

ALFORD ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Alford Academy
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Minutes of AGM 17th September 2018

Present: Colin Turnbull, Liz Strachan, David Wyllie, Sandy Innes, Penny Fuller, Denise Smith, Sarah McGregor, Sabina Smith, Sarah Lewis, Sheena Lawson, Monica Iloya

In Attendance: Moira Milne

Annual General Meeting

1. Welcome and Apologies

Colin Turnbull welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Richard Stroud, Nicola Sedgwick, Charlotte Milburn and Tara Crooke.

2. Chairperson's Annual Report

Colin summarised the activities of the Parent Council over the last year and emphasised that the Parent Council acts as a conduit to the school to give a voice to the parent forum, helping the school understand what parents are wanting from the school, and helping parents understand what the school are trying to achieve. It is not a forum for personal issues about individual children – these should go direct to the school. Alford Academy has an open-door policy for parents to discuss any issues of concern. On occasion parents have contacted Colin, as the PC Chair, regarding individual concerns, and he has helped individuals to liaise with the school by listening and being part of discussions, to ensure there are no misunderstandings or miscommunications. Colin has been involved in interviews for the Pupil Senior Executive and for the recent recruitment of the new Depute Head Teachers.

The Parent Council's most dynamic activity is fundraising, for which Colin thanked David Wyllie for his continued good work with the sub group. Other activities in the last year included the Careers and Finance Information evening for parents and pupils to learn about apprenticeships, university and other courses and advice on funding. Planning for the outdoor learning environment has taken place in conjunction with the Student Council. Christmas lights were funded by the Parent Council at the end of last year. The Parent Council has been involved in the development of the school's restorative practice policy and punctuality policy as well as the vision, values and aims of the school. Colin has attended meetings with the Chair of the Primary School Parent Council to share ideas.

The Parent Council has been involved in helping the school develop the School Improvement Plan this year. Aims for this year include providing volunteers that have had the necessary checks to help when required in supporting the school, improving home learning by providing parents with support to help their child, building relationships with all parents and determining the most effective way to reach them. A drugs awareness and mental health information event is planned this year. A sub group is to be set up to give a voice to parents with children with additional support needs. Upskilling parents is also a focus for this year.

Colin thanked our co-opted member, Richard Stroud, and all other members of the Parent Council as well as others who have helped this year.

Colin reported that Ian Findlay has sadly passed away - he contributed great knowledge and experience to many of the meetings, despite ill health. He will be greatly missed.

There are many things the Parent Council would like to be involved in, but as all of us are volunteers, lack of time makes it hard. Breaking tasks into smaller chunks will make it easier for people to volunteer.

3. Treasurer's Annual Report

The balance of the main account on 31/08/2018 was £4,014.41.

The balance of the lottery account on 31/08/2018 was £1651.00. Unpresented cheques total £150.00, leaving a cashbook balance of £1501.00. (If cheques are not presented once they are more than 6 months out of date and there is no reply after contacting the individuals, the cheques will be written off.)

This leaves an overall balance of approximately £5,500.

Aberdeenshire Council funding has not been received this year as we must show evidence that the Parent Council Constitution has been reviewed before funding will be released.

The accounts for 2017-2018 have been audited.
(See attached financial statements)

4. Election of Office Bearers

Chairperson:	Colin Turnbull	Proposed by David Wyllie Seconded by Liz Strachan
Secretary:	vacant	(Liz Strachan will continue until post filled)
Treasurer:	Denise Smith	Proposed by Colin Turnbull Seconded by Penny Fuller
Co-opted member:	Richard Stroud	Proposed by Colin Turnbull Seconded by David Wyllie
Vice-chair:	David Wyllie	Proposed by Colin Turnbull Seconded by Sarah Mcgregor

Election of Members

There are 14 parent/carer members at present, and 1 co-opted member; 1 more parent place remains which can be filled at subsequent meetings if required.

The following are members for 2018-19:

Sheena Lawson	(S1)	Colin Turnbull	(S4)
Sabina Smith	(S1)	Penny Fuller	(S4)
Charlotte Milburn	(S2)	Liz Strachan	(S5)
Denise Smith	(S2, S6)	David Wyllie	(S6)
Sarah Lewis	(S2)	Sandy Innes	(S6)
Monica Iloya	(S3)	Tara Crooke	(S6x2)
Sarah McGregor	(S3)	Richard Stroud	(co-opted member)
Nicola Sedgwick	(S3)		

AGM close

First Meeting of Parent Council Session 2018-2019

1. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting on 20th June 2018 were accepted as accurate.

Proposed by Sandy Innes

Seconded by David Wyllie

Matters arising

1.1 Parent Council- Pupil Council partnership – outdoor learning environment

Ongoing – new school contact Stuart Cookson

ACTION: Outdoor learning environment – Penny Fuller, Sarah Mcgregor and Liz Strachan will attend Pupil Council meeting and feedback at next meeting Moirra Milne

1.2 Forum across all cluster schools

Ongoing. Drugs awareness/mental health information event – see 3.1.2

ACTION: Parent Council to create a forum across all cluster schools and aim to hold a topic driven event twice yearly. Drugs awareness/mental health event planned. See 3.1.2

2. Constitution review

An updated proforma constitution has been provided by Aberdeenshire Council. The details were discussed at the meeting tonight with the members of the New Parent Council and all members agreed with the amendments. The proposed new constitution will be sent to all members of the Parent Forum via the school email and on the school blog. It will be adopted at the next meeting provided there are no objections.

During discussions about the constitution, it was noted that school staff may be co-opted onto the Parent Council – Moira Milne will ask if any members of staff are interested.

3. Feedback from Parental Engagement meeting on 27th August 2018

3.1 Home learning

3.1.1 Understanding progress letters and reports

A drop-in session to help parents understand tracking letters and reports is planned after the S4-6 tracking letters have been issued. Sessions will be arranged for Monday 24th September – one during the day and one in the evening. Parent Council members thought that “Signposting” was a good title for this. Senior management team members will be present along with some Parent Council members. Feedback from parents will be used to make any changes to the way the information is presented and handled.

ACTION: Drop-in sessions to be planned, to help parents understand tracking letters and reports. Some Senior management staff and Parent Council members will be present. Moirra Milne

3.1.2 Drugs awareness/mental health information event

A date has been set for March 20th 2019 for an event during school time for pupils and an evening for parents and carers. The following Parent Council members volunteered to help with this event - Denise Smith, Sheena Lawson and Monica Iloya.

ACTION: Drugs awareness/mental health information event planned for 20th March 2019. A sub group of Parent Council members will liaise with the school.

3.1.3 Upskilling parents

Ideas to upskill parents included workshops for specific subjects and giving information on learning styles. It is difficult to know when the best time to offer these workshops is. David Wyllie will draft a survey to ask parents when they would prefer. One idea is to add them on to Parents evenings, however many parents felt that those evenings were already busy enough without extra events. Ideas to try and reach the parents that would benefit were discussed. It was felt that even if only a few of these parents participated, it could be of great help to their children. Initially it was felt that we should target one subject – possibly Mathematics. Pupils could be involved in teaching parents; Pupil Council could possibly take the lead to run workshops. There may be an opportunity to join with the community and involve the Donside Community Council as well.

ACTION: David Wyllie will draft a survey to ask parents when the best time is to hold upskilling workshops and if they would attend. A pilot workshop for Mathematics is proposed.

3.2 Partnership with School

3.2.1 Communication – the school are looking at this at present – methods for parents to contact the school and teaching staff as well as the school communicating with parents. The plan is to continue Show My Homework, further develop the school website and promote the blog.

3.2.2 Parent Council-Pupil Council links – meetings with Parent Council subgroup planned.

3.2.3 Resources in community to enrich school education – aim to find who can help and then plan activities/tutorials etc. A sub- group of the Parent Council will help with this. Volunteers so far are Sarah McGregor and Penny Fuller. This could also involve the Donside Community Council.

3.3 Parental Representation

3.3.1 Parental Voice – the school are good at getting views but not sharing the results with parents – “You said, we did”. A suggestion was made to have a section in the school newsletter summarising what has been done.

3.3.2 Parent Council – share the work of the Parent Council and encourage volunteers. People find it easier to volunteer a small contribution rather than a huge task. It is proposed to hold a meeting in August each year a few weeks before the AGM, inviting parents to “Come and meet the Parent Council”. This would be a shorter more informal meeting.

3.3.3 Parent Council subgroup to liaise with Community Groups – eg “Spikin Autism” group - to give a voice to parents of pupils with additional support needs- carried forward to next meeting.

4. Staffing Update

New appointments/changes

I Gilliland	Teacher of ASL
C McKay	Teacher of ASL
S Mackrell	PSA
D Wilson	Probationer Mathematics
K Henderson-Young	Teacher of History
D McCance	Teacher of Art & Design
S Cahill	Teacher of Computing
L Gillan	Teacher of Modern Studies
S Kilerei	Teacher of Modern Languages
L Taylor	Teacher of Business
J MacRae	Teacher of Science
S Conway	Acting PT Science

A Shearer	Acting Principal Teacher PE
D Gerrie	Principal Teacher Guidance (New House)
G Scott	Principal Teacher Guidance (Craigievar)
V Williams	Principal Teacher Guidance (Kildrummy)
H Czarnecki	Teacher of Computing
R Forsyth	Teacher of Business
S Whitelaw	Teacher of ASL

Supply staff continue to be used for Biology, Modern Languages, Business, Computing, Drama, ASL and Chemistry when needed.

Close 9.15pm

Dates of future meetings

Tuesday 6th November 2018 at 7pm

Wednesday 23rd January 2019 at 7pm

Monday 18th March 2019 at 7pm

Tuesday 14th May 2019 at 7pm

Wednesday 19th June 2019 at 8pm

Monday 26th August 2019 at 7pm (“Come and Meet the Parent Council”)

ACTION POINTS

- ACTION:** Outdoor learning environment – Penny Fuller, Sarah McGregor and Liz Strachan will attend Pupil Council meeting and feedback at next meeting Moira Milne
- ACTION:** Parent Council to create a forum across all cluster schools and aim to hold a topic driven event twice yearly. Drugs awareness/mental health event planned. See **3.1.2**
- ACTION:** Drop-in sessions to be planned, to help parents understand tracking letters and reports. Some Senior management staff and Parent Council members will be present. Moira Milne
- ACTION:** Drugs awareness/mental health information event planned for 20th March 2019. A sub group of Parent Council members will liaise with the school.
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