



**The Nicolson Institute
Parent Council**

Annual Report

2011/12

Introduction

The Nicolson Institute Parent Council was constituted on 11th June 2008.

This annual report provides an overview of the current Parent Council, its function, the activities undertaken during 2011/12 and a financial statement.

Why do we have a Parent Council?

The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 gives parents the right to receive information about their children's education and to be represented and have their views expressed through a Parent Council.

The main functions of a Parent Council are to:

- Support the school in its work with pupils and parents;
- Represent the views of parents;
- Promote contact and communication between the school, parents, pupils, the community, and other providers.

The aim is to ensure that schools, parents, families and the community work together to give children and young people the best possible education. Schools serve the community in which they are located and a positive relationship with parents and the community is essential for the success of both the school and the community.

Whilst parents rely upon the skill, expertise and dedication of the officers of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and particularly the teachers within The Nicolson Institute, it should not be forgotten that parents also provide valuable skills, expertise and insight because they:

- Are experts in relation to their own children and have expert knowledge about their children's needs;
- Have unique and varied skills, interests, knowledge and experience;
- Are members of the local community with links to businesses, commerce and services that the school might not have;
- Are in touch with other parents and can represent a wide range of views.

It is for this reason that parent participation in the school's Parent Council is essential, to ensure that parents contribute to the success of The Nicolson Institute and the outcomes for all of the pupils who attend the school.

Community Vision

Parent Councils play an important role in delivering community vision. Local councillors are very supportive of Parent Councils and assist in the resolution of various issues and problems as well as attending events organised by the Parent Council.

The local councillors for Ward 06 Steornabagh a Deas are Angus Campbell, Charlie Nicolson, Angus Maccormack and Rae Mackenzie. Further details about your councilors and how to contact them can be found on the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar website <http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/members/>.

Parent Council activities in 2011/12

The Parent Council met on a regular basis during school term times and focused on the following main areas:

- Administrative tasks
- New School
- Curriculum for Excellence
- General Issues

Administrative Tasks

A number of administrative tasks were undertaken:

- At the Annual General Meeting on the 27th September 2011 the following office bearers were re-elected and agreed to continue in their roles for another year:

Chair – Frank Rennie

Vice Chair – D R Macdonald

Treasurer – Mairi Macsween

Clerk Carol Somerville.

Members elected for the forthcoming year:

Iain N Morrison; Calum Morrison; Scott Connor; David Hanlon; Graeme Craig; Catriona Mackenzie; David Morrison and Stuart Baird.

Frances Murray, Rector, will continue as Advisor to the Parent Council.

- Discussion Documents
The Parent Council were asked for their contribution on CNES Religious Observance consultation document, National Parenting Strategy for Scotland and the school's Standard and Quality Improvement Plan.
- Greater Broadbay Area Parent Council
Parent Council members continue to attend the Greater Broadbay Area Parent Council meetings and report back to the Council with any issues.

New School:

- Site visit for Parent Council members
Some Parent Council members visited the New School site in December 2012 and were very impressed.
- New School Opening
Teachers and pupils had a slight phased return to school in August 2012 in order to allow the teachers to move in to their classes prior to the pupils returning. The School held an Open Day on Saturday 02 September 2012.
- Groupcall
Discussion took place with the Parent Council on which was the best way of alerting parents to any issues. It was agreed to continue with Groupcall text alerts.
- HMIe Recommendations
The Council were pleased to hear a report from the Rector that in line with recommendations from HMIe, they would be promoting Gaelic on a larger scale and would also be appointing a Co-ordinator to assist 'able' pupils.

Curriculum for Excellence

The School continues with the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, supported by the Parent Council. The Rector continues to keep the Parent Council informed of any issues relating to this.

General Issues

A number of views and concerns, raised by parents and by the school, were considered by the Parent Council:

- Parent Council
In order to make parents aware of the Parent Council and how to access it, information was included in the School Newsletter, along with pictures of the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- Litter Campaign
The Parent Council have continued to support the School/Council's Litter Campaign and were successful in their request to the Council that additional litter bins be placed in certain areas.
- Study Leave
This year study leave for prelims was amended, with pupils attending their classes for focussed study with supervision. Study leave for SQA exams will remain the same.

- Supervision
Supervision of pupils during break times was being supported by youth workers from the Bridge Centre and also teachers and janitors.
- School Achievements
There have been some excellent school achievements, some of which are:
 - U15 boys football team won North of Scotland Cup and the Senior boys reached the final of their group in this cup.
 - U15 girls football team won Scottish Schools Shield.
 - U15 girls rugby team won Meadowbank Rugby Shield.
- School Prizegiving
In line with last year, the Parent Council were pleased to support The Charity Shield and Young Achievers.

Financial Statement.

All financial records are kept and maintained by our Treasurer, Ms. Mairi Macsween and thanks are due to her for her good work.

A statement of accounts is in the process of being prepared and a separate annual financial report will be provided.

Acknowledgements

The activities and achievements of the Parent Council can only be delivered through the hard work and dedication of the parent representatives and the teaching staff.

None of the work could have been achieved without the generosity of the parents, family, friends, pupils and teaching staff who volunteered their time. Thanks are also due to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar who provide staff and funds to assist with the Parent Council.

Suggestions and Comments:

If you would like to make any suggestions or have a comment you would like the Parent Council to consider, please contact us "The Nicolson Institute Parent Council" at The Nicolson Institute Office and mark for our attention. All suggestions and comments will be discussed at the next scheduled meeting.

D.R. Macdonald

Vice Chairman

September 2012