



ALFORD ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Alford Academy

Greystone Road

ALFORD

AB33 8TY

www.alfordacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk

Minutes of Meeting

6th March 2017

Present: Colin Turnbull, Liz Strachan, David Wyllie, Yvonne Buckingham, Nicola Sedgwick, Penny Fuller, Denise Smith, Maria Rossi, Donna Gray, Karen Noble, Sandy Innes, Richard Stroud, Sue-Ann Grant, Sarah McGregor

In Attendance: Moira Milne, Lisa Lees, Cllr John Latham

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Ian Findlay, Tara Crooke and Kerry Bryant

Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting on 5th December 2016 were accepted as accurate.

Proposed by Penny Fuller

Seconded by David Wyllie

2. Matters arising

2.1 Supporting learning

This is ongoing – a subgroup will meet.

Colin Turnbull reported that he will meet with the chair of the Primary Parent Council and Moira Milne to discuss transition to the 3-18 campus and how the Parent Councils can work together.

ACTION: a subgroup will meet to develop ways to share resources and ideas with parents to support their child's learning. Colin Turnbull and Moira Milne

ACTION: Colin Turnbull will meet with the chair of the Primary Parent Council and Moira Milne to discuss transition to the 3-18 campus.

2.2 Bag racks – more lockers are planned in 2 locations.

2.3 Outdoor learning environment – Penny Fuller, Liz Strachan and Sarah McGregor will meet with Shona Ogilvie prior to attending a student council meeting to share ideas and offer support for projects for the outdoor environment of the campus including the forest plots.

ACTION: Penny Fuller, Liz Strachan and Sarah Mcgregor will meet with Shona Ogilvie prior to attending a student council meeting to discuss ideas for the outdoor environment of the campus.

2.4 Easyfundraising – David Wyllie has posted information to the blog to encourage participation.

3. Treasurer's report

The balance of the main account as of 6th March was £8,277. The balance of the lottery account was £1,936. The Easyfundraising app has generated £648 since it was first set up a few years ago. Commitments for funding are £1500 for the awards ceremony, approximately £3,600 for Show My Homework, £150 for the basketball club and £50 clerk's fees. Moira asked for funding to pay for bottled water for students during exams. This was agreed. Nicola Sedgwick offered to obtain some cost price from her wholesaler and will send the school costs for various size bottles. Colin will contact Deeside water and Penny will investigate Costco prices. Funding will be offered for the outdoor learning environment projects as above in matters arising **2.3**. External sources of funding for this will be investigated also.

4. Social Media Event

Lisa Lees (Depute Head) organised a successful internet safety event 4 years ago and offered to help with the one proposed for this year. Paul Hay was the main speaker last time and has some availability this year - 2nd May was suggested as a provisional date. (Subsequent to the meeting April 20th has been confirmed as the date). Liz Strachan will co-ordinate a meeting with the events sub-group and Lisa Lees.

ACTION: Liz Strachan will co-ordinate a meeting with the events sub-group and Lisa Lees.

5. Punctuality policy – consultation with parents

Moira reported that there has been a culture of tardiness in the school and it was felt necessary to put in place a policy to improve pupils' time-keeping. The warning bell was removed on moving to the new campus, as this was not effective. Pupils are actively encouraged to take more responsibility for their own time-keeping.

Moira outlined the policy steps and details – initially the class teacher will talk to a pupil who is late with no valid reason. If this is repeated, the Faculty Head will be informed and if there is no improvement, the Guidance team will be involved. Pupils who are late for several different classes will be picked up during weekly guidance team meetings. Letters will be sent to parents or they will be phoned if necessary. The policy has been launched last week and a small improvement has been seen already. Moira will report to the Parent Council at the next meeting whether there is evidence that the policy is working. Richard Stroud reported that this is an ongoing issue in every school, but with electronic registers it is now much easier to see a pattern and appropriate action can be taken.

A parent asked whether a pupil may choose for the school not to contact their parents about an issue – many parents were surprised that the age of consent is 12. The school would strongly encourage all pupils to involve their parents as they are the ones who will want to help them. There will be cases however involving child protection where the matter would be referred to social work in the first instance.

6. Restorative Practice – sharing the vision

Restorative practice training has been ongoing in the Alford Cluster Schools for over 8 years. All staff at the Academy had training last year, and the Parent Council also had a workshop session. Restorative justice deals with an incident with consequences linked to the event rather than punishment. It aims to restore the relationship rather than give a detention or other unconnected punishment. There is still a “level” system in place at present, though it is hoped that this will be phased out soon.

MVP – Mentors in Violence Prevention. This scheme is running in Alford Academy and the first mentors are being trained – 45 S4/5 pupils are being trained and will practice with the current S1s in June and then should be ready to fully mentor the new S1s. If they see something that is not right they are trained to know what to do instead of just doing nothing. All materials for training are provided by MVP and several members of staff have been trained to train mentors. Various scenarios can be worked through to help pupils learn how to deal with different situations.

Rights Respecting School – the Alford Campus received the initial award 2 years ago, it promotes children’s rights in the school community.

The aim of these approaches is to encourage good behaviour and ethos in the school and to increase mentoring opportunities for more pupils.

Health and Well Being - The school is organising a health and wellbeing event for S4/5/6 pupils with activities and workshops for pupils, followed by a parents’ session to look at how we can help manage our children’s stress and anxiety.

7. Head Teacher’s Report

Staffing update

- **Mathematics** – long term absence, return soon, all classes covered at present, an extra mathematics post has been created and is still to be filled.
- **Modern Languages** – a modern languages supply teacher has covered classes during a long term staff absence.
- **Humanities** – existing staff are still covering absences, phased return in progress.
- **English** – G Leven appointed
- **Technical** – vacancy – 5th re-advertisement.
- **PT Guidance Kildrummy** – S Johnstone appointed
- **Business** – vacancy, no applicants
- **ASL** - vacancy

Departures

- **Modern languages** – G Barclay retiring
- **J MacEwan** – PT Guidance leaving

As the school roll increases so staffing will increase. However, across Aberdeenshire there are problems recruiting teachers; the council are trying to attract teachers to the area with incentives.

Highlights

- Tree of Knowledge sessions in December for pupils.
- Christmas service held in the theatre to allow all pupils to attend and save the walk to the Church in winter weather. The Easter service will be held in Howe Trinity Church. S1-3 only.

- Successful netball teams – new outfits sponsored by S McGregor.
- Young Engineers – Alford won an award the North East Club of the Year award.
- Basketball – Alford continue to be successful.
- Safer internet day for pupils which involved the Academy Digital Leaders and groups of pupils from Primary Schools.
- S Millar – won a bronze medal for athletics at national level.
- S Millar volunteered overseas with the Gathimba Foundation and met Enoch who then came for a visit to Alford, and talked to many pupils at an informal assembly.
- Successful curriculum evening with representatives from CHAP, NESCOL, Aberdeen University and My World of Work.
- I Tolometti – possibility of being selected for the commonwealth team in gymnastics.
- Football – Alford made the Scottish Schools semi-final.
- Prefects – next year there will be 2 head prefects and 2 deputy head prefects instead of being separated into head/depute girl and boy. This is a significant change - some schools have already gone down this route. The selection process will remain the same as before. There are 8 senior prefects under this team of 4 senior executives.

8. 3-18 Vision, values and aims

The Alford Campus is transitioning to 3-18 with one Head and 5 Depute Heads. Job sizing is currently being evaluated for the various roles. The next step is to look at vision, values and aims across the whole campus.

9. Proposals for Funding

- 9.1** Funding agreed to help develop an outdoor learning environment (see **2.3** above).
- 9.2** Funding agreed to provide water bottles for students during exams (see **3.** above).

10. AOB

- 10.1** Donna Wilson (Parental Engagement Officer) offered to attend the next meeting of the Parent Council to offer support for our ideas for encouraging parental engagement.
- 10.2** Colin will attend the SPTC meeting in May and welcomed any others wishing to attend including the cluster school Parent Councils. Colin suggested that we should create a forum across all the cluster schools and hold an event twice a year which is topic driven eg dyslexia.

ACTION: Parent Council to create a forum across all cluster schools to hold a topic driven event twice yearly. Colin Turnbull

- 10.3** Car Park – signs to advise reverse parking and correct use of the drop off zone will be up soon. On-going communication with parents and other users is needed to ask for everyone to park responsibly.

11. Date of next meeting

Monday 8th May 2017 at 7pm

Close 9.10pm

Proposed dates of future meetings
Wednesday 14th June 2017 at 8pm

ACTION POINTS

- ACTION:** a subgroup will meet to develop ways to share resources and ideas with parents to support their child's learning. Colin Turnbull and Moira Milne
- ACTION:** Colin Turnbull will meet with the chair of the Primary Parent Council and Moira Milne to discuss transition to the 3-18 campus.
- ACTION:** Penny Fuller, Liz Strachan and Sarah Mcgregor will meet with Shona Ogilvie prior to attending a student council meeting to discuss ideas for the outdoor environment of the campus.
- ACTION:** Liz Strachan will co-ordinate a meeting with the events sub-group and Lisa Lees.
- ACTION:** Parent Council to create a forum across all cluster schools to hold a topic driven event twice yearly. Colin Turnbull