



CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held on Wednesday 28th August 2013 at Charleston Academy

Present: Fiona Alexander, Rita Farragher, Helen Hunter, Jill Kent, Urszula Kozak, Linda McLean, Rona Macpherson, Kate McEwen, Susan Mitchell, Kate Morris, Tim Muir (Chair), Julie Riddle, Gordon Stewart, Lindsey Stout, Christian Wittke

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

Apologies: Yvonne Brown, Sinead Robertson

1.	<p><u>WELCOME</u></p> <p>Tim Muir welcomed everyone to the meeting. He advised that there had been a change in his personal circumstances and that he no longer had any children at the school. Tim Muir stated, that in line with the constitution, he would be stepping down at the end of this meeting.</p>
2.	<p><u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u></p> <p>The minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 15th May was approved Proposed: Sue Mitchell Seconded: Julie Riddle</p>
3.	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There were no matters arising
4.	<p><u>RECTOR'S REPORT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr O'Neill thanked Tim for his work over the past year, and also for drafting the constitution• The first newsletter of this session has been issued both as a paper copy and by e-mail• Mr O'Neill stated that he was very pleased that all vacant posts were filled by June – this is a unique position as many of the other schools are still recruiting. Appointments have been made as follows:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Kathleen Marshall (English)○ Sam Todd (English)○ David McCulloch (Maths)○ Sali Massey (Geography)○ Fiona Marshall (Support for Learning)○ Ashley Crawford (History)○ Eilidh Matheson (Home Economics)• Mr O'Neill explained that Mr Richard McKendrick has taken retirement due to the ill health of a family member. The school is currently recruiting a temporary replacement, and it is hoped that the substantive post will be advertised prior to the October holiday.• Ms McConnachie has also decided to retire. As the school was required to make a post reduction a decision was taken to reduce some availability in RMPS. The Principal Teacher for History is managing the department on a temporary basis. RMPS lessons will be relocated to the main building as the Highland Council will remove the RMPS Huts in the near future in an effort to reduce costs.• It was reported that the new café in the community complex is going well. This facility provides a real alternative space for pupils and compliments the school canteen. In addition to lunch the café provides breakfast and also tray bakes and tea / coffee for pupils who take part in after school activities. Following its recent refurbishment a branding exercise will now be undertaken for this facility, which is both for pupils and the wider community.• Discussion took place on healthy eating and how pupils can best be encouraged to use the school facilities. It was reported that a trained chef is working with canteen staff and feedback has indicated that the standard of food being served is superb. In addition the school has undertaken work with the local shopkeeper. He has been very supportive and agreed that caffeine drinks will not be sold to pupils.• A meeting with members of the Highland Council, which will focus on reviewing the school building and the surrounding area will take place shortly. Mr O'Neill reported that no funding had been allocated to Charleston Academy in the last 5 year capital expenditure plan. A small amount of

	<p>funding had been received for disabled access improvements only. This meeting will incorporate discussions on the removal of the RMPS huts as well as the wider issue of refurbishment. It is recognised that refurbishment is conducted in phases and is generally more complicated for the smooth running of the school than a 'new build'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police have been monitoring a number of the 20 mph zones outside schools and were 'naming and shaming' any parents / carers who have exceeded the speed limit. Mr O'Neill advised that no parents / carers of Charleston Academy pupils had been reported. • Mr O'Neill advised that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14.9% of pupils passed 5 or more Highers, this being the third highest pass rate of all the large schools within the Highland area. This result was slightly down on last year (second last year), but higher than in previous years. ○ 32.6% of pupils passed 3 or more Highers, with particularly excellent results being achieved in English and Maths. ○ 40.3% of pupils achieved passes at Standard Grade Credit Level, this being the highest percentage ever achieved by pupils at Charleston Academy ○ 100% pass rates were recorded for French, PE, Art, Gaelic, RMPS and Biology, with only one pupil not achieving a pass in Physics. • Preliminary discussions on the above results have taken place between Principal Teachers, the Senior Management Team and the Quality Improvement Officer. A more detailed analysis will be undertaken shortly when Scotland wide data becomes available to the school. The more detailed analysis will remain confidential within the school, although general conclusions will be shared with parents / carers. • It was reported that the new National 4 and National 5 exams are expected to be more challenging.
5.	<p>FINANCE REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Muir, on behalf of Yvonne Brown, reported that the bank balance at 31st July was £3,351.61, with the only movements since the May meeting being income from 'Friends of Charleston' Club. • Claire Dyker won the 'Friends of Charleston' Club in August • Further to discussion it was agreed to ask Miss Jacqueline Bisset (Principal Teacher Business Management at Charleston Academy) to audit the accounts to the financial year ending 31st July 2013. It was suggested that a bottle of wine and some flowers (or similar) be purchased for the auditor as an honorarium / thank you.
6.	<p>CONSTITUTION</p> <p>Discussion took place on the drafted constitution and a number of amendments were suggested. It was agreed that Tim Muir would re-draft the constitution to incorporate the outcomes of the discussion and that this updated version would then be circulated in advance of the AGM. It will be necessary for the Parent Forum to vote on the adoption of the revised constitution at the AGM.</p>
7.	<p>AGM</p> <p>The AGM will be held at 7pm on Monday 23rd September. Tim Muir reiterated that the AGM will include a report on the work of the Parent Council and its committee, a Rector's Report, and elections of office bearers. The Parent Forum will also be required to consider the adoption of the proposed amendments to the constitution. Mr Tillman has agreed to give a short presentation on the work of the Eco Committee (greenhouse / polytunnel etc) at the AGM.</p>
8.	<p>CORRESPONDENCE</p> <p>No correspondence has been received</p>
9.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with Parent Council. Tim Muir advised that members of the Parent Forum are welcome to raise concerns / issues with individual members of the Parent Council or pass on a message via the school office. It was agreed to look into setting up a Parent Council e-mail address in order that private details of Parent Council members do not need to be shared. • Mr O'Neill advised that funding is no longer available for the provision of revision classes – any additional tuition provided by staff is done so on a voluntary basis. It is not always possible to advise parents of revision classes available as some of these are arranged on an 'ad hoc' basis to cover specific topics • A query was raised in relation to the number of Highers students were expected to study in S6. Miss MacPherson explained that the curriculum should present challenge and choice and that pupils are expected to engage with a reasonably full timetable. The content and levels studied will vary from pupil to pupil – parents who require further information or have concerns should contact their child's guidance teacher in the first instance. • Mr O'Neill explained that the prizes awarded at the Graduation Night / Award Ceremonies are

	<p>based on set criteria. Rona Macpherson is overseeing a new system that incorporates more categories (gold, silver and bronze). It has been developed to capture both achievement in school and also wider achievements gained through extra-curricular activities. This new database will also allow for capturing of information such as punctuality, effort and homework. It will work on a 'points' system and therefore provide a fair and objective way of identifying pupils whose achievements are to be celebrated at the awards ceremonies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents were reminded that the Albert Roux Dinner is being held on the 12th September. Tickets for this fundraiser for the Hospitality Kitchen are available from Elaine Bremner and Yvonne Brown. It was acknowledged that £30 per person may not be affordable to everyone, however, this is set in guidance with Mr Roux and reflects his donation of the ingredients, and the inclusion of desserts and wine which are required to be purchased by the school. Mr O'Neill stated that it anticipated that this is the last event which will be required to raise funds for the installation of the kitchen, and that future fundraising events will allow for the purchase of equipment etc. • Discussion took place on the provision of drama classes. Due to logistical issues it is not possible to provide drama classes for which pupils would undertake SQA exams. Mr O'Neill stated that it may be possible to provide space within the school for an external agency, such as Eden Court through their outreach programme, to provide drama as an extra-curricular activity. It was reiterated that pupils currently have the opportunity to take part in the school radio station, recitals, the 'Rock Challenge' and from time to time the school pantomime. • The S1 Art Exhibition will take place on Tuesday 19th November. A small sub-committee (Jill Kent, Lindsey Stout, Urszula Kozak) will assist with the running of this event. Any first year parent who would like to get involved should contact the sub-committee directly or pass on a message through the school.
10.	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING – the next meeting is the AGM Monday 23rd September - 7pm</p>