



## CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

### Minutes of Parent Council Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2014 at Charleston Academy

**Present:** Fiona Alexander, Andrew Barrie, Sue Fraser, Leona Hayes, Yvette Hogan, Helen Hunter, Fiona Jackson, Jill Kent (Chair), Urszula Kozak, Rona Macaskill, Steve McLean, Rona Macpherson, Sue Mitchell, Kate Morris, Andrea Paterson, Julie Riddle, Lindsey Stout, Neil Watson

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

**Apologies:** Anne Ashton, Lyndie Cameron, Kate McEwen, David Gillies, Fiona Malcolm, Linda McLean, Rona McWhirter, Gordon Stewart, Christian Wittke

1.	<b>WELCOME</b> Jill Kent welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Lindsey Stout for the provision of hot refreshments for parents on their arrival.
2.	<b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b> The minute of the Annual General meeting held on Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2013 was approved. Proposed: Urszula Kozak Seconded: Julie Riddle
3.	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ It was reported that the greenhouse has now been purchased for the Eco-schools project and that the pond is almost finished. The greenhouse will be installed once the building work for the new hospitality kitchen has been completed.</li><li>○ As Jacqueline Bisset was not available to examine the Parent Council accounts (she no longer works at Charleston Academy) these were examined and approved by Rosalyn McMillan, Class Teacher, Central Primary School.</li></ul>
4.	<b>FINANCE REPORT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The Treasurer's Report, which had been independently examined and approved by Rosalyn McMillan, Class Teacher, Central Primary School was circulated.</li><li>○ Sue Mitchell reported that the bank balance at 15<sup>th</sup> August 2014 was £4304.81.</li><li>○ Expenditure for the year totalled £1,345.33</li><li>○ Income totalled £2259.06 but it was noted that this includes two payments of £1645.36 from the Highland Council - one for 2013/14 and the other for 2014/15.</li><li>○ Sue Mitchell was thanked for her work in her role as treasurer. Sue Mitchell will now be standing down as she no longer has any children at the school.</li></ul>
5.	<b>PARENT COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT</b> An annual report outlining the activities, which had taken place over the last 12 months, was circulated. Jill Kent reported that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ The 5<sup>th</sup> S1 Art Exhibition, which is now an annual event, included participation from other groups within the school. These included the Science Club, Botswana Group, Home Economics displays, and the String Group provided background music under the direction of Mr Hay. Jim Steven, Head of Education Services, attended the event and was very impressed with the lively participation of the event and also the quality of the artwork. He requested, on behalf of Hugh Fraser, that the winning pieces be displayed at Highland Council Headquarters where they then drew many positive comments.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Organisation for this year's event is currently underway. The event also includes stalls selling arts &amp; crafts, local produce, Christmas gifts etc – anyone who would like a table should contact Sue Fraser. The cost of a table is £10.</li><li>○ A decision was taken not to charge for the artwork to ensure that each family is able to take a piece of their own artwork home. A raffle to raise funds will be held instead</li><li>○ It is hoped that the winning artwork will again be displayed at Vue Cinema – approval from the Area Manager is currently being sought</li></ul></li><li>○ Discussion has taken place throughout the year on the new exam system. This included sharing information and addressing parental concerns. Parents were very grateful to Mr Mezals, teacher representative, for the initiation of additional support and to all staff who provided revision classes for pupils taking National 5 and Higher exams.</li></ul>



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- James McTaggart, Educational Psychologist gave an excellent presentation to help parents have a greater understanding of how they can support young people in managing exam stress.
- A staff appreciation lunch was held on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February. This was to thank staff for their continuing dedication to the school above and beyond their contracted work. It was noted that Charleston staff were under more pressure than in previous years as the new exam system coincided with a tighter operating budget. Staff members who were not working on the inset day, such as bus divers and canteen staff, were provided with a treat on their first day back after the break. This gesture was well received by all 120 members of staff.
- The Parent Council supplied funding to enable bus monitors to be provided with a hot roll and drink twice during the school year. This was to recognise the vital role that bus monitors play in keeping the school buses as safe and pleasant as possible and the support they provide to bus drivers by dealing with minor issues that occur.
- Toni Clark from RoWAN attended a Parent Council meeting and talked about reducing food waste. In addition the team from RoWAN conducted surveys with parents, which identified a desire for a cookery demonstration using leftovers. Fran Davidson, manager of the Charleston Community Complex is liaising with RoWAN in order to identify a suitable date for a workshop. It is hoped that this will take place in the new Roux Kitchen.
- The Parent Council contributed towards the cost of purchasing a greenhouse for the Eco Group. This has been purchased and will be installed once the building work for the new hospitality kitchen has been completed.

Jill Kent also advised that the Parent Council would be running the Rotary Charity shop for a week commencing 24<sup>th</sup> September. Volunteers are still required – particularly for the 10am to 1pm shift on Sunday. Donations of goods suitable for selling in the shop can be dropped off in the school car park in the morning, at Jill's house or at the shop. Sue Fraser has volunteered to assist with the window displays and Fiona Jackson will help with the pricing of goods.

### 6. **RECTOR'S REPORT**

- Mr O'Neill welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that he was pleased to see such a good turnout.
- As information on the life and work of the school is available on the internet Mr O'Neill asked the Parent Council to consider what they would like included in the Rector's Report at future meetings. He indicated that he is happy to share information in relation to activities undertaken but there may be other items that parents would prefer to see as 'standing items' and which they may wish to hear progress reports on.
- A group of 50 senior pupils attended the Scottish Independence Referendum debate at the SSE Hydro in Glasgow. Feedback indicated that they enjoyed the experience, which allowed them to hear the views and opinions of politicians, provided an opportunity to ask questions, and also gave them an insight into BBC production processes.
- Tempest Photography were in school earlier this year and pupil photos have now been taken. It was reported that the background colour is lighter and that there is therefore an improved contrast. Mr O'Neill advised that the pupil photos are also used for the school's database.
- Staff annually donate in excess of £2000 to MacMillan Cancer Support much of which is raised through hosting sandwich lunches, sale of tray bakes etc. One of these fundraising events is usually held on 26<sup>th</sup> September but this falls on an INSET day this year. Funds raised via the ice bucket challenge undertaken by the Senior Management Team will be donated instead.
- The Lead Prefect Team took part in a leadership development weekend at Badaguish.
- The English Department is running a poetry competition entitled 'Bards in the Bog' for National Poetry Day. Winning entries will be displayed in the Eastgate Centre toilets and also the toilets in the school.
- Kay Storey has now taken over the facilitation of the Debating Group. The group has already had success with the Big Green Challenge and local competitions are now beginning to take place again. It was felt that there is a need for more interschool events and competitions that are not sport related. Prefects from across the schools are now meeting on the next inset day to see how this could be made possible.



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- Ami Warren, Active School's Co-ordinator has introduced a new extra curricular project this session for S1 to S6 for girls who do not usually take part in sporting activities. The Girls' Fit project has proved very successful. Engagement has been so good that it has been necessary to provide two sessions to accommodate all those who wish to take part.
- Work in the Home Economics Department is still on-going. The hospitality kitchen is almost complete but installation has taken longer than originally anticipated as additional work in terms of re-roofing the area and installation of a new ventilation system are also being undertaken. The school continues to take steps to minimise disruption to the curriculum.
- Senior prefects formally represented Charleston Academy at the Kirking of the Council.
- Funding has been secured for the continuation of the Boxing Club for the next two to three years.
- The school welcomes William Burnside and Shona Smith to the Learning Support Department. There are currently vacancies in the Biology Department (maternity cover post) and also in Technology as Andrea Gordon now undertakes the role of Guidance Teacher for Kishorn.
- INSET days have been arranged for 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September. There is now only one INSET day in February. The INSET day on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September will focus on subject areas. Teachers will meet and work collaboratively with their peers from across the region, with Charleston Academy hosting the work being undertaken in English. The INSET day on September 26<sup>th</sup> is an in-house event and staff will review and analyse last year's exam results and look at SQA/CFE arrangements for this session.
- The Annual Sponsored Walk will take place on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September. Historically this event has been regarded as an opportunity for pupils to interact and for learning outwith the classroom. There is now a greater necessity to also drive the fundraising aspect of this event due to the increasing pressure on school fund. This is to ensure that pupils continue to have the opportunities to take part in the variety of learning experiences and extra curricular events, and that the school fund is able to meet the cost of this provision.
- Mr O'Neill explained that the Fabric & Fashion Course is being taught by the Home Economics Department and that staff in the Art Department are also able to teach this course.
- Seminars are being held at Highland Council Headquarters to discuss spending priorities for 2015 to 2019 and consider how savings can be found. It was noted that most of the savings made by the council would have to come from the Care and Learning Budget. Jill Kent added that the National Parent Forum for Scotland is holding its national conference on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October at Bishopbriggs Academy. Keynote speakers are Dr Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages and Sir Ian Wood, Chair of Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce.
- Mr O'Neill thanked Jill Kent for all her hard work and stated that it had been a pleasure working with her over the last four years. Her infectious enthusiasm and drive have helped to bring everyone together – staff, parents, and the wider community. Jill, in her role as Chair, has also helped to raise awareness of the work of the Parent Council and will be sorely missed. A small gift was presented to Jill in appreciation of her contribution both to the Parent Council and to the school.

### 7. **NEW PARENT COUNCIL MEMBERS AND APPOINTMENT OF OFFICE BEARERS**

- Parent Council members were ratified as all those in attendance and listed in the apologies (all of whom had indicated a desire to stand as members for the year 2014-5)
- Lyndie Cameron has volunteered to attend as the Teacher Representative and members of the SMT will continue to attend on an advisory capacity

Appointments of Office Bearers were made as follows:

**Chair** – Kate Morris

**Proposed** – Fiona Jackson

**Seconded** – Sue Fraser



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	<p><b>Vice Chair</b> – Yvette Hogan Proposed – Andrea Paterson Seconded – Fiona Alexander</p> <p><b>Treasurer</b> - Urszula Kozak Proposed – Leona Hayes Seconded – Fiona Alexander</p>
8	<p><b>Talk by PC Steve McLean – Community Beat Officer for Kinmylies and Scorguie Areas</b> PC Steve McLean introduced himself and explained that he was the Community Beat Officer for the Kinmylies and Scorguie areas. Although he does still undertake some response work his main role is to work within the community. PC Steve McLean's area includes Charleston Academy and 3 local primary schools. The aim of community work is to be pro-active rather than reactive and PC McLean works closely with Charleston Academy to identify potential problems so that early intervention can prevent habits from becoming entrenched and causing difficulties at a later stage.</p> <p>Anyone wishing to discuss issues can contact PC McLean directly by emailing him at the following address: <a href="mailto:steven.mclean2@Scotland.pnn.police.uk">steven.mclean2@Scotland.pnn.police.uk</a>.</p>
9.	<p><b><u>DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2014</li><li>○ Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014</li><li>○ Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015</li><li>○ Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015</li><li>○ Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015</li><li>○ Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2015</li></ul>