

**ALFORD ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL**  
Alford Academy  
Greystone Road  
ALFORD  
AB33 8TY



[www.alfordacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk](http://www.alfordacademy.aberdeenshire.sch.uk)

[alfordaca.pc@outlook.com](mailto:alfordaca.pc@outlook.com)

**Minutes**  
**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020**  
**Alford Academy**  
**At 7pm**

Chair: Ingrid Huldal (Vice-Chair)  
Minutes: Monica Iloya (Secretary)  
Present: Committee: Sarah Lewis, Donna Gray, Charlotte Millburn, Denise Smith  
Penny Fuller, Sheena Lawson, Rhona Stuart  
Other: Liz Strachan, Fiona Parsons, Gloria Malcolm, Joe Purkis,  
Fiona Parsons, Councillor John Latham  
Apologies: Committee: Nicola Sedgwick, Grainne Paton, Richard Stroud,  
Colin Turnbull  
Other: Fiona Mitchelhill, Petra Glennie, Ishbel Mollison  
In Attendance: Moira Milne (Head Teacher)

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

**Apologies:** As above

**2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising**

**MINUTES:** Proposed by Penny Fuller; Seconded by Sarah Lewis

**2.1 ACTION:** Application for Grants – Denise Smith to update group on progress.

*Update: Nil to report; add to next meeting*

**2.2 ACTION:** Alumni Project: Ingrid will arrange with Joe/Moira a time to come to the school to discuss with the pupils who have volunteered.

*Update: Joe, Diane and Moira met with a group of pupils for the Inspire Young People (Alumni) project. The pupils are very enthusiastic. A questionnaire has been trialed and the pupils are reviewing the questionnaire. The plan is to meet again as time allows to move this forward.*

**2.3 ACTION:** Sub-groups - Monica will email the members of each group to check they still wish to be involved and to ask that the group members liaise with Moira Milne to agree a remit for each of the sub-groups which should then be written down and shared at the next meeting.

*Update: Email went out and groups have been formed.*

**2.4 ACTION:** Litter in the Community: The school will continue their focus on educating pupils and monitoring litter. Contacts with local Aberdeenshire Officers will be made to look into other potential strategies.

*Update: Moira and Councillor Latham have discussed with the Area Office and have been signposted to some people who could come and speak to pupils.*

**2.5 ACTION:** Cycling on Campus - Councillor Latham will take this forward at the council aiming to enable an environment on campus conducive to safe and considerate cycling. In the meantime, Moira will reissue message as regards cycling which is not currently allowed on campus.

*Update: Councillor Latham has contacted Transport Officer, Martin Hall, and he is going to follow up with the school, but this hasn't happened as yet. Councillor Latham will continue to chase this up.*

### **3. Treasurer's report – Denise Smith**

Balance in main Account: £2144.77

No cheques going out

Easy Fundraising has raised £72.99

No money from Council – Monica to email again and copy in Denise.

**ACTION:** Monica to email Christine McLennan again with a copy of AGM and Constitution requesting funds be released to Parent Council, copying in Denise.

### **4. Head Teacher's report:**

#### **Staffing update:**

- Susan Whitelaw ASL – leaving the school
- Seyda Killerci – 0.2 FTE as Acting Principal Teacher of Modern Languages
- Jenni Prentice – FT – Recently started as the School's Business and Community Support Officer (funded via the Excelerate Programme).
- Vacancies: Teacher of Physics; Teacher of Technical – supply teachers currently

#### **Events:**

- S3 – Health Day – Judo, sleep, healthy eating, active schools and mental health were all covered.
- YPI (Young Philanthropist Initiative) – 5<sup>th</sup> Year pupils – this initiative is sponsored by the Wood Foundation with a £2500 prize to be given to the chosen charity. There were great presentations from the pupil teams and the winning presentation by a team on SAMH (Scottish Association of Mental Health) was outstanding; the pupils also have to raise another £500 in addition to the prize money to give to their chosen charity. The winning team has been invited to present to the National YPI Conference in Perth.
- SDA (Skills Development Academy) – Pupils work towards an SQA qualification through this programme. One group organized a Community Café (Coffee Morning) and invited community members to the event which did very well.
- Children in Need – Teams of Teachers took part in the now annual Lip Sync Competition which was a lot of fun and raised money for Children in Need.
- Alford School Values – A Graphic Designer is working with pupils to develop school material to represent the updated school values.
- Boccia Festival – there was an Inter-schools Boccia festival at Alford Academy.
- House Assemblies – the end of term house assemblies went well and were good fun.

- Project Based Learning – the school is focusing on developing staff skills as regards being able to deliver effective project-based learning; a pilot project was undertaken around the topic of Food Banks. This is described as “Learning through the Lens”. The children learnt Maths and other skills through taking part in this project.
- Christmas Services – the Pipe Band and Concert Band played at the Christmas Services. They were excellent and they then played again at the Whole School Assembly.
- Rotary Young Musician of the Year Competition was held – there was a very high standard.
- Inter-house competitions – these are ongoing, and the school is trying to do these each week and pupils can win points for their house.
- Feedback on Excelerate:  
Moirra gave a summary of what the Excelerate Programme is all about. This is being funded and facilitated by the Wood Foundation. She spoke about their visit to the Nashville Academies and a more recent visit to Newcastle to find out more about how to move this project forward. Three staff members went to Newcastle and are very passionate about the Excelerate Programme. The most recent Excelerate event was a Stakeholder Engagement Conference last week. There was good representation from Alford Parent Council with Colin, Ingrid and Monica attending. There were also head teachers, teachers, pupils and local businesses. The conference was very positive and informative. Ingrid, Monica and Moira were all impressed with the impact that the Nashville Academies have had with improved outcomes for pupils on many levels including academically. This is a work in progress and Moira will continue to update Parents on the progress of Excelerate.  
<https://www.thewoodfoundation.org.uk/developing-young-people-in-scotland/excelerate/>  
**ACTION:** Moira to continue to Update the Parent Council on Excelerate
- Excelerate Visit – Starr Herrman from Nashville Academies visited Alford this week and spoke to staff in small groups. She is a very inspiring and motivating person and the school feel privileged to be working with her as part of the Excelerate Programme. <http://nashvillehub.org/about-us/>

## 5. Parent Council Sub-groups\* - Update

### a. Fundraising Group

Ingrid, Petra and Grainne met on 16.1.20 to discuss ideas for fundraising for the school. Ingrid fed back a summary of this meeting. Their aim is to make plans just and aim to get something done this year (? A ‘roup’) but the main plans will focus on the next academic year. Other ideas included cake stalls at Parents Evening and a Fashion Show. At the meeting, it was suggested that this group explore eligibility criteria for fundraising through the Co-op.

**ACTION:** Fund-raising group to explore fundraising options through the co-op and to ask Amy Wilson about options as regards a Fashion Show as Amy has some knowledge in this area.

### b. Parent Council-Pupil Partnership

Ishbel and Sarah met with Student Council Representatives yesterday, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Sarah fed back the following for the meeting which was read out at the meeting:

- I. The pupils thanked the Parent Council for the generous donation for the Christmas lights & decorations. The students were very pleased with them all.
- II. They have now formed 3 sub-groups - Eco, Campus & Media who will now concentrate on these 3 key areas
- III. The first task was a survey of the Campus.
- IV. Outside areas 'The Triangle' and the 'Canteen Outside Area' to be utilised more; perhaps furnished with better seating arrangements, sensory items, plants, cover from rain. Their next task is to re-look at the further outside areas and ask for comments from students.
- V. They do have a number of ongoing issues, and would welcome another 'sit down' with canteen staff:
  - a. Queuing – they hope to discuss a better way of forming queues and getting through faster
  - b. The round tables & chairs are more obstructive and perhaps replace them with the long tables
  - c. Please, more fruit and healthy snacks, maybe a salad bar and less cakes
  - d. To discuss amount of food prepared...perceptions that it always runs out.
  - e. Reduce packaging - in particular single use plastic.

**c. Community Group Link – additional support needs**

This group has met recently with Moira. Three main areas were discussed: 1) Communication – the school are keen to promote that it is “ok” to be contacting school with concerns even if this is frequent; 2) Bullying – this was discussed and the sub-group were reassured as to the schools approach to Bullying; 3) Training – funds are available to support teachers with additional supports training eg utilize Spikin Autism. The aim of this sub-group is to keep good communication going between the school and parents with additional support needs. Moira reported that she felt this had been a very useful meeting and was also a useful “Myth busting” meeting. All present felt that there is a shared vision in place which was very positive.

**d. Alumni Project**

Donna Gray as a former pupil has kindly offered to help with this project and Ingrid plans to stand down for this group. This project will work well with new Excelerate Project. A pupil is going to take on the IT part of the project.

**6. Parent Council Health Check**

- The parent council reviewed and rated the “Communication: Parent Council Health Check”. These checklists have been developed by Connect who “strive to make parental involvement in education as good as it can be”. <https://www.connect.scot/>
- It was agreed that most areas were ‘Green’ (very well implemented) but the following areas were ‘Orange’ (Good Start) but room for development/improvement. There was one ‘Red’ (Needs Improvement):
  - *We have organised the Connect information session Involving all Parents*
- Orange areas:
  - *We use different ways to communicate with parents”*
  - *We produce leaflets for parents to help them engage with their child’s education*
  - *We write articles for the school newsletter*
  - *We have a page on the school website*

- *The Parent Forum know who is on the Parent Council*
- *The Parent Forum know how to contact the Parent Council*
- *We make sure all communication from the Parent Council and the school is written in parent-friendly language*
- *We always publicise our work and achievements to all parents and others in the school community*
- *We are aware of the challenges some parents face when trying to engage with the school/Parent Council*
- *We make an effort to involve all parents including single parents, nonresident parents, and parents from ethnic and cultural groups*
- *We work with the family link worker/community workers to develop ways to work with parents currently not engaged with their child's learning*
- Some ideas were discussed but as time was limited no actual changes were agreed.
- Charlotte Milburn has a background in communications and has kindly offered to look at the 'Orange' areas and bring some suggestions back to the next Parent Council Meeting.

**ACTION:** Monica to email Charlotte with the 'Orange' areas and she will look at potential ways to improve in these areas.

## 7. AOB

- a) Sarah McGregor is standing down from her role in Parent Council. This leaves a Vacancy on Parent Council; Frank Sewell has volunteered to join the Parent Council and there was agreement by all present for this to happen. Sarah also has a role with adding things to the School Blog for Parent Council. It was agreed as a trial, Monica will take on this role in the short-term. Ingrid has offered to be back up in this role.

**ACTION:** Monica to update membership of Parent Council; Monica & Ingrid to liaise with the school as regards the Blog.

## 8. Dates of next meeting

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 7pm

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 7pm

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020 8pm

Close at 9pm

## **ACTION POINTS:**

**ACTION:** Application for Grants – Denise Smith to update group on progress.

**ACTION:** Cycling on Campus - Councillor Latham will feedback on outcome of his communication at the council as regards this issue.

**ACTION:** Monica to email Christine McLennan again with a copy of AGM and Constitution requesting funds be released to Parent Council, copying in Denise

**ACTION:** Moira to continue to Update the Parent Council on Excelerate

**ACTION:** Fund-raising group to explore fundraising options through the co-op and to ask Amy Wilson about options as regards a Fashion Show as Amy has some knowledge in this area.

**ACTION:** Monica to update membership of Parent Council; Monica & Ingrid to liaise with the school as regards the Blog.

**\*Parent Council Sub-groups 2019-2020: Update on Members**

Fundraising – Sarah McGregor, Ingrid Huldal, Grainne Paton, Nicola Duncan & Petra Glennie  
Parent Council-Pupil Partnership – Penny Fuller & Ishbel Mollison  
Community Group Link: additional support needs – Sheena Lawson, Rhona Stuart, Sarah Lewis & Donna Gray.  
Alumni Project: Inspire Young People –Joe Purkis, Colin Turnbull & Donna Gray

**Updated Parent Council Members: Quorum 6**

Fiona Henderson	(S1)	Colin Turnbull (Chair)	(S2, S5)
Nicola Duncan	(S1)	Donna Gray	(S2, S4, S6)
Sarah Lewis	(S1, S3)	Ingrid Huldal (Vice-chair)	(S3)
Grainne Patton	(S1)	Sheena Lawson	(S3, S4)
Jane Veitch	(S1, S3, S6)	Denise Smith (Treasurer)	(S3)
Monica Iloya (Secretary)	(S1, S4)	Charlotte Milburn	(S3)
Nicola Sedgwick	(S1, S4)	Penny Fuller	(S5)
Frank Sewell	(S1, S2)	Richard Stroud	(co-opted member)