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Dear Parent/Carer

Parents' Evening Online Booking System

At Portlethen Academy, Parents' Evenings are an important aspect of school life. Dialogue between parents and teachers during Parents' Evening give both school and home valuable information on how best to support young people to reach their potential.

It is essential for us that our parents' evenings are a valuable experience for pupils, teachers and parents. They work alongside the written comment reports to provide detail on pupil progress and next steps.

This session we decided to move to an Online Booking System for Parents' Evenings in order to give parents more control over the booking of appointments for their children. Feedback about the new booking system from the S5/S6 parents' evening in September was very positive. However, we realised that in S1-S3 there would be some inevitable difficulties relating to booking of appointments since pupils here take more subjects and therefore have more teachers. Each teacher can see the parents of a maximum of 24 pupils during each of the 5 evenings in the year, i.e. 120 over the school year.

Unfortunately, this means that it is not possible for a parent to see each of their child's teachers at every Parents' Evening, particularly in S1 and S2 when pupils study a larger number of subjects.

This has been the subject of much debate both within our own Parent Council and nationally. However it would require a change in the national agreement to create more time.

It is important to realise that there has been no reduction in the number of appointments on offer. The online system is merely a different way of accessing these appointments.

We took advice from the system designers and existing users and set our system up as suggested however we encountered a significantly higher request rate than predicted. This caused problems for parents of S2 pupils with some parents unable to get appointments. This situation was compounded by the nature of the online system where early users were able to book as many appointments as were available and spaces quickly filled up.

For these reasons and in the spirit of equity we have decided to restrict the number of bookings each parent can make for S1 pupils to 10.

As a solution this year and where parents have been in touch for information that is not covered in reports, we are working with staff to provide further comment by phone call or by email. If you are not able to make an appointment with a particular teacher but have questions that are not covered in your child's written report, please contact the school through the main office with the specific questions you would wish covered and we will endeavour to respond to these.

Thank you

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**Neil Morrison
Head Teacher**