

## **Parents' Evening Advice for Parents**

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.

### **Parents' Evening Online Booking System**

We now use an Online Booking System for Parents' Evenings in order to give parents more control over the booking of appointments for their children.

### **Frequency and timing of parents' evenings**

Parents' evenings take place once per year for each year group in S1-3.

For S4/5/6 there are two evenings close together which all teachers attend. Parents then choose to attend whichever evening is most convenient for them.

The timing of parents' evenings in the school calendar is planned carefully in conjunction with the timing of reports to inform important times for pupils such as course choice in S2 and S3 and the lead up to Prelim exams for seniors. The school calendar is produced in consultation with staff and parents.

Parents' evenings will also regularly be combined with opt in information sessions on the same night on topics such as course options and exams.

### **How will I be informed about parents' evenings?**

Parents' evenings are publicised on the school calendar which is available on the school website as well as through school newsletters.

Approximately 2 weeks prior to the parents' evening you will receive an email informing you of the parents' evening and instructions on how to book appointments

### **How do I make Parents' Evening appointments with teachers?**

You will be notified when the system for booking appointments goes live.

You then go to <http://www.parents-booking.co.uk/portlethenacademy>

Login to see which appointments are available and select ones that are convenient for you.

**You will need to enter:**

- Your first name and surname (*these must match those we have on record for you*)
- Your child's first name, surname and date of birth

It is important to note that appointments may book up very quickly in some subject areas. Where teachers are responsible for more than one class it is unfortunately inevitable that they will not be able to see all of the pupils they teach. In light of this, the number of bookings each parent can book for S1 pupils, for example, is restricted to 10.

**Time allocated to parents' evenings**

Teachers in Scotland's local authority secondary schools are required to attend and prepare for five parents' evenings each academic session as part of their "working time agreement". Parents' evenings run from 5pm until 7pm and appointments for each pupil are 5 minutes long. This means that each teacher can see the parents of a maximum of 24 pupils during a parents' evening.

Unfortunately, it cannot be guaranteed that parents will see all their child's teachers at every Parents' Evening, particularly in S1 and S2 when pupils study a larger number of subjects. However, if families have concerns about specific subjects and there are no available appointments, we would encourage parents to raise concerns with Guidance staff who will liaise with all relevant staff on your behalf. Guidance teachers will be at all Parents' Evenings and available on the 5-minute appointment schedule, but they are also happy to liaise with teachers and pass on any information you have not been able to find out at parents' evening.

**Content of parents' evening meetings**

Teachers are asked to provide evidence based specific information regarding each child's progress at parents' evenings, rather than providing general course information. The meeting should be an opportunity to discuss your child's progress, any concerns and clarify the next steps in your child's learning.

If you have specific concerns regarding your child's progress in a particular subject, which you feel may take longer to discuss, it is recommended that you contact your child's Guidance teacher to set up an additional meeting where you can discuss your concerns more fully. We value these opportunities to meet with parents and it is important to us to be able to discuss and resolve quickly any concerns you might have.

**Other information available on courses and assessments**

Information on courses and revision materials is available on the school website and for National Qualifications can be readily found on the SQA website.

Course information boards are also displayed at parents' evenings with general information applicable to all parents.

### **What to do when you arrive**

As part of our self-evaluation, we like to monitor involvement of parents and guardians at our parents' evenings. We therefore ask you to sign in at the front door on your arrival. Prefects will direct you to the correct board. This also allows teachers to check whether parents who have may have missed their appointment time are present.

At reception, there is a map showing where faculties are located on the night to help you find the appropriate teacher. Consultation areas are located in the theatre, canteen and pupil social areas.

On your arrival, you will also be given a parent survey. This is an important way for us to gather the views of as many parents as we can and provides valuable feedback which can be used to improve our school and delivery of services.

### **Before you leave**

Please remember to hand in your parent survey. Your comments are much appreciated

### **Who is there to help on the night?**

At each parents' evening, prefects are asked to attend to help direct parents to the right place, distribute and collect surveys and facilitate parent registration. Pupils also sell teas/coffees and biscuits from mobile trolleys which serve all areas used for parent meetings.

Principal Teachers of each curricular area will be present whether or not they have a class in that year group to answer subject related questions.

At least two of the Senior Leadership Team will also be in attendance to answer any further questions or respond to any concerns on the night.

### **FAQs**

#### ***What happens if I cannot make an appointment with a teacher I would like to see?***

*Guidance staff will contact the teacher and ask them to provide a brief report on the pupil concerned. Guidance staff or the teacher concerned will make contact either by phone or email to communicate this information to you.*

#### ***What will happen if a teacher is absent during a parents' evening?***

*Names of teachers who are absent during parents' evening will be posted on a notice board at reception for parents to see. If a teacher you had made an appointment with is absent please contact your child's Guidance teacher who will arrange for you to be provided with the information you have missed.*

***Should pupils attend along with their parents?***

*Pupils are not required to attend, however, we encourage them to do so as it is beneficial for them to be involved in discussions about their progress.*

***What if my child has 2 teachers for one subject?***

*Faculties will decide which of the two teachers will be available on the night to take appointments. Parents will only see one teacher per subject.*

***What if I cannot attend the date of parents' evening?***

*If you are not able to attend parents' evening, please contact your child's Guidance teacher to arrange for information on their progress to be provided to you.*

***Can my child have a priority appointment at the next parents' evening if he/she has not been able to get one this time for a particular subject?***

*Unfortunately, it is not possible to prioritise appointments as the online booking system is open to all parents to book appointments when the system goes live.*