



<https://alfordacademy.edublogs.org/parent-council>  
<http://alfordaca.pc@outlook.com>

## **MINUTES OF THE ALFORD ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 (7.00 - 9.00 pm)  
Alford Academy - Room D068/D069/Virtual - via Teams link

### **Attendees** ('T' = on Teams):

- Office Bearers: Ingrid Huldal – Chair, Coralie Robertson – Secretary
- Parent Council Members: Lucy Greene (T), Fiona Henderson, Monica Iloya, Sarah Lewis (T), Frank Sewell, Tanya Viliene, Sharon Witherspoon
- Parent Forum: Shona Barclay (T), Fay Mckay, Lisa Moir, Aly Lyon, Linda Purkis, David Reeves, Rhona Stuart, Fiona Woodhead (T)
- School Staff: Angela Wotherspoon - Head Teacher  
Stuart Cookson - Depute Head Teacher (Curriculum)  
Graham Scott - Acting Depute Head Teacher (Pupil Support)
- Councillors: Cllr Jeff Goodhall (T), Cllr Gwyneth Petrie (T)

### **1. Welcome & apologies**

Apologies: Joe Purkis (Vice-chair), Dawn Brown (Treasurer), Charlotte Millburn, Denise Smith, Cllr Sarah Brown.

### **2. Review of previous meeting minutes and matters arising**

Corrections to previous minutes under Parent Council Members 2022 – 2023

- Sharon O'Mant corrected to Sharon Witherspoon
- Treasurer corrected to Dawn Brown

Minutes approved by Linda Purkis, seconded by Tanya Viliene

#### **Actions:**

Send out reminder about Easyfundraising and <a href="#">link</a>	Ingrid
Application for fundraising through Tesco at Westhill	Fundraising sub-group
Feedback on hybrid meeting	All at meeting

### **3. The Parent Council**

Ingrid gave a presentation about the Parent Council:

#### **Introduction to the new office bearers and PC Members**

- Thank you to out-going Secretary, Monica, and Treasurer, Densie, and welcome to Coralie Robertson (Secretary) and Dawn Brown (Treasurer).
- Welcome to new S1 Parent Council members and thank you to all those staying on the PC Committee this year so that there is representation across the school years.

**Main role of parent councils**

- To improve links between parents, schools, local authority, and local community.
- Report to parents/carers on school updates, provide support, represent views of all parents/carers and discuss any issue of interest to parents/carers.
- Take part/organize social (and fundraising) activities.
- Involved in School Improvement Planning & Action plan, recruitment of Senior Management Team and in school inspections.

**What you can expect from Alford Academy Parent Council (AAPC)**

- To get information about the PC and its activities, be invited to be involved in PC activities, such as sub-committee, and be asked for your opinion by the PC on issues about the school community.
- To have all views listened to and represented in an equal and fair way involving parents from the whole school community and to be involved in how the PC is organized and how it operates, for example, making changes to the constitution.

**Where we can't provide support**

- Individual matters relating to pupils or staff or faculty members.
- Alford Academy has an open-door policy for parents to discuss personal or specific issues of concern relating to pupils or staff through House Guidance Head, the Leadership and Head Teacher.

**Code of Conduct / Parent Council meetings**

- Be courteous, respect other people's views, signal to Chair that you would like to speak.
- Put forward items for the agenda before the next meeting - personal issues should not be raised.
- Keep contributions short and to the point.
- Thank you for suggestions that were put forward for this meeting from parents/carers and the PC will continue to ask for these for each meeting.

**How we communicate**

- Meet each school term –now finally back to on site for hybrid meetings
- Meeting minutes and agenda are sent out via email and also on blog <https://alfordacademy.edublogs.org/parent-council>
- Direct questions to AAPC email [alfordaca.pc@outlook.com](mailto:alfordaca.pc@outlook.com)

**4. AAPC Constitution**

Change logo to Alford Academy

Vote at next meeting on specifying maximum length for officer bearers to allow others the opportunity to support the Parent Council in these roles.

Action:

Update Constitution with proposed changes and circulate to all parents/carers for review	Coralie
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**5. Treasurer report**

Balance from the last meeting: £5,256.53

Plus, additional payment from Co-op of £3,509.25 (Total funding received from Co-op was an amazing £4,027.32)

Easy fundraising received this month £94.47

**Balance currently £8860.25**

Cheque to be paid out for the school senior basketball kit – £443.24

**Balance after kit cheque comes off £8417.01**

The amount raised for the Outdoor Space project is ring-fenced as the PC has had a generous offer from Kirkwood Homes to match half of our fundraising target of £15,000.

## **6. Sub-committee updates**

### FUNDRAISING

Outdoor Space Project - Thank you to our families, friends, school community and the local Co-op for supporting our fundraising. Together we raised £4,027.32

Basketball Club - Emily Niven, who runs the basketball club, thanked the PC for funding for senior team kit which they used in the Scottish Cup League and other matches. Club is expanding and brought in an external coach and are in the process of forming a team from the Junior club members and are actively encouraging more girls to join. Thank you to the staff who give their free time to support lunchtime and after school activities.

Just Transition Fund - Government money to support communities transition to net zero. School projects need to apply for funding through a constituted group such as the PC:  
Alford Community Food Resource

- supporting our local community and school to become greener and more waste conscious through creating a publicly shared space where food that would otherwise be wasted is freely available to the community.

School Eco Group - supporting the aims of our pupil Eco Group to

- encourage regeneration and increase biodiversity of the area around the campus after Storm Arwen
- improve the local environment by supporting litter picking
- move towards a plastic free school by supporting reusable water bottles

Successful application will be decided by public voting.

Thank you to Dawn for supporting the application process.

### HORIZONS

Alford Academy actively trying to improve our career education to inspire young people about their future careers. Sub-group focused on engaging with parents/carers & wider community to share experiences, pathways and skills to inspire our young people

Meeting held on 11th Oct between Mr Cookson and Lisa.

Lisa contacted 24 local business and partners for school

Mr Cookson shared the Horizon vision for the term and what would wish to achieve for our senior pupils, including

- Involving more businesses to share their experience and skills that they use everyday.
- Planning who to invite into school to share experience and their pathways with pupils.
- Increasing our partners of businesses who can provide a talk or demonstration of their job to young people.

- Increasing the number of businesses/partners who could give up their time to help with mock interviews, virtual or in person.
- Create Horizons Flier providing info on what we are trying to achieve in Horizons to share with businesses.
- Engage parents to help reaching out to potential partners.
- Contact local businesses to provide brief overview of Horizon's Program.

Mr Cookson shared this with our Developing the Young Workforce Coordinator, Romana. Employer Mock Interviews held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November for group of S5, others for group S6 on 6<sup>th</sup> December.

Mr Cookson said it was a great start to the Horizon's Program and thanked Lisa for getting this going so well.

## PARENT COUNCIL & PUPIL PARTNERSHIP

Student Council is very enthusiastic and refreshing number of ideas and suggestions. Frank and Coralie have had two meetings to support the Student Council and identify areas where PC can help. Meetings well attended representing all years across school. Student Council identified current priorities:

- Ways to raise the awareness of the Student Council within school.
- Identifying areas for pupils to use as study areas within the school and library with enough access to sockets for charging devices, including the option of using power banks.

The next meeting to discuss the Outdoor Space project.

PC members plan to meet with the Student Council termly to support the number of ideas they have for improvements elsewhere.

### Action

Arrange meeting with Student Council	Parent Council & Pupil Partnership subgroup
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## COMMUNITY GROUP LINK: ASN

Group has been largely dormant since covid lockdowns.

Historically established 6 years ago to look at communication.

Sub-group would welcome any new members with an interest in additional support needs with the opportunity to support each other, share experiences and information (please pass your contact details via PC email).

See Appendix for some resources parents/carers and children may find useful.

### Action

Information to be sent out via school inviting new members	Community link: ASN sub-group/Coralie
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## COMMUNICATION

No further updates since the last meeting.

### Action

Arranging a date to meet and discuss	Communication sub-group
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## 7. Head update

Staffing and training update:

Laura Allan allocated one day equivalent per week in pupil support role.

Nursing assistant hours have been advertised.

Technical teacher post advertised for some time and looking at incentives to attract candidates as this is a problem across the North East. The timetable has been adjusted to accommodate.

Mrs Wotherspoon thanked Mr Gardner and the staff said goodbye after his 14 years at Alford Academy. The new Depute Mr Matt Skellern has been appointed and his start date is currently being negotiated.

Behavior and relationship group had staff training by external company

Inspection:

Mrs Wotherspoon thanked parents/carers for completing questionnaires and supporting their children to do that and for parents/carers who came in for meetings with the inspectors.

Inspection is being assessed on the following 3 Core Quality indicators from the document 'How Good is our School':

- 1.3 Leadership of change
- 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment
- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

Industrial action:

School will look at how to support pupils during any industrial action affecting prelims and re-schedule exams.

School update:

S5 Horizons held CV writing session and Mock interviews.

S4 in PSE took part in Youth Philanthropy Initiative in teams creating a presentation about a local charity and presenting this to an audience and judges. The winning team's charity was Food Bank (Inverurie) who received a donation from the Wood Group. This was the first year the event was back in school.

S3 Chemistry pupils are set to tackle an exciting project with Neptune Energy following a series of presentations from staff members during Scottish Careers Week.

S2 pupils attended Agriculture Careers Fair organised by our partners at Countryside Learning Scotland with guest presenters from sectors within Agriculture to highlight progression and pathways.

S1 Parents evening – successful evening with parents back in school.

The Pupil Participation Forum (a subgroup of the Student Council who meet once a term with other pupils from Aberdeenshire schools and the Head of Education and Director of Education) took part in a Teams meeting to voice their opinions on school improvement.

World Mental Health Day - staff wore yellow raise awareness of, and to demonstrate support for, young people's mental health. Staff shared how to access support in and outside school.

Remembrance – daily poem reading by senior pupils. Senior prefects and pipe, and P7 took part in ceremony of Remembrance and laid wreaths on behalf of the Academy.

Visit by Owen Miller MBE who won Gold in the men’s T20 1500m category at the Tokyo Paralympics in September 2021. He spoke to several classes and brought his gold medal along for pupils to see.

Interact - thank you for supporting the young people with Rotary Shoeboxes. Interact held an enjoyable coffee morning raising £279.52. Children in Need raised about £550.

Eco group have been awarded Green Flag status for the third year and the Fair-Trade Achievement Award.

Interhouse competitions were held in Table tennis and an entertaining Pictionary

Christmas Dance will be held for the first time for a number of years

S1-3 Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 7-9.30pm

S4-6 Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 7-10pm

School leaver profile:

Mr Cookson said the consultation voting has been completed on the school leaver profile highlighting 7 skills young people will work towards before leaving the Academy.

Every classroom will have these displayed as a poster.

Horizons program focuses on these skills so pupils can demonstrate them.

School is creating a presentation about the school leaver profile to share with pupils and parents.

Work experience/placement

Mr Cookson explained that several years ago school stopped arranging a week of work experience with the introduction of Foundation Apprenticeships. Parents/carers would need to look for placements themselves and then approach Guidance teachers who can provide support so school can assess health and safety.

Action

School to send out information to all parents about work experience/placements	Mr Cookson
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## 8. AOB

Just Transition Fund (Community Fridge & Eco Group) – application asked for contribution to funding. Total funding applied for is over £9,000 and funding contribution through PC of £250 was agreed.

Basketball Club – it is currently difficult to get sponsorship for team kit and Emily Niven has donated some equipment to get club established. The PC agreed to fund junior team kit of £444 and suggested basketballs were supported by club fundraising or exploring funding through Alford Sports Hub.

National Discussion survey – decided that responses would be by individuals rather than through PC at [National Discussion Scottish Education - Scottish Government - Citizen Space \(consult.gov.scot\)](https://www.nationaldiscussion.scot/)

School wifi - not working well for some pupils with some using their own data.

Devices provided by school not always in the classroom they are needed.

Not easy to use own mobile devices for some activities.

Mrs Wotherspoon advised that the Scottish Government intends to provide a device for each pupil, Aberdeenshire Council currently discussing which type of device, however, once decided there are longer lead times at present.

#### Action

School to contact Aberdeenshire Council about speed of wifi	Mrs Wotherspoon
School to contact Aberdeenshire Council about progress of providing devices for pupils	Mrs Wotherspoon

Year reps/points of contact – Raised that PC meetings focused more on senior years e.g., exams and not covering S1-3 with issues taken up directly with parents of particular years. Understanding the needs of S1-3 and their parents was raised, particularly around S2 and S3 parents visit day being during the working day making it difficult for some parents.

Mrs Wotherspoon explained the opportunity for parents to visit had be organised through Clan to give S2 and S3 leadership opportunities as well as inviting parents/carers into school and had positive feedback. An evening event was not possible as the teaching staff agreement covers number of evenings worked and this was for parents evening which are now in person.

It was felt that each year group was well represented through the PC members and parents/carers are encouraged to submit topics for discussion at PC meetings.

#### **Date of next meeting**

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2022

#### **APPENDIX**

COMMUNITY GROUP LINK: ASN

Some resources parents and children may find useful:

My Rights My Say ( <https://myrightsmysay.scot/> ) Children with additional support needs aged 12 –15 have rights. My Rights, My Say supports children aged 12-15 to be more involved in the decisions that affect them.

Salvensen Mindroom, ( <https://www.mindroom.org/> ) a Scottish charity that supports, informs, and empowers children and young people living with learning difficulties. They also have a great back to school tool kit and signposting to many other organisations.

Enquire ( <https://enquire.org.uk/> ) Advice service for parents of children who have or may have additional support needs.

Independent living Fund ( <https://ilf.scot/> ) ILF Scotland provides transition funding support for disabled people aged 16-25 in Scotland.

Grampian Opportunities ( <https://www.grampianopportunities.org.uk/> ) Connecting people to information, guidance, and other support options. Volunteering, employability, and a whole lot more.

**Dates of next meetings:**

16<sup>th</sup> January 2022 (Monday)  
 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023 (Tuesday)  
 10<sup>th</sup> May 2023 (Wednesday)  
 June 2023 (Date TBC) – P7 Parent Welcome

**Parent Council Members 2022 - 2023 (Quorum 6):**

Karen Leven	(S1)
Tanya Viliene	(S1)
Dawn Brown (Treasurer)	(S2)
Lucy Greene	(S2)
Sharon O’Mant	(S3)
Coralie Robertson (Secretary)	(S3)
Fiona Henderson	(S3, S1)
Joe Purkis (Depute Chair)	(S4)
Monica Iloya	(S4)
Sarah Lewis	(S4, S2)
Frank Sewell	(S5, S4, S2)
Donna Gray	(S5, S3, S2)
Denise Smith	(S6, S4)
Ingrid Huldal (Chair)	(S6, S1)
Charlotte Milburn	(S6)

**Parent Council Sub-committee Members 2022-2023:**

Fundraising	Ingrid Huldal, Grainne Paton, Coralie Robertson, Dawn Brown
Parent Council-Pupil Partnership	Frank Sewell, Coralie Robertson
Community Group Link: Additional Support Needs	Rhona Stuart, Donna Gray, Lisa Moir
Horizons	Joe Purkis, Lisa Moir, Jan Whitfield, John Whitfield
Communication	Charlotte Millburn, Dawn Brown
School Uniform Recycling	Amy Wilson, Sarah Lewis, Charlotte Milburn, Ingrid Huldal, Monica Iloya