Mrs Rodger concluded by saying that all staff understand the anxiety that pupils had, and the school just wanted to do the best they could for pupils. If there were any issues, she asked pupils and parents to use the communications Inbox to let the school know and staff would work to improve. She thanked all parents who were doing a great deal of work to support pupils.

Ms Neri added that the Senior Council were also determined to try and help pupils with advice.

The Chair said it had been very helpful to have such a reassuring message from the staff.

Date of Next Meeting – Tuesday 9 March.