



Glasgow City Council

Education, Skills and Early Years City Policy Committee

Report by Executive Director of Education Services

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PARENTPAY AND PARENTS PORTAL

Purpose of Report:

To advise Committee of progress on the implementation of Parent Pay and Parent Portal.

Recommendations:

The Committee is asked to note the progress to date.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

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1 Background

1.1 Strategic and Policy Context

The vision laid out in the Scottish Government's Digital Strategy published in 2018 is to ensure that we are committed to delivering digital public services that meet the needs of the public. The implementation of ParentPay and Parents Portal across the school estate, realises some of the ambitions included in this strategy and also in the following: Scottish Government's Digital Strategy 2018, Glasgow City Council's Technology Strategy 2019, Digital Glasgow Strategy 2019, Glasgow City Council Strategic Plan 2017-2022, Glasgow City Council's Digital Citizen and Incoming Customer Payments Programme.

2 Parent Pay

2.1 Parent Pay is an online payment solution with integration to a new/upgraded cashless catering solution across the school estate. The purpose of the implementation of these solutions was to enable parents/carers to pay for all school related items online from the comfort of their home or using their personal mobile device at any time of day and, to enable parents in primary schools to pre-order their child(ren)'s meals. The business case was approved in March 2021.

2.2 Parent Pay - Timescales and Deliverables

Following approval of the business case in March 2021. The scope of the project was to implement the solution in all mainstream primary and secondary schools, including six ASN schools who shared a campus and kitchen with a mainstream school. 177 schools in total.

2.3 The project had an aggressive timescale that aimed to implement the full solution to all schools, in scope, during the academic year 2021/22. The plan involved rolling out online payments first, to bed in the notion of paying for goods online. Thereafter, cashless catering and meal selection were implemented.

2.4 The project met its timescales and implemented the complete solution to 177 schools by mid June 2022. This was due primarily, to having a strong, committed project team consisting of staff from Education Services, Catering and Facilities Management, Corporate Finance, SITT, CGI, Internal Audit and ParentPay.

2.5 In addition, there was a robust engagement and communication strategy that ensured all relevant staff including, teachers, Senior Management Teams, administration and catering staff, were engaged with, trained and given advice at the appropriate times in an appropriate way. This support will continue.

2.6 In implementing the solution, Glasgow City Council:

- Reduced cash handling for parents/pupils and staff and the associated risks.
- Reduced risks around the handling and storage of cash in schools
- Reduced the volume of cash transactions and the associated processing times
- Streamlined processes
- Removed the stigma attached to be a “free school meal” pupil
- Improved the experience at school for pupils
- Improved the customer journey
- Created operational efficiencies in schools
- Brought Glasgow into line with other Scottish local authorities utilising this technology to improve the customers’ experience

3 Parents Portal

3.1 In line with Glasgow's Digital Citizen policy and to enhance communication with parents/carers Parents Portal is an application that enables and creates a digital relationship between parents, pupils and schools. Parents Portal is designed to replace the 'schoolbag run' and provides online access to a range of school related services to Parents/Carers. Parents Portal will provide access to Parents/Carers with information about their child's school and will allow 24-hour online access to: -

- Link to their child
- Complete the annual data check process electronically
- Update their own as well as their child's details at any time
- View the school calendar
- Complete electronic permission slips and consent forms

3.2 To use Parents Portal, parent/carers must have an MyGov account. They can then use the same login details to access Parents Portal. A parent can sign in using a single sign in, enabling them to view information about their child's education. As the Parents Portal develops, more services will be introduced in the future including online placing requests, absence reporting, report cards and appointments for parents' evenings

3.3 Parents Portal has been jointly developed by the Improvement Service and SEEMIS. The Improvement Service have established a standard deployment plan for rolling out parents portal in each local authority.

3.4 Progress to Date

The portal had a soft launch in two primaries and one secondary in the North East and results from this were gathered via a Smart Survey. The results were encouraging and will form a baseline by which to measure future rollouts. The survey also served to understand parents' perceptions of the system and to highlight issues experienced and to also consult on what parents wanted to use the portal for.

The remaining schools in the North East went live with on 3rd May, with the North West and South following on 6 June 2022.

Parents Portal is only available for Parents/Carers of Primary and Secondary school children. Schools are still encouraging parents to sign up to Parents Portal and uptake is being monitored weekly by Education Support Team. As at 22.07.22 there were 4,398 parents linked to 5,230 pupils. There are also children linked in 179 of the 192 establishments. This is an increase of 426 since the previous week. Take up rates vary across a wide scale, up to 84.4% in some schools.

Story published on Glasgow online.

3.5 Next Steps

Planned targeted communications for the new academic term to drive sign up and use of the annual data check process to encourage this. Progress with extra functionality to provide additional services, which take into account the requirements of parents. Considering the events over the past regarding the Pandemic, Parents Portal is an excellent addition to the current communication mechanisms already in place.

4 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

Financial: None

Legal: None

Personnel: None

Procurement: None

Council Strategic Plan: Excellent and inclusive Education
A well governed City that listens and responds

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify. N/A

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? N/A

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: N/A

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? N/A

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? N/A

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts: None

5 Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress to date.