



<https://alfordacademy.edublogs.org/parent-council>

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MINUTES OF ALFORD ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 19th November 2024 (7.00 – 8.00 pm)

Attendees

Office Bearers: Dawn Brown (Chair), Joe Purkis (Depute-chair), Coralie Robertson (Secretary)
PC Members: Linda Purkis, Charlotte Milburn, Nicole Scherer-Dickson, Rowena Ruben
Parent Forum: Ian Forbes, Emyr Bell
School Staff: Mrs Angela Wotherspoon - Head Teacher
Dr Matt Skellern - Depute Head Teacher (Learning and Teaching)
Mr Stuart Cookson Depute Head Teacher (Curriculum)
Mr Graham Scott - Depute Head Teacher (Pupil Support)
Councillors: Cllr Blackett, Cllr Goodhall

Welcome & apologies

Apologies:

PC members: Ingrid Huldal (Treasurer), Frank Sewell, Monica Iloya, Lindsey Duncan. Additionally: Cllr Brown, Cllr McKail

1. Review of previous minutes and matters arising

Previous minutes proposed by Coralie Robertson and seconded by Charlotte Milburn.
No matters arising that are not covered below.

2. Treasurer's report

Balance as of 19th November 2024	£5,965.36
Changes since last meeting:	
Income	
Aberdeenshire council payment (for Jo Munro ACT grant ward 14)	+£310.00
Easy Fundraising	+£151.28
Outgoings	
Transfer of grant to Alford Academy account	-£310.00
Pending	
*Actual projected available balance	£1938.04
*Reminder: £4,027.32 Ringfenced from Co-op for Outdoor Space project	

Asda Foundation grant for £500 received to support provision of school breakfast club (application made by Principal Teacher of Equity, Excellence and Wellbeing through Parent Council).

3. Sub-committee updates

Family Learning

- Dr. Skellern ran event for families on Google classroom with over 30 parents and carers.
- Next family learning event will be Study Support for S4-S6s.

Excelerate / Horizons

- Horizons programme for S5/S6 coming to an end with Police Scotland session about how to keep safe on a night out.
- Excelerate – sector day for S2s project-based learning in sector of choice. Employers coming in from industry sectors to talk to new S2s.

Fundraising

- PC will need to raise funds to continue to support school. Consider running quiz night/hundred club.
- Easyfundraising – continues to bring in a steady amount. Please sign up, it costs nothing and makes a reasonable amount of money for no effort.

Communications

- Photos added.

Action: Dates at Golf Club for fundraiser in March - Coralie

4. Head update

Staffing

- Pupil Support Worker appointed until end of March.
- Pupil Support Assistant appointed until the end of session.
- Social Subject Principal Teacher appointed.
- Interviews for the Maths Department completed with no appointment, will advertise again.
- Numeracy post vacant and advertised.
- Nursing Assistant post vacant and advertised.
- Biology post vacant and to be advertised.
- Modern Studies post vacant and to be advertised.

Updates

- Preparation for Prelims in January.
- Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) Final (S4) with presentations supporting charities in areas such as mental health, domestic violence and dementia.
- Rotary Shoebox appeal.
- Senior Boys football team through to Cup quarter final.
- U15s Girls football team first match together (team kit donated by PC).
- S3 Robotics project-based learning trip to Deans of Huntly.
- S1 to S3 took part in Bebras Challenge showcasing maths and computing.
- S3 project-based learning showcased work to their peers.
- Remembrance Day commemorations in school and at the Alford Memorial.
- Odd Socks Day supporting anti-bullying.
- Children In Need dress as you please raised £554 with lunchtime Taskmaster event.
- 2 pupils interviewed by Landward about rural careers at event in Aviemore.

Events:

- Christmas Dances.
- School music event in early December.

Depute Head Teacher (Learning and Teaching) update

- S3 Tracking and monitoring reports.
- Staff development in areas of differentiation, project-based learning, literacy & numeracy, effective feedback.

- Book group looking at pedagogical principal theories.
- Prelim preparation – timetables out to parents and on website.
- New chief invigilator. As a cost saving, staff will be used to invigilate prelims for S5/6 with external invigilators for S4 as first exam experience.
- Learning and teaching continues with Aboyne, Banchory and Westhill Academies for science and modern languages.
- In-service day focused on Observations, sharing and developing best practice.

Depute Head Teacher (Curriculum) update

- S3 project-based learning across 8 different sectors. Pupils showcased their chosen sector through presentations.
- S3 assembly discussed the skills they had developed since choosing their sectors in S2.
- S1-S3 project-based learning called Mission Christmas, a kindness project.
- Course choices for next session.

Depute Head Teacher (Pupil Support) update

- S4 parents evening 84% attendance.
- S5/S6 parents evening includes appointments with careers advisor.
- Theatre performance and workshop with S4, some senior pupils and drama pupils by Tie-It-Up Theatre company and Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation, a drug education charity. School will be working with the Foundation this year looking at webinar for parents and workshops across pupil year groups.

5. School Improvement Plan

1. Self evaluation

- School improvement based on data, looking at tracking and monitoring, insight data, baseline data.
- Make sure staff know how to use data to support improvement and Education Scotland quality indicators.
- Staff accessing learning opportunities (including at weekends).

2. Learning and teaching assessment

- Make sure curriculum is relevant and meets needs of pupils, including experience of project-based learning, YPI, activities days.
- Consistency in learning and teaching using circle framework developed across Aberdeenshire schools about inclusion in classroom and access by all pupils.
- Staff looking at how to bring improvements that fits in with lesson framework.
- Looking at what Alford Academy lesson looks like with feedback from staff, pupils and small group of parents.

3. Wellbeing

- Improve health and wellbeing of all stakeholders including pupils, staff and parents and carers. Cara Roberts supporting this.

School Improvement plan will be put on the blog to see progress.

6. AOB

- Mrs Wotherspoon asked about email that was sent concerning pupils buying school lunches without money on cards. School working hard to bring down number of pupils owing money as this is a debt the school has to carry and cannot afford. A lot of thought was put into the wording of the email and Mrs Wotherspoon confirmed that no pupils in receipt of free school meals were in debt.
- From 1 December, pupils without money on their card will not be able to buy drinks but will be able to put the cost of food on their card.

- Cllr Blackett asked how pupils are supported in school. Several ways, such as free school meals, Pupil equity fund, uniform, toiletries, Food hub, Guidance teachers have snacks available, school shares information about support with parents. Cllr Blackett has donations for the Food Hub.
- Cllr Goodhall to discuss issue with Chair of Education and Children Services.

Review of Amazon vouchers at Awards Ceremony as this has been a significant cost for the PC which would need to be supported by fundraising.

Is there funding to support pupils with UCAS fees?

- Pupils in receipt of free school meals do not pay UCAS fees.

Action:

- Information to be shared with parents about paying for school meals through iPayImpact App, MyAberdeenshire website and machine that can take cash to put on cards – Mr Scott.
- Issue about school debt against school lunches to be raised at the next PC Chairs meeting with Lawrance Findley – Dawn.
- Small group of parents to work with Student Council and SLT to review Amazon vouchers used at Awards Ceremony – Joe.

7. Date of next meeting

21st January 2025 – virtual meeting

PC meeting dates 2024/2025:

24th September 2024 (AGM)
 19th November 2024
 21st January 2025
 11th March 2025
 13th May 2025
 10th June 2025 (P7 Welcome evening)

Parent Council Members 2024/2025 (Quorum 6):

Kenny Criggie (S1)
 Suvidha Narayanan (S1)
 Rowena Ruden (S1)
 Jonathan Christie (S1)
 Tanya Viliene (S3)
 Ingrid Huldal (S3, S1)
 Dawn Brown (S4)
 Charlotte Milburn (S4)
 Nicole Scherer-Dickson (S5, S1)
 Sharon Witherspoon (S5)
 Coralie Robertson (S5)
 Linda Purkis (S6, S4)
 Joe Purkis (S6, S4)
 Frank Sewell (S6,S4)
 Monica Iloya (S6)