



CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held on Tuesday 13th May 2014 at Charleston Academy

Present: Fiona Alexander, Anne Ashton, Marie Bisset, Robert Bowie, Sue Fraser, Helen Hunter, Jill Kent (Chair), Urszula Kozak, Rona Macpherson, Susan Mitchell, Kate Morris, Fiona Morrison, Katrina Morrison, Julie Riddle, Gordon Stewart, Neil Watson

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

Apologies: Fiona Malcolm, Linda McLean, Andrea Paterson, Lindsey Stout

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 12th March was approved. Proposed: Sue Fraser Seconded: Julie Riddell</p>
3.	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was confirmed that the RoWAN demonstration on cooking with leftovers would be held in the Community Centre. This will enable members of the wider community to also attend. ○ Feedback from RoWAN indicated that Charleston Academy is the best performing school in the area in respect of separating food waste. ○ Due to the mildness of the winter bus monitors only attended one meeting where their sterling work was recognised by the provision of a hot drink and roll. ○ The council will shortly be finalising its budget for the next year – parents were welcome to raise the importance of education with councillors where possible ○ It was reported that the Parental Support Session held on 24th April was excellent. The Educational Psychologist provided a very informative talk and 'Question and Answer' session, followed by further advice and support on an individual basis. It was agreed that a copy of the PowerPoint was not required. ○ Mr O'Neill reported that the format of the proposed Parental Questionnaire had been discussed with the school's Quality Improvement Officer. It was felt that Survey Monkey would not be the best way to disseminate the questionnaires as this would potentially enable anyone to fill this in – and therefore responses may not be accurate. Paper copies will therefore be mailed to approximately 80 randomly sampled parents (10% of school roll) with an equal number being selected across the year groups to ensure views across the whole age range are captured. In addition, the questionnaire will also be available on the website – parents who have not been included in the sample but wish to contribute are welcome to download the questionnaire instead. Pupil views are also being sought and this information will be gathered through pupil questionnaires issued to representatives of each year group.
4.	<p><u>RECTOR'S REPORT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mr O'Neill advised that the school would be saying farewell to a number of staff at the end of the session. Mrs Christine MacDonald, Mr Iain McKie, Miss Cariona Macpherson and Mrs Elaine Bremner are retiring. The recruitment process to fill these vacancies is in process and it was reported that a large number of applications have been received. These are of a very high calibre and strong leet have now been drawn up. ○ Significant changes have taken place with regards to the corporate structure of the Highland Council. The number of directors has been reduced from nine to five. Bill Alexander has been appointed Directed of Care and Learning. The savings realised through this restructuring has meant that budget cuts at school level are less significant and that Charleston will no longer be required to save a further 1%. A decision is still awaited with regards to the permitted 'carry forward' of unspent budget – this is currently at 5%. The school 'saves' the carry forward in order to undertake projects such as refurbishment – any reduction on this amount would have an impact of work that can be undertaken. Mr O'Neill advised that the school has now made all the changes that it can in order to work as cost effectively as possible – any further cuts would require decisions to be made at Local Authority level.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Helen Hunter is the year head for the new S1. The S1 intake in August is slightly lower than normal and the number of places available has been capped at 120 instead of 140. Two places have been reserved for young people moving in to the local area. The school has timetabled 6 classes instead of 7 - the associated cost saving will be carried forward in the budget as it is anticipated that the roll will increase for the 2015-16 session onwards.○ Mr O'Neill stated that the new National 5 exams have got off to a good start. These are both challenging and demanding for pupils. It was noted that there is a high level of motivation with lots of pupils coming in during study leave to consult teachers. Study leave for future S4 pupils may be reduced in future years.○ Pupils studying Geography and / or Biology benefited greatly from fieldwork undertaken with Countryside Rangers○ It was reported that the Charleston Team comprised of three senior girls won the Youth Outdoor Challenge at Badaguish. It is hoped that this excellent event will be held again in the future.○ S5 pupils attended a multi-lingual debate at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh.○ School trips taking place shortly are the trip to Botswana and also the Watersports trip to Spain○ It is hoped that the work on the Roux Kitchen will be completed by August. Electrolux has been awarded the tender and contractors are due to move in just before the beginning of the summer break. A Roux Dinner will be held in honour of Elaine Bremner for all the work she has undertaken to see a professional standard hospitality kitchen installed at Charleston. It was felt that this was particularly poignant as Mrs Bremner will not have the opportunity to work in the new facility as she retires at the end of this session. The school anticipates that it will attract a strong leet for the position of PT Home Economics / Hospitality.○ Helen Hunter was thanked for all her hard work preparing and making arrangements for the exams.○ Thanks were also paid to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Richard Syred and the Support for Learning Department for the mentoring of pupils and preparing them for their exams○ Teaching staff who had provided revision classes, and in particular those staff who gave up their time over the Easter holidays to provide additional tuition – this was much appreciated.
5.	<p>FINANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ FINANCE REPORT. It was reported that the current bank balance is £3464.60.
6.	<p>FUNDRAISING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Discussion took place on the possibility of undertaking fundraising by running the Rotary Charity Shop on the corner of Strothers Lane and Academy Street for 2 weeks during October. The shop can be leased at a rate of £600 per week and it is estimated that it may be possible to raise in the region of £2000. It was agreed to proceed with this initiative and Jill Kent will confirm the provisional booking being held on the school's behalf. Volunteers are required to set up the shop on the Sunday, and then store assistants will be required during the week. Parents were asked to start putting aside any items that would be suitable for selling in the shop, and adverts will be placed on the school website. The possibility of selling Enterprise goods and pupils wishing to gain work / life skills assisting in the shop were also discussed.○ It was reported that there was now a wi-fi signal throughout the school – it is anticipated that the software licenses will be in place by June.○ Funding is required for a number of initiatives being run by the school. These include some of the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Funding is sought to cover the shortfall for a joint venture being run for youngsters by the school, police and the Highland Boxing Academy. The project provides extra support for transition, life skills and helps youngsters to settle in to school. The venture has seen outcomes such as young people stopping smoking, an improvement in behaviour both in and out of school, and an engagement with education. A 12 week block costs in the region of £1800 and this would cover the rent of a hall, the cost of hiring a trainer, and also supply cover for teachers who are required to accompany youngsters / supervise the



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	<p>sessions. A Leadership Award is currently being developed for the boys attending the boxing. It was agreed to formalise the application for funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The Football Academy is currently in the process of sourcing funding for the continuation of the football initiative○ It was reported that the school now has 7 teachers who are qualified to lead the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Funding is required to replace and / or supplement tents. It was also noted that the Climbing Club now has an increased profile and therefore may require additional funding.
7.	<p>ART EXHIBITION including display of work at Eden Court</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ It was agreed that the Art Exhibition would be held before the S1 Parents Evening. Jill Kent will liaise with Mr O'Neill to agree a date – it is anticipated that the exhibition will take place towards the end of November.○ Parents will be required to assist with the labelling and hanging of the artwork
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">○ There is a new format for the award ceremony this year. The new awards also celebrate wider achievement. Pupils are awarded points based on monitoring in relation to the school's values. The new monitoring system gives each pupil a score and they will be awarded levels according to their score (bronze, silver, gold, platinum). Some certificates will be awarded at assemblies and some at the award ceremonies.○ Robert Bowie advised that the 20 mph speed limit is now being implemented at both signs in the morning, at lunchtime and also at the end of the school day. He agreed to check the times they are being implemented and inform Mr O'Neill.
10.	<p>DATES OF NEXT MEETING Tuesday 26th August 2014 – 7pm</p>