



**PARENT – PUPIL – SCHOOL  
PARTNERSHIP  
POLICY**

**Monifieth High School**

**June 2006**

## Preface

Dear Parent,

Our revised school aims (agreed by pupils, parents and staff in June 2006) are firmly based on the vision of our school as an all-embracing community, in which our young people can best be supported through the closest partnership of the pupils themselves, of parents and of staff.

This philosophy has been underlying our development over many years and indeed the whole-hearted involvement of parents in all aspects of their children's education is one of our school's greatest strengths. It has therefore been a great pleasure to assemble a policy which records all this good work. I very much hope that this brief document will be helpful to all parents, and particularly to those new to the school, as an overview of all the ways in which you can become involved.

Yours sincerely

Richard Coton  
Rector

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## 1. Links

This policy relates to:

- The National Priorities
- The Angus Council Vision Statement

We are committed to realizing the potential of all children, young people, communities and staff by:

- \* Putting people at the heart of all we do
- \* Nurturing an ethos of achievement
- \* Striving for sustainable improvement
- \* Working co-operatively

- Rights and Responsibilities of Pupils and Parents  
(*Angus Council leaflet available from schools and County Buildings*)
- Monifieth High School Aims (see box below)

### School Aims

At Monifieth High School , we are committed to:

- \* Support all pupils and staff in developing as successful active learners
- \* Help all pupils and staff to build confidently on their achievements
- \* Create, in partnership with all parents, pupils, staff and with wider society a community of responsible learners and citizens
- \* Develop a caring environment where all pupils, parents and staff are valued and all contribute effectively

## 2. Introduction

Young people do best when home and school work closely together. This policy therefore lays out ways in which parents and Monifieth High School staff together can support the pupils of the school. It has been produced in consultation with parents and teachers, and it has been approved by the School Board and the Pupil Councils. It expresses a commitment from Monifieth High School staff and an expectation of support from all adults who send children to the school.

## 3. The School's Commitment

We undertake not only to do our best for all children in the school but also to work as closely as is practical with their parents in order to provide the best education appropriate to individual need. The ways in which the school will seek to realize this aim is printed below. A detailed expression of the school's strategic purpose is to be found in the School Aims (see above) and its current priorities are contained in the School Improvement Plan, a summary of which is distributed annually to parents.

#### **4. Diary Planner**

At the heart of communications between teacher, pupil and parent is the Diary Planner, which is issued at the start of the new session to every pupil. This is not simply a personal organizer for recording homework. It is also a tool for longer term planning and target-setting. Above all it is the means by which parents can gain an accurate picture of their child's day-by-day homework and next steps. Parents are strongly encouraged to read the entries in the Planner daily so that they can discuss their child's work with him/her. Certain information (eg. end of term test results) is provided specifically for parents via the Planner, and in such cases parents are asked to acknowledge that they have seen it by counter-signing. Periodically, a teacher may write a note for the attention of the parent in the Diary Planner; in such cases, parents are asked always to respond in writing in the Planner. Equally, a parent may write a note (e.g. enquiring about homework, seeking assistance, information etc.), to a teacher in the Planner; the pupil is required to show this note immediately to the teacher, who will always respond in writing.

It is the responsibility of each pupil to keep his/her Planner fully up to date, and to support this all teachers will insist that pupils note their homework in the planner. Form tutors and other staff will assist pupils to set personal goals and targets and record them in the Planner. Parents are asked to check and sign the Planner regularly. Form tutors will make regular check on Planner use by the pupils, and all pupils must put their Planners open on their desks when they are in Tutor Groups and other classes. Because the Planner is such an important learning tool, each pupil is responsible for bringing his/her Planner to school daily. Parents will be notified by letter if their child does not do this. Equally, if a Planner is lost a pupil must immediately buy a replacement from the School.

#### **5. Home-School Communication**

At the heart of a successful home-school relationship is good communication. While the Diary Planner is key to this, there are many other ways in which the school aims to keep parents fully involved.

##### *a) School Handbook*

This is given to every parent when their child is in P7. Copies are available to other parents on request. It contains much key information about the school and Angus Council.

##### *b) Formal Parents' Evenings*

There are five of these in the session, one for each year group (with S5/6 being taken as a single group). They provide the opportunity for parents to talk directly to teachers.

##### *c) Special Parents/ Evenings*

The school believes in the importance of providing additional opportunities for parents and teachers to come together to discuss educational matters, with a focus frequently on how parents may best support their children's learning at home. These evenings are advertised on an individual basis.

##### *d) Newsletters*

A Parents' Newsletter will be issued every term (i.e. three in a session)

e) *Case Conferences*

Sometimes it is necessary to arrange a meeting of specialist staff, from both in and outwith the school, to discuss ways of supporting a particular pupil. Parents will always be invited to such meetings.

f) *Individual meetings*

There are occasions when the school needs to speak to a parent or the parent needs to speak to the school. The appropriate member of staff will always try to arrange such meetings at a time convenient to the parent.

g) *Telephone Calls*

The school will frequently use the telephone to inform a parent quickly of any important matter that has arisen concerning their child.

h) *Letters*

Where an issue is less urgent or needs to be a matter of record, the school will communicate with parents by letter.

i) *Illness of pupils*

Unwell pupils are looked after by our Secondary School Assistants with First Aid qualifications. Children will never be sent home without parents first being contacted. If a child has to be taken to the Health Centre or the hospital parents will be informed as quickly as possible.

j) *Bad weather arrangements*

Occasionally inclement weather, usually snow, makes it necessary to close the school early. This is always done in conjunction with the local primaries. Children are dismissed progressively from the school according to a well-tested procedure. Pupils are supported in contacting their parents (generally by mobile phone). No child is sent home without the school first establishing that they are going home or to a friend's/relative's house. Complete closure of the school is a very rare occurrence. During most winters, however, there is at least one day when those pupils who travel by school bus require to be taken home early on grounds of adverse weather. Similar procedures are used for this as for whole-school closures, with no child being sent home without the school establishing that they are going home or to a friend's/relative's house.

k) *Study Leave arrangements*

Senior pupils receive study leave during Prelim and SQA examination diets. Parents are always informed by letter of the dates of these arrangements. The period of study leave is always kept to the minimum and it must be clearly understood that it is a privilege. Abuse of study leave by a pupil will lead to its withdrawal. Study leave pupils who wish to come into the school either for private study or to meet by arrangement with teachers will always be welcome to do so. In all such circumstances full uniform is required. When pupils have SQA exams outwith Study Leave they are excused normal school attendance on the day prior to the exam. They are also excused attendance at other classes on the day of the exam.

### *l) Work Experience arrangements*

Parents are also always informed by letter of where, when and any special conditions attached to a work experience placement.

### *m) School Trips*

At the beginning of every session, parents will be asked to give general approval for their child to participate in school trips. When such trips involve anything more than the briefest of local excursions during school time, parents will always be provided with details of departure and return times, the mode of transport and who is in charge.

## **6. Promoting Positive Behaviour**

- a) The school places great emphasis on recognizing achievements and responsible behaviour. For example, teachers record positive comments in Diary Planners, Achievements are displayed on school noticeboards and an extensive Awards system involves certificates, Internationalists' ties and the annual Awards Evening and Prizegiving Ceremony. Many types of achievement are also recognised, including effort and positive behaviour (eg through the 'Reach for the Stars' assemblies and the bi-annual letters of commendation).
- b) Parents and pupils are warmly encouraged to tell the school (via Form Tutors) of pupils' achievements outside school, so these too can be recognized.
- c) The school system for Promoting Positive Behaviour also involves informing parents when their child's behaviour has merited a punishment exercise or a period withdrawn from classes in our Time Our Area. A note of this action will always be sent home and will usually require a parental signature to acknowledge receipt.
- d) Very occasionally when a child has committed a very serious offence, it may be necessary to exclude the child temporarily from school. A child will never be sent home in the course of the day without the parents first being contacted. No child will be sent to an empty house without the parent's approval. A child having being excluded, the parent will be invited to a meeting at the school to take place within ten days (but usually much sooner)

## **7. Working together to improve the school**

Parents, pupils and staff work together in a wide variety of ways in order to develop and improve the school. Questionnaires on a wide variety of topics help to collate views. Focus groups and periodic working parties formulate policy and approaches. Pupil councils (one for each year group), chaired by senior pupils and facilitated by staff, meet regularly to suggest ways of improving the school. Representatives of each Pupil Council meet termly to discuss ideas and proposals with the Chair of the School Board, who in turn discusses these with the Rector. The School Captains are also members of the School Board.

The School Board is an elected body which co-opts additional members and also has teacher and senior pupil representation. It has a chairman and a paid secretary. It meets regularly during the school session:

- Receives regular reports from the Head Teacher
- Develops ideas and suggestions for school improvement
- Approves the school's per capita expenditure
- Makes contact with Angus Council Education Department and other bodies in support of the school
- Assists with the appointment of senior staff

## **8. Support for Parents and Pupils**

The school is keen to support all parents as the prime educators of their child, with by far the greatest influence on their child's development and education. In addition to all the approaches listed above, parents may from time to time wish to contact the school in order to seek more focused support. In most cases, they will make contact via their child's Principal Teacher (Pupil Care & Support), or Form Tutor, or the appropriate Depute Rector. The necessary support may well be provided by these people, but the school also works closely with a number of other agencies, e.g:

- School and Family Support Service
- Educational Psychology Service
- Parental Advice & Conciliation Service
- ASPIRE
- Social Work Department
- Local Multi-Agency Resource Team
- School Nurse
- Tayside Police

## **9. Working together: a quick checklist for parents**

### *a) Keep the school informed about changes in your child's circumstances*

Because it is important that the school has accurate addresses, telephone numbers, medical conditions, family illness and the like, in order that your child can be looked after properly while away from home.

### *b) Come to Parents' Evenings*

Because it is good to talk and because it shows your son/daughter that you see education as very important. Special Parents' Evenings (like "How To Help Your Son/Daughter events) give detailed and practical insights into how you can support your child's learning.

### *c) Read the Newsletter*

Because that is the school's main vehicle for giving you insights into the life of the school and your child's education.

### *d) Check the Planner daily*

Because the Planner is a highly effective tool for ensuring that your son/daughter studies every evening, completes homework and plans ahead over days, weeks and terms. Overseeing your child's use of the planner daily makes it even more effective and keeps you in touch with what your child is doing.

### *e) Ensure a timetable of important events is kept at home*

Because this is a key tool in helping you to be fully involved with the school and your child's education.

### *f) Support school uniform*

Because regular consultations always reveal overwhelming support for school uniform, but its wearing can only be enforced in the school if you insist along with teachers that the uniform is worn. The wearing of full uniform is essential for school security (allowing us to detect any intruder), inhibits the formation of gangs or cliques (who use clothing as a badge of membership and/or for expensive and ostentatious display), promotes a school ethos of purposeful work and is much cheaper than designer clothing.

*g) Support the school's promotion of positive behaviour*

Because your child thrives on encouragement (especially from you!). Wholehearted commitment to learning, linked to responsible behaviour and caring attitudes to others, will help your child to thrive. This can best be developed as parents and teachers work closely together.

*h) Offer a work experience placement*

Because work experience is greatly appreciated by pupils and is clearly of educational benefit to them. It is only possible if enough work experience places are made available.

*i) Support Charities and fund-raising initiatives*

Because working for the benefit of others is a central school value. This embraces work and fundraising for charities, fund raising for the Pupil Support Fund (which supports extra-curricular activities), and service in the local community.

*j) Come to school shows, concerts, etc.*

Because young people love to have their parents see what they can do; they want their parents to be proud of them.