



CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held on Tuesday 26th August 2014 at Charleston Academy

Present: Fiona Alexander, Anne Ashton, Andrew Barrie, Marie Bisset, Robert Bowie, Ciara Flugel, Cathy Fraser, Sue Fraser, David Gillies, Helen Hunter, Fiona Jackson, Jill Kent (Chair), Urszula Kozak, Rona Macaskill, Rona Macpherson, Fiona Malcolm, Linda McLean, Kate Morris, Julie Riddle, Richard Smith, Gordon Stewart, Christian Wittke

In Attendance: Chris O'Neill (Rector), Margret MacRae (Clerk)

Apologies: Caroline Keiro-Kirk, Kate McEwen, Fiona Morrison, Katrina Morrison, Andrea Paterson, Lindsey Stout

1.	WELCOME Jill Kent welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES The minute of the meeting held on 13 th May was approved. Proposed: Fiona Alexander Seconded: Julie Riddle
3.	MATTERS ARISING <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A date for the RoWAN demonstration on cooking with leftovers is still to be finalised.○ Mr O'Neill reported that a decision was taken not to circulate the Parental Questionnaire in June due to time pressure. A school census will take place in September, and once e-mail addresses for the parents / carers of S1 pupils have been confirmed it will be possible to contact a sample across the school and request their feedback.
4.	RECTOR'S REPORT <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Mr O'Neill welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that he was pleased to see such a good turnout.○ Two school trips took place over the summer break – the Watersports Trip to Spain and also the trip to Botswana. Both trips provided fantastic and thought provoking experiences for pupils. During the trip to Botswana, which also cemented the partnership with the British Council, pupils visited an Aids orphanage, a maternity unit, Lotsane Senior Secondary School and went on a safari. Photos and a DVD for the website are currently being prepared.○ Trips to America and the Mediterranean have been arranged for 2015 and a further trip to Botswana is being planned for 2016. It is hoped to arrange a trip to Botswana every other year with return visits to the school on alternate years. Mr O'Neill advised that there is a group of 8 or 9 teachers who are interested in supporting the partnership with Botswana which ensures sustainability when staff changes occur.○ It was reported that the SQA results this year were amongst the best achieved by the school and compared favourably across Highland. Excellent results were achieved in English and across a range of subjects.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ In S5, 39% (55 pupils) achieved three or more Highers (second highest in the Highland Council area)○ 6 pupils achieved five Highers at Grade A○ 45% (64 pupils) obtained 5 or more awards at National 5. This is an increase of 5% on previous Credit Level Awards.○ Mr O'Neill stated that this was a very pleasing result, particularly as it had been a challenging year with the introduction of all the changes. Analysis of all the results will now be undertaken in order to try and sustain this level of attainment.○ Mr O'Neill stressed the importance of a three-way partnership between parents, pupils and staff in order to promote a positive attitude to learning. Pupils will be advised of the increased expectation in terms of timekeeping, dress code and the punctual completion of homework. It was felt that this would create the right discipline and mindset in order to promote achievement. It was noted that 4th and 5th year pupils were keen to wear the school tie and most were very well turned out.○ It was reported that there had been a number of staffing changes and Mr O'Neill referred the



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	<p>Parent Council to the newsletter and school website for details. Five members of staff retired at the end of last session with a further three leaving to take up promoted posts at other schools. Ten new staff have now been appointed, including two newly qualified teachers. Mr O'Neill stated that he is positive that the new staff will add value to the school. There is still a vacancy for the post of Principal Teacher of Home Economics. This post is currently being re-advertised. It is acknowledged that this is a challenging post which requires the new post holder to undertake a number of extra curricular activities in the form of events. Elaine Bremner is continuing to support the school in the meantime.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The school roll is currently capped to 140 pupils in S2 and 120 pupils in S1. There has been a slight dip in the roll due to a decrease in the number of P7 pupils which in turn affects the staffing and capitation budgets. A decision was therefore taken to reduce the number of sections. There is currently no space should a pupil move into the catchment area, however, this position is likely to change over the year as there is usually some movement in the roll.○ The school is in a good financial position – it had earmarked funds for specific projects and much of this work was undertaken over the summer. This included:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Refurbishment of classrooms○ Upgrading of the two ICT classrooms○ Refurbishment of the canteen / kitchen○ Additional computers for the science lecture theatre○ Improvements to other Home Economics Rooms with items that were removed from the Roux Kitchen○ Support for Learning Department – moved to a new base to complement the Arches○ Mr O'Neill advised that it is necessary for the school to focus closely on its budget as the Highland Council no longer zero rates overspends at the end of the financial year. Any overspend would be carried into the following year and would need to be made up from that year's budget.○ A vast range of extra-curricular activities is provided by the school thanks to the exceptional goodwill and commitment of staff and Mr O'Neill would like to encourage pupils to take part in these. Research identified that pupils who take part in extra-curricular activities often do well later on in school. Notices can be found on the school website and parents were asked to encourage their children to get involved.○ The school is delighted to receive the donation of a weather balloon. Orion provided equipment and sponsored the launch of a weather balloon by one of the school's S1 pupils and their father. After taking some excellent photos the equipment came down in woodland near Beaully and was almost intact. This was then donated for use by the school.○ There have been some delays during the installation of the Roux Kitchen which mean that 5 classrooms were out of action during the first week of term. Although most work has now been completed a new extraction system is still awaited. The Roux Dinner has now been postponed to November.○ In order to facilitate support for pupils in S5 and S6 the timetable has been restructured and pupils now undertake 5 periods of teaching per week rather than 6. The additional period created will allow guidance staff and members of the Senior Management Team to meet with pupils, provide support and advice, and ensure that any difficulties are addressed at an early stage. Students taking 5 Highers will receive the most intensive support and peer tutoring will also be provided by S6 pupils. In addition to the two periods of support pupils will also have one lesson per week of PSE and two periods of PE.
5.	<p>FINANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ FINANCE REPORT. It was reported that the current bank balance is £4304.81○ FUNDING REQUEST. Mr Smith, PT Support for Learning thanked the Parent Council for the funding received allowing the department to provide a healthy snack for youngsters who may have not had breakfast or lunch due to financial hardship or other disadvantage. He asked that the Parent Council consider further funding for a cross-curricular study that would allow pupils of all abilities to work collaboratively. Mr Smith stated that his vision for the Support for Learning Department was to reduce the stigma associated with it and make it 'A part of the school – not apart from the school'. The project would involve the purchase of 12 chick eggs from a specialist



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	<p>company who also provide an incubator and take responsibility for the ethical homing of the chicks once hatched. This 21 day project, aimed at S1 and S2 pupils would allow for the study of English, Art and Biology. Funding required is £300 and this would include a small amount of money for digital camera accessories. Discussion took place and the Parent Council agreed to fund this initiative.</p>
6.	<p>FUNDRAISING Rotary Charity Shop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jill Kent confirmed that she has now booked the Rotary Charity Shop on the corner of Strothers Lane and Academy Street for one week – commencing Wednesday 24th September. Volunteers are being sought to work 2 hour shifts in the shop. The shop requires 3 people to be working together at all times. Jill explained that the Parent Council and associated volunteers would take over the shop on the Wednesday afternoon. Any remaining stock would be inherited, but good quality second hand items are required to increase stock. Stock would then be sorted and priced on the Wednesday afternoon, and the shop opened on Thursday morning. ○ It is hoped to arrange a collection point for suitable items in each of the geographic areas of the associated primary schools. Please ensure that donations are appropriately laundered. Kate Morris will send further information to the school for posting on the school website ○ Anyone interested in helping out should contact Jill or Margret. <p>ART EXHIBITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The S1 Art Exhibition will take place on 11th November. In addition to the display of artwork there will also be some musical entertainment provided by the Music Department. This is an informal social event which also provides an opportunity for parents to meet. A small group of volunteers is required (5 or 6) to help co-ordinate the event and assist with the stalls and displaying of artwork. Sue Fraser volunteered to help out with the stalls and Urszula Kozak volunteered to assist with the co-ordination. ○ It was agreed that the artwork would be judged in the afternoon and winners notified to ensure that they are present when the winners are announced during the evening.
7.	<p>AGM The AGM will be held at 7pm on Tuesday 23rd September 2014. Jill Kent informed the Parent Council that she will be standing down and therefore a new chair is being sought. Nominations for a new treasurer are also required as Sue Mitchell has resigned from her role as she no longer has any children attending the school.</p>
8.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No correspondence has been received
9.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kinmylies Post Office. It was reported that consideration is being given to the downsizing of the Kinmylies Post Office. Views are being sought through a consultation process – anyone wishing to support the Post Office is asked to either submit their views online or write a letter of support. ○ Pupil Council. It was confirmed that the school has a pupil council. Members are selected through indirect elections – each register class elects two representatives- these then form a Year Group Committee. Representatives of the Year Group Committees are then elected to the Parent Council. The Pupil Council, which is chaired by the Depute Head Boy and Depute Head Girl can also co-opt a staff member if they wish to do so. The Pupil Council focuses on issues that it can change or influence by providing valuable feedback. This includes involvement in the Youth Parliament via Youth Voice. It is hoped to also co-opt a Pupil Council member to the Parent Council and vice versa. ○ Councillor Allan Duffy was welcomed to the meeting. Councillor Duffy is a member of the Management Committee for Charleston Complex.
10.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING The next meeting is the AGM and has been arranged for 7pm on Tuesday 23rd September 2014</p>