



## CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

### Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at Charleston Academy

**Present:** Fiona Alexander, Anne Ashton, Sue Fraser, Jill Kent (Chair), Urszula Kozak, Fiona Malcolm, Linda McLean, Rona Macpherson, Kate McEwen, Susan Mitchell, Kate Morris, Julie Riddle, Gordon Stewart, Lindsey Stout, Christian Wittke

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

**Apologies:** Robert Bowie, Fiona Morrison, Katrina Morrison

1.	<b><u>WELCOME</u></b> Kate Morris welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2.	<b><u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u></b> The minute of the meeting held on Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> August 2013 was approved Proposed: Lindsey Stout Seconded: Anne Ashton
3.	<b><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></b> o None
4.	<b><u>RECTOR'S REPORT</u></b> o Mr O'Neill explained that the changes associated with the Curriculum for Excellence are being rolled out slowly and that the most substantial changes will affect pupils currently in S2. The Highland Council requires that all secondary schools offer a maximum of 6 subjects in S4, preceded by a wider and broader education in S1 through to S3. These changes will be implemented from Session 2014-15. A further information session to explain these changes and answer concerns will be arranged for parents of pupils in S2. o ICT – Charleston Academy has been permitted to break from the original ICT rollout contract which means that the school is no longer restricted to purchasing desktop computers. The school can now choose how the budget is spent, with the only restriction being that equipment has to be bought from Fujitsu. Mr O'Neill advised that the school wishes to install wi-fi (security arrangements will be incorporated to ensure this is used safely) and extend the use of portable devices. o Students who went on the Battlefield Trip held a series of Armistice Assemblies to share their experiences. These assemblies were attended by the Provost, local Councillors, Area Education Manager and representatives of the British Legion. The feedback was very positive and students did themselves proud. An audit of work undertaken by schools is being conducted by the Scottish Government in preparation for the Centenary of WW1. o It was reported that Jeni Herbert, Active Schools Co-ordinator has now started her maternity leave. The role will be filled by Amy who has a background in Support for Learning. Following the success of the boxing coaching for the boys it is hoped a similar project for the girls with the emphasis being on promoting self-esteem can be established. In addition she will also deliver a leadership programme for sports and facilitate the development of skills through extra curricular activities. o Mr O'Neill stated that Mr McKendrick, PT of Support for Learning, has now retired. Meanwhile Richard Smith and Christine MacDonald are jointly managing the Support for Learning department until a permanent appointment is made. The school also hopes to appointment two further Pupil Support Assistants in December. o Mr O'Neill explained that the school had experienced a period of change with a number of retrials but is pleased that Charleston Academy is in an excellent position compared to other schools in the Highland Area as it has been able to make good appointments and fill all its vacancies. This should now ensure a period of stability for the school. In addition almost all staff are providing extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. o In order to ensure a good balance of core teaching / learning and fun it was decided that festive activities would all take place during the last week of term. These will include charity events, a Christmas lunch, Christmas Dances, followed by an inter-house quiz on the last day of term.



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5.	<b>FINANCE REPORT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Sue Fraser reported that the bank balance at end of October was £4176.86</li><li>○ Winner of the Friends of Charleston Club was Jill Kent</li></ul>
6.	<b>FUNDING REQUESTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>MRS BREMNER.</b> A request was received from Mrs Bremner (Home Economics Department) for £100 in order that materials could be purchased to enable students to make felt Christmas Stockings. These are to be displayed at the Art Exhibition. Although funding requests are normally considered at Parent Council Meetings the tight time scale necessitated this request to be circulated by email as a timely decision was required. Eighteen responses approving this request were received.</li><li>○ <b>MR STEWART.</b> A request was received from Mr Stewart for £156 to provide a morning meeting cup of hot chocolate / roll and sausage etc. to bus monitors. In times past the monitors got a free Stagecoach bus pass. The new contractor is unable to offer that service but they did offer free football tickets instead. However, that offer did not have a high uptake.</li></ul> <p>Mr Stewart explained that the morning meeting would give the monitors a little thank you, show parents are supportive of their efforts and also encourage more active involvement on buses. There would be two meetings a year to share good practice, one of which would take place in the Autumn to discuss special arrangements that may be required during adverse weather conditions.</p>
7.	<b>ART EXHIBITION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Jill Kent was delighted to report that there are now 9 members in the Art Exhibition sub-group and that plans for this event were well underway.</li><li>○ Sue Mitchell is currently in discussion with the Vue Cinema. It is hoped that the winning artwork will be displayed in the cinema for one month. Vue Cinema will also donate cinema tickets as prizes for the winning entries.</li><li>○ Mr O'Neill advised that the school would also make a presentation to the winner with the artwork then being hung in Mr O'Neill's office.</li><li>○ The winning entry will also feature as the graphic for the front of next year's school planners which are issued to all pupils.</li></ul>
8.	<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Jill Kent advised that she had recently attended a meeting for Parent Council Chairs that was held at Charleston Academy. Discussion included communication and school websites as this is an issue for a number of schools. Charleston Academy is to be commended on its excellent website. Mr O'Neill reported that he had been asked for the template for use by the authority but has declined to share this as it is felt important that the website retains an individual feel in order to reflect the schools identity.</li></ul>
9.	<b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ It was brought to the attention of the Parent Council that a 5<sup>th</sup> year pupil will shortly be undertaking intensive specialist treatment for scoliosis. The pupil has set up a fundraising page to raise money as the treatment and associated travel and accommodation costs are very expensive. It is not possible to hold a whole school fundraising event that specifically benefits one pupil although the school would be happy to support the pupil should they wish to hold a sale of baking or other such type of event. It was agreed to share details of the fundraising page.</li><li>○ Toni Clark explained RoWAN's (Ross-shire Waste Action Network) 'R U Up 4 It?' food and waste reduction project. This initiative has been running for over a year supporting 10 Inverness and Dingwall schools (including Charleston Academy). Over this time RoWAN has had regular contact with several of the members of staff at Charleston who are active in the areas of composting and growing food. Mr O'Neill reported that the school has made further progress in this area as waste can now be scraped from plates as polystyrene is no longer being used. RoWAN now wishes to widen the work they do and involve families and the wider community. A survey would be conducted in the first instance and after discussion it was agreed that in order to maximize returns of the questionnaires these could be undertaken on Parents Evenings.</li></ul>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Mr O'Neill advised that the school operates a discretionary exchange programme of hoodies / jumpers should families not be able to afford items of clothing that comply with the school dress code. Iron on badges and ties are also available free of charge.</li><li>○ The school was thanked for an excellent 'Albert Roux Dinner'. A 'Homecoming' Dinner is now being planned for 2014.</li></ul>
<b>10.</b>	<b><u>DATES OF NEXT MEETING</u></b> Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> December 2013 – 7pm