



ALFORD ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL
Alford Academy
Greystone Road
ALFORD
AB33 8TY
www.alfordacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk

Minutes of Meeting

14th June 2016

Present: David Wyllie, Penny Fuller, Liz Strachan, Sue-Ann Grant, Sandy Innes, Maria Rossi, Richard Stroud, Karen Noble, Ian Noble, Ishbel Mollison, Jane Veitch, Monica Iloya

In Attendance: Moira Milne, Struan Gardner

1. Welcome and Apologies

David Wyllie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Colin Turnbull, Nicola Sedgwick, Yvonne Buckingham, Kerry Bryant, Ian Findlay and Tara Crooke

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting on 30th March 2016 were accepted as accurate.

Proposed by Maria Rossi

Seconded by Penny Fuller

2.1 Communications

The Community Campus website is now live.

2.2 Social media group – the Alford Academy bulletin is now shared on Facebook and the school blog is automatically sent through to Facebook and Twitter.

2.3 Homework app – see agenda item 6

2.4 Supporting learning – ongoing – subgroup still to meet.

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

2.5 Student Council partnership with Parent Council – ongoing – request for funding form drafted.

2.6 Games Hall temporary flooring - large carpet tiles have been purchased using part funding from Aberdeenshire Council so no funding is needed from Parent Council for this.

2.7 Bag racks – spaces for bag racks have been identified for bag racks, Moira will consult with the Student Council to look at options.

3 Treasurer's Report

- The available funds in the main account at present total £7,970.84. Since the last meeting a contribution to the Christmas lights has been paid and also a bill for photocopying. The Parent

Council have committed to pay approximately £1,600 for the Awards Ceremony and £150 for refreshments for the P7 parent information evening.

- The balance of the lottery account on 31/05/16 was £629.50.

4 **Head Teacher's Report**

Staff changes:

- **Biology** – Ms Kaura has left. An experienced biology teacher has since been appointed.
- **Art and Design** – Miss May is leaving. A probationer teacher has been allocated.
- **English** – Miss Sharp is moving abroad. A new principal teacher of English has been appointed. Mr Turner is leaving and this vacancy is yet to be filled.
- **Support for learning** – Celestine Medley is retiring
- **PSA** – Wendy Thomson is retiring.
- **Mrs Park - reduced to 3 days** – the position to cover the remaining 2 days has been advertised.
- **Depute position to support 3-18 school** – Alford primary and secondary are working towards having one Head Teacher for the whole campus. The cluster primary schools will need reassurance that there will be no disadvantage to their pupils. The cluster primaries will benefit from shared curriculum planning to enable a smooth transition to the academy. Information regarding the proposal to transition to a 3-18 school will be sent out soon. Moira informed us that other schools already have this model for example Moffat, Dumfries and Galloway and Webster High School, Blairgowrie – small rural schools similar to Alford. It was suggested that the Parent Councils may join together for some meetings.

5 **Proposals for funding**

Parent Council agreed to fund the Award Ceremony again this year, approximately £1,600 as well as the refreshments for the P7 parent information evening -£150. A further proposal is for funding for the “Show My Homework” app. (See 6 below)

6 **“Show My Homework” App**

The principal teachers at Alford Academy feel very positive about this tool; there is overwhelming support for it. It is a web based tool to let staff share the details of homework tasks with pupils and parents. There are case studies from other schools to show the benefits to staff, students and parents. The “Show My Homework” team have provisionally agreed to start in August. They will run the package until Christmas and the school can walk away at this point if it is not suitable without incurring any cost. The cost for 2 years of delivery is £3,600. The issue of access was raised, not all homes may have access to the internet at home. The current homework planners would be run in parallel for the first year and if the app was found to be working for all then the planners would not be necessary in subsequent years. The Parent Council felt that a common complaint from parents was not being aware of the homework tasks that had been set and would therefore be willing to support this, and possibly fundraise in the future for this specific cost. The members present at the meeting all agreed that the £3,600 cost over 2 years should be funded by the Parent Council. At Christmas, after the trial period, feedback will be obtained and a decision made whether to continue or not.

7 **School Improvement Priorities**

Parental Engagement – a pilot was run on the evening of the meeting using the company “Tree of Knowledge” to help determine how to involve and engage parents. Unfortunately it was not well attended. Moira would like to plan a longer event run during the day and evenings in September.

A suggestion was made to repeat the open days that happened some years ago where parents visited classes to see pupils working, however these were not well attended in the past. Events tied in with parents’ evenings are ideal as there is always high attendance. A presentation on the “Show My Homework” app could be incorporated. Some parents asked for a talk from the police about internet safety similar to the one for P7 parents.

Close 9.15 pm

Date of next meeting - AGM September 2016, date TBC

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

