



CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Minutes of Parent Council Meeting held on Monday 3rd November 2014 at Charleston Academy

Present: Fiona Alexander, Lyndie Cameron, Sue Fraser, David Gillies, Cllr Alex Graham, Yvette Hogan, Urszula Kozak, Rona Macpherson, Fiona Malcolm, Kate Morris (Chair), Katrina Morrison, Andrea Paterson, Julie Riddle, Cllr Graham Ross, Gordon Stewart, Lindsey Stout

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

Apologies: Andrew Barrie, Robert Bowie, Leona Hayes, Fiona Jackson, Kate McEwen, Linda McLean, Neil Watson, Christian Wittke

1.	<p><u>WELCOME</u> Kate Morris welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p>
2.	<p><u>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</u> The minute of the meeting held on 26th August was approved. Proposed: Lindsey Stout Seconded: Urszula Kozak</p>
3.	<p><u>MATTERS ARISING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There has been no further update in relation to the cooking demonstration being facilitated by RoWAN. The waste awareness initiative continues to be progressed within the school through work being undertaken by the Eco Schools group. ○ Mr O'Neill reported that the Parental Questionnaire will be circulated shortly. There has been a delay in sending this out due to difficulties with the management census software, but this has now been resolved.
4.	<p><u>RECTOR'S REPORT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mr O'Neill advised that, further to consultation, the Rector's Reports would continue to include updates on activities undertaken by the school. ○ Ten members of staff recently attended a Development and Leadership weekend at Badaguish. This was very well received and Mr O'Neill received very positive feedback, including cards and photos, from staff who appreciated this opportunity. Approximately 30 members of school staff have now taken part in this leadership programme. ○ The S1 Art Exhibition will take place on 11th November. ○ The Albert Roux Dinner has been postponed due to delays in completion of the hospitality kitchen. In addition Elaine Bremner is unable to assist at the present time due to personal circumstances. The kitchen is now operational and being used by staff, but further to discussion with Albert Roux, it was agreed to hold the official opening dinner later in the session. ○ The school has now recruited a teacher of French who is also qualified to teach German and Mandarin. Pupils also received a taster lesson in Mandarin. Charleston Academy was visited by members of the Chinese Community who provided information on Chinese culture and Mandarin. ○ The English Department held a poetry competition entitled 'Bards in the Bog' for National Poetry Day. Pupils were highly motivated by this initiative, the theme of which was 'Remembrance.' The winning entries were displayed on toilet doors in the school and also at the Eastgate Centre. ○ The school is delighted to receive the donation of a weather balloon. Orion provided equipment and sponsored the launch of a weather balloon by one of the school's S1 pupils and their father. After taking some excellent photos the equipment came down in woodland near Beaully and was almost intact. This was then donated for use by the Physics and Geography departments who hope to be able to launch their own weather balloon in due course. ○ The annual sponsored walk organised by Gordon Stewart raised just over £10,000. ○ Funding is in place for the next three years for the Boxing Club. This initiative 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. The school is now looking to extend this initiative by developing boxercise sessions for girls. ○ 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



CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

	<p>very successful, and the school is now looking to add an extra-curricular session (for which there will be a small charge) on a Friday.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A number of educational visits have taken place. These include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A visit to the Tramway Gallery by a group of Advanced Higher Art Students○ Attendance at the Gaelic Careers Event○ Attendance at the 16+ vocational conference○ Five teachers and ten pupils from Lotsane /Senior Secondary School in Botswana will visit Charleston Academy on March 2015. Two members of Charleston's staff visited Lotsane last year as part of the Global Exchange programme.○ The WW1 Battlefield Trip was very successful. Pupils conducted themselves very well and positive comments commending students on their behaviour and respect were received from tourists. Pupils will now deliver a series of assemblies on the theme of 'Remembrance' for pupils within the school. The assemblies will also be attended by special guests including Provost Alex Graham, Mr Roddy Wood from the Royal British Legion, and Ex Sgt Major Mr Sam Ward from the Gordon Highlanders.○ Working groups looked at developments across the school during the inset day. The new Standards and Quality Report and the new Improvement Plan are now available on the school website.○ Mr O'Neill advised that all Head Teachers had been invited to attend a meeting at Highland Council Head Quarters in relation to budget savings and the potential impact these may have on schools. A public consultation is currently on-going.
<p>5. BUDGET SAVINGS – IMPLICATIONS FOR CHARLESTON ACADEMY</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr O'Neill reported that he had received a powerpoint presentation from Bill Alexander for sharing with staff and parents. The Highland Council started a public consultation on 27th October in relation to the £64 million (11% of HC budget) savings that are required to be made by 2019. Mr O'Neill circulated a handout that covered the points which are relevant to Charleston Academy. It was highlighted that the proposed savings are not exhaustive, and that a further £2 million of savings are still to be identified in order to be able to balance the budget.• The points highlighted and discussed were as follows:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The Highland Council is looking to reduce it's Care & Learning Budget by 4% over the next financial year○ Catering, Cleaning & Facilities Management – there is a concern that the reduction of budget for school meals may lead to meals being of a lesser quality. There is also a proposed increase (above the level of inflation) in the cost of school meals. This could lead to more pupils deciding to use the local shops which would have a negative impact both in terms of healthy eating and also in relation to being able to prevent groups of children loitering around the area by the shops.○ It is not yet clear what the implication of the removal of free school lets will mean. Currently the school uses facilities for meetings (for example Staff Room for Parent Council meetings) and also for extra-curricular activities for pupils. It is not clear whether a charge will be levied in respect of use of the school buildings after 3.30pm.○ The proposed reduction of 2 Quality Improvement Officers (QIO) within the region will impact on the support received by Head Teacher's. QIOs help to set the path for school improvement, assist with monitoring and feedback and facilitate the sharing of best practice and initiatives between schools.○ The reduction of the Devolved School Management annual Budget carry-forward from 5% to 1% would mean that schools can no longer 'save' money during one year and carry this forward to the next financial year for investment in larger projects / meaningful development.○ The removal of over entitlement in teaching posts, coupled with a 1% reduction in teaching staff allocation in Secondary Schools would have a significant impact on Charleston Academy. In real terms this would amount to a reduction of 8% / 4.4 FTE (full time equivalent) teaching staff. This would have an impact on the curricular choice that the school is able to offer.



CHARLESTON ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The proposed timetabling of 33 period weeks in secondary schools would mean that there will now be no development time. • The Parent Council stated that they would endeavour to seek clarity from officials and also seek the support of local counsellors in order to ensure that they have an awareness of the particular issues Charleston Academy faces in relation to a reduction of over entitlement and the associated Health & Safety implications. These are mainly due to the some of the classrooms being small and not having suitable ventilation / heating for teaching large classes.
6.	<p><u>DRUGS AWARENESS</u></p> <p>Rona Macpherson advised that Highland Council and partner agencies have developed a new toolkit for the prevention of substance misuse. This will be launched at the Centre for Life Sciences on Friday 12th December. The event, which will be attended by a member of the Guidance Team and a member of the Senior Management Team, will run from 10am to 3.30pm. There is also one space available for a parent – anyone wishing to attend this event should contact Ms Macpherson directly.</p>
7.	<p><u>FINANCE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FINANCE REPORT. It was reported that the current bank balance is £5868.32. A cheque for £300 still needs to be raised for the Support for Learning Initiative outlined by Mr Smith at the meeting held on 26th August.
8.	<p><u>FUNDRAISING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rotary Charity Shop. It was reported that members of the Parent Council took over the running of the Charity Shop from 24th September to 1st October. The Parent Council thanked everyone who was involved in the sorting, pricing, ironing and selling of items and also all those who donated items to be sold in the shop. Although initially hard work, everyone very much enjoyed this experience. A total of £1734.26 was raised and this will help to provide funding for projects within the school. ○ Art Exhibition. Vue Cinema has agreed to sponsor the S1 Art Exhibition, which will take place on Tuesday 11th November, by providing cinema tickets for prize winners. Donations of prizes for the raffle have also been received from a number of local businesses. Judges for the event will meet with Ms Marj MacLeod prior to the evening in order that winners can be notified beforehand to ensure that they are present when the winners are announced. The winning entry will feature on the front cover of next year's pupil planners, and once a proof has been approved, the original artwork will be displayed at Vue Cinema. Pupils will assist with serving refreshments at the Art Exhibition – Mrs Helen Hunter will liaise with Lindsey Stout regarding arrangements. Sales tables are also available for groups within the school.
9.	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No correspondence has been received
10.	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ None raised
11.	<p><u>DATES OF NEXT MEETING – 7pm on:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tuesday 16th December 2014 ○ Tuesday 20th January 2015 ○ Tuesday 17th March 2015 ○ Tuesday 19th May 2015 ○ Tuesday 25th August 2015