



Charleston Academy Parent Council

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held on Monday 30th April 2012 at Charleston Academy

Present: Fiona Alexander, Anne Ashton, Yvonne Brown, Sue Fraser, Jill Kent (Chair), Linda MacLean, Rona Macpherson, Kate McEwen, Susan Mitchell, Kate Morris, Gordon Stewart

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

Apologies: Pip Farman, Cllr Alex Graham, Jan Patience, Mieke White, Trevor White, Christina Wittke, Cllr Hamish Wood,

1.	<p><u>WELCOME</u> Jill Kent welcomed everyone to the meeting</p>
2.	<p><u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u> The minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 22nd February was approved Proposed: Yvonne Brown Seconded: Sue Fraser</p>
3.	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roux Kitchen. Jill Kent reported that following the Parent Council meeting in February correspondence was sent to local councillors regarding the development of a professional hospitality kitchen at Charleston Academy. The Parent Council was advised that although Albert Roux has managed to negotiate a heavily discounted price of £80,000 for the kitchen, an additional £130,000 is required for maintenance work that needs to be carried out prior to installation of the kitchen. Replies have been received from Hamish Wood, Pauline Munro and Bill Finnie. Mr Finnie advised that the Education Culture & Sport service is progressing discussions in order to try and identify additional sources of funding. Mr O'Neill clarified that the Inverness City Committee will meet after the local elections have been held. Discussion regarding potential sources of funding will take place at this meeting. • Recycling. It was reported that pupils are now recycling aluminium cans and plastic bottles. The greater challenge for the school is how to reduce the amount of refuse generated. This is made up largely of packaging from school lunches, items purchased from local shops, and waste produced by the canteen. Solutions are currently being sought.
4.	<p><u>RECTOR'S REPORT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr O'Neill reported that Mr John Mackay from the PE Department has been successful in his application for the post of Principal Teacher at Kingussie High School. Miss Lauder (English Department) is still on secondment and it is not yet known if she will be returning to Charleston Academy. Mr Brian Yates is currently covering this post. Mr O'Neill also advised that the following principal teachers would be retiring at the end of this session: Mr Copland (Physics), Mrs Lewery (Languages), Mr Hines (Geography), and Mr Cripps (History). These principal teacher vacancies have now been advertised and it is hoped that interviews will take place during June. The school would like to appoint prior to the end of this session in order that effective liaison can take place with the principal teachers who are retiring. Mr O'Neill will endeavour to update parents of appointments by means of the Charleston News. This summer term edition will also acknowledge the work of the staff that are retiring. • Mr O'Neill reported that the annual audit of additional support needs has now been completed. The local authority has confirmed that staffing levels will remain as at present. As Linda Johnson is retiring, and Yvonne McCloy moving on to pastures new, additional support for learning staff will also be recruited. • Scott Anderson has been appointed as Facilities Officer (previously known as Head Janitor). • A number of staff gave up their own time to take part in a leadership weekend. This very successful event was arranged by Mairi Sutherland (Chemistry Dept) and took place in Badaguish. The course was based on the Columba 1400 model and looked at all aspects of leadership. • It was reported that Tuesday 1st May will be the last of school for the S6 class as the S5 and S6 classes will start their study leave on Wednesday 2nd May. A graduation ceremony for the S6 class has been arranged for the evening of 1st May, and the S5 award ceremony will take place on the morning of 2nd May. The staff that are retiring at the end of this term have been invited to present the awards.

- The 'Dreams and Teams' initiative which saw a group of South African staff and pupils visit Charleston Academy in March was a great success. The pupils were staying with host families and enjoyed a family ceilidh at Kilmorack Hall. Activities arranged for the visitors included football at Inverness Caledonian Thistle Football Club, dance at Eden Court, and a trip on the funicular railway in the Cairngorms. They also met the provost and were noted for their wonderful singing. Pupils who took part in this visit were from the S6 age group and it is now hoped to foster partnerships with younger pupils.
- The exchange trip to Sweden will take place in May and the school trip to Botswana will take place in June.
- Ms McPherson is currently working with the pupils who took part in Columba 1400 in developing the house programme. This will include the appointment of a greater number of prefects as the house system requires a house and vice captain for each of the four houses. A head boy, head girl, and 2 deputies will also be appointed. The application process is now open.
- It was reported that visits to the primary schools to outline the School of Football initiative have now taken place. The School of Football aims to develop the social and academic skills of pupils through football. It is offering 15 places to pupils who have an aptitude for football but may find it difficult to engage with the curriculum in S1 and S2. The Primary 7 teacher will make a recommendation, and if selected pupils will take part in 5 sessions of football per week – 3 will take place during the school day with the remaining 2 sessions being provided as extra-curricular sessions (i.e. before or after school). Funding is in place for coaching for a 2-year period, and may be on-going. Charleston Academy has been selected to host this programme on the strength of its PE department and links with the Highland Football Academy. It was confirmed that pupils who live in the Charleston catchment, but who currently attend St Joseph's Primary or Bishop Eden School are also eligible to take part, and the relevant information has been shared with these schools.
- There will be two additional in-service days for the 2012-13 session. These will take place on Tuesday 14th August and Tuesday 23rd October. Parents were reminded that the school would be closed on Monday 4th June to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The new timetable will commence on 5th June and pupils will return from study leave.
- Feedback from the Parents' evening pilot indicated that 64% of parents preferred the earlier start time of 4.30pm, and 26% the preferred the later start time. Staff reported that the earlier start time allowed for quality dialogue and felt less time-pressured. It was agreed to formally change the start time of future parents' evenings to 4.30pm. As discussed at a previous meeting it is the intention of the school that there is no more than 6 months between communications with parents (i.e. written report or parents evening). There was a request for the S4 parents evening to be held earlier in the session, possibly just after the results of the prelims are known. This would allow for time to address any issues prior to the start of the exams.
- Mr O'Neill explained that pupils are made aware of extra-curricular activities, school trips and other opportunities through the daily notices. Due to the large volume, and sometimes short notice, of these events it is not possible to issue information via letters or the Charleston News. It may be possible to add the daily notices to the school website once this has been completed. Parents asked for their thanks to be passed on to Mrs Stewart for the development of a choir group – this is a most welcome addition to the extra-curricular activities on offer.

5. FINANCE REPORT

- Yvonne Brown reported that the bank balance at 30th March was £4628.36.
- 'Friends of Charleston' has a small number of new members. It is anticipated that there will be a drop in numbers due to pupils leaving the school at the end of the academic year. However, it is hoped to recruit new members with the new S1 intake. The Parent Council will consider having a table at the P7 induction evening on 18th June to promote the 'Friends of Charleston' initiative. Anne Ashton volunteered to assist.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence has been received since the last meeting:

- PTA magazine
- Replies from local councillors in relation to the Roux Kitchen – please see item 3 (Matters Arising)
- Guidance in relation to child protection. As there are currently no parent volunteers working directly with pupils at the school it is not necessary for any parents to be disclosure checked. Should this situation change parents should contact Jill Kent for further information.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Parent Forum. Jill Kent and Alastair Todd currently represent the local authority area as members of the National Parent Forum of Scotland (NPFS). The NPFS was set up to give Parent Councils and parents an opportunity to discuss and raise educational issues of mutual interest or concerns and share practice. Jill Kent and Alastair Todd are currently in the process of arranging a meeting with Calum MacSween and Moira McCarrell. Any parent interested in attending NPFS meetings should contact Jill Kent.
7.	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Lockers. Mr O'Neill reported that the Highland Football Academy has been successful in raising funding towards the development of changing facilities including a toilet block that would be located under the stilts. However, it is thought that there is still a financial shortfall. Mr O'Neill advised that the meeting scheduled for March was postponed; the next meeting will now take place in May. If this work is progressed it may be possible to consider converting the existing toilet area in the tower block to house lockers. It was noted that the new changing area proposed by the Highland Football Academy would not be accessible from the school and it would be necessary for pupils to go outside to access the toilets. In addition it may be necessary to re-house the two classrooms currently in the demountable huts in the main building at some point in the future. The lease on the demountable huts expires in June and rental of these buildings cannot be guaranteed long term.
8.	<p><u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> Tuesday 28th August - 7pm</p>