



## Minutes of Meeting

**TITLE** : THE NICOLSON INSTITUTE PARENT COUNCIL  
**DATE** : Tuesday 29 April 2014 **TIME** : 5.30 pm  
**VENUE** : Staff Room, The Nicolson Institute (new building)

**DISTRIBUTION** : Parent Council Members, Frances Murray for NI  
 website and Parent Forum, Cllr Angus Campbell,  
 Cllr Charlie Nicolson

**Present:** D.R. Macdonald (Chair)(Parent Member); Catriona Mackenzie (Vice Chair)(Parent Member); Mairi Macsween (Treasurer)(Parent Member); Rev. Graeme Craig (Parent Member); Mairi Mackinnon (Parent Member); David Hanlon (Parent Member); Frances Murray (Rector) Carol Somerville (Clerk).

**Apologies:** Iain N. Morrison (Parent Member); Cllr. Charlie Nicolson; Cllr Angus Campbell.

Item	Summary and Action	Who/What?	When?
1	<b>Welcome/Apologies</b> D.R. Macdonald welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened the meeting with prayer. Apologies were received from Iain N. Morrison, Cllr. Charlie Nicolson and Cllr. Angus Campbell.		
2	<b>Approval of Previous Minute</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2014 were approved by Mairi Macsween and seconded by Mairi Mackinnon, subject to Mairi Mackinnon (Parent Member) being added to those 'Present'.		
3	<b>Matters Arising</b> <b>Road Crossings/Drop Off Area</b> D.R. Macdonald reported that he had written to Malcolm Burr on 04 February 2014 and although he had not received a reply from Malcolm Burr, he had received a telephone call from the Technical Department at CNES. The representative from the Technical Department informed him that they had been observing the area. D.R. Macdonald had asked whether a 'red tar' crossing could be put in place and was informed that they would continue to monitor the situation and the NIPC would be informed when a decision was made.  As no further communication had been received from CNES, the Parent Council agreed		

Item	Summary and Action	Who/What?	When?
	<p>to write a further letter to Malcolm Burr requesting something be done about the situation prior to the new school year in August 2014.</p> <p>Frances Murray reported that she continued her request for signage to be put in place at the regular FES/School/Authority meetings without result.</p> <p><b>School Fund Account</b> Frances Murray circulated a copy of the draft audited School Fund Accounts to 31 July 2013 and reported thereon. She requested that these be kept in confidence to the meeting.</p> <p><b>“Include Us” Visit – 25 February 2014</b> Noted that this meeting was attended by D.R. Macdonald, Mairi Macsween, Mairi Mackinnon and Calum Morrison. The Council members in attendance agreed that it was a very informative meeting about student finance, SAAS and budgeting and lots of practical advice was given to parents and pupils.</p>	Chairman write to Malcolm Burr	ASAP
4	<p><b>GBB Parent Council Meeting – 05 February 2014</b></p> <p>Mairi Macsween and Mairi Mackinnon had attended the GBB Parent Council meeting held on 05 February 2014. Mairi Macsween reported on the meeting. Noted minutes of this meeting will be circulated to NIPC members when received.</p>	Clerk to circulate notes of GBB PC meeting when received.	When received.
5	<p><b>Easy Fundraising</b></p> <p>Carol Somerville, Clerk submitted a cheque for £21.18 to Mairi Macsween, Treasurer, which had been received from Easy Fundraising.</p>		
6	<p><b>CNES Circular No. 2014/04: Education &amp; Children’s Services Dept Business Plan 2014/15</b></p> <p>Noted a copy of the email and CNES Circular No. 2014/04 had been circulated to the Parent Council.</p> <p>Frances Murray reported that she had met with Peter Carpenter, Director of Education and the Circular had been discussed. The Director asked that plans be kept more manageable and requested 3 projects which would encompass the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) delivery high quality learning and teaching</li> <li>(2) ensure effective accountability and leadership</li> <li>(3) improve use of data.</li> </ol> <p>D.R. Macdonald asked if this was achievable and Frances Murray stated it was.</p>		
7	<p><b>Parent/Carer Survey 2013</b></p> <p>D.R. Macdonald reported on the results of a Parent/Carer Survey held in 2013. Agreed to circulate the document by email to the NIPC.</p>	Clerk to circulate Parent/Carer Survey 2013	ASAP

Item	Summary and Action	Who/What?	When?
8	<p><b>School Toilets</b></p> <p>Frances Murray reported that due to incidents of vandalism and improper use of the toilets during school hours, the toilets were now locked during lessons. If a pupil required to use the toilet during this time they had to request the key from the office, sign for it and return the key to the office. Noted the toilets were open before school started, during breaks and during lunch time.</p> <p>Noted that the Pupil Council had raised the matter of the mess that was being made in the toilets with Erica Macdonald, Assistant Rector and were now happy with the outcome.</p> <p>Frances Murray reported that she had received three emails and one letter from parents complaining, and had received a positive response once she informed them of the situation.</p> <p>Noted no incidents had occurred since the toilets were locked during lessons. Frances Murray reported that there was a staff/disabled toilet in each wing which could be used in an emergency.</p>		
9	<p><b>Rector's Report</b></p> <p>Frances Murray reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magnificent achievement by Senior Girls football team on their recent victory in the Scottish Cup. Sporting play and good manners a credit to the school and their families. Thanks also to coach Jack Bain and his assistant Catherine Anne Macleod. D.R. Macdonald requested that the Rector convey congratulations from the NIPC to the Senior Girls football team on their success.</li> <li>• Kara Hanlon congratulated on her recent performance at the Scottish Swimming trials. The Rector stated that Kara is a credit to herself, her family and the school in the manner in which she balances her training and competing and her academic work. The Chairman asked that congratulations from the NIPC be passed to Kara.</li> <li>• Update was received in relation to the staffing for next session. Noted it is anticipated moving the timetable for the Senior School on 22 May 2014 in order to allow for the change of course work in the National Awards.</li> <li>• Noted interviews will shortly take place for the vacancy of Acting Deputy Rector currently being covered by Malcolm Macleod and the NIPC may be asked to sit on the Vacancy Panel.</li> <li>• Received a very positive HMle report and noted they will not be returning to the school in connection with the June 2011 report.</li> </ul>		

Item	Summary and Action	Who/What?	When?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parental surveys conducted at the Parents' Meetings this session have been broadly positive and have given the teaching staff food for thought on communications. It is hoped to move to email communication as much as possible in the near future.</li> <li>• Noted Senior Management had attended the following: Frances Murray and Malcom Macleod attended a Higher event in Glasgow in March; Fiona Cunningham attended a pupil support event in Kilmarnock and Angus Maclennan had spent a day at Grange Academy in Kilmarnock. Noted these meetings had all been organised as preparation for new qualifications and new data management systems.</li> <li>• Subject Departments have had a very busy year implementing the new S4 qualifications and anticipate an equally busy session to come with the new Highers on the way. Noted exams had started today.</li> <li>• S6 pupils Catriona Campbell and Chrisell Macdonald were involved in the STV debate on the referendum which was televised last month. Katy Mackenzie of the English Department had prepared the pupils and accompanied them to Glasgow.</li> <li>• Noted a referendum was held in February by the Modern Studies class, involving all of S5 and S6. The Rector thanked Donald Macleod for his work in organising the event which involved politicians and students.</li> <li>• French staff and pupils joined the school for the last week in March 2014, staying with families here. Noted Mrs. Robertson, Mrs. Macdonald and Mr. Beattie will be accompanying the pupils visiting France in June for the exchange.</li> <li>• Noted a group of senior pupils visited Pendleton in April 2014 and their behaviour was commented on most favourably by all who met them. A number of staff have volunteered to take on the role from the existing committee who have all retired.</li> <li>• Pupils in S1 – S3 have recently been awarded Bronze, Silver and Gold Merit certificates in recognition of behaviour and effort in classes.</li> <li>• Sir Peter Howsden, the Scottish Government's top civil servant, visited the school on 16 April 2014 and has written to say how impressed he was with the facility.</li> <li>• SQA exams have commenced. Noted Donnie Smith is Chief Invigilator with his team. Pupils have been granted appropriate Study Leave. Noted the S6 Leaver's Ceremony will take place on 09 June 2014 in the Town Hall and the Parent Council will be invited to be represented.</li> </ul>		

Item		Summary and Action	Who/What?	When?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noted that the S6 last day passed without serious incident. Noted the Police had attended the school and had been requested to speak at Assembly.</li> <li>• Asymmetric Week – arrangements are currently being finalised for a meeting in mid-May for all parents and which will be attended by Senior Management and Education Department staff. Noted all Primary 7 pupils have been invited.</li> <li>• The Rector reported that she will shortly be replaced by Fiona Cunningham as Acting Rector for the remainder of the school term due to surgery and medical treatment. On behalf of the NIPC, D.R. Macdonald wished Frances Murray all the best and a speedy recovery.</li> </ul>		
10	AOCB	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>National Awards 4s and 5s</b> Mairi Mackinnon commented on how she felt the current pupils undertaking National 4s and 5s were quite stressed. Frances Murray agreed and stated that this year the 4<sup>th</sup> years were doing 8 subjects, next year this will be reduced to 7 subjects. Frances Murray stated that this is why the senior school timetable will commence on 22 May 2014 and not in June, to allow for the change of course work in the National Awards.</li> <li>2. <b>NI Website</b> Mairi Macsween commented that dates of the NIPC meetings were not available on the NI website and the minutes of meetings were very dated. Frances Murray will email the Clerk contact details of Willie Macleod who will update this information.</li> <li>3. <b>Resignations</b> Noted the following resignations: D.R. Macdonald, Chairman, Catriona Mackenzie, Vice Chairperson and Carol Somerville, Clerk. Noted D.R. Macdonald and Carol Somerville will attend their last meeting in September 2014 (the Annual Meeting). Agreed the vacancies should be displayed on the NI Website and also circulated by email in August 2014 to all parents when this communication is in place. Noted this was Catriona Mackenzie's last meeting. D.R. Macdonald thanked Catriona for her contribution to the NIPC over the years. Catriona Mackenzie thanked D.R. Macdonald for his valuable contribution to the NIPC and wished him all the best. She also thanked Carol Somerville for her contribution as Clerk to the NIPC.</li> </ol>	Frances Murray email Clerk with contact details for Willie Macleod.	ASAP
11	Date of Next Meeting	The meeting closed at 7.10pm. The next meeting to be held on Tuesday 23 September 2014 at 5.30pm in the Staff Room. Noted it was necessary for the Clerk to book the Staff Room through Linda Macmillan in the School Office.	Clerk to book Staff Room for next meeting.	Staff Room booked for all mtngs in 2014.