



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

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

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025

### **Attendees**

- Office Bearers: Dawn Brown (Chair), Suvidha Narayanan (Treasurer), Coralie Robertson (Secretary)
- PC Members: Linda Purkis, Frank Sewell, Suvidha Narayanan, Rowena Ruden, Tanya Viliene, Nicole Scherer-Dickson, Karen Leven, Lindsey Duncan, Emyr Bell, Ingrid Huldal
- Parent Forum: Heidi Neal, Amy Wilson, Crystal Anderson, Gillian Neal, Anne-Marie Little
- 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 Goodhall, Cllr Brown, Cllr Blackett, Cllr Petrie, Cllr Walker

### **Apologies**

PC members: Joe Purkis (Depute-chair), Charlotte Milburn, Sharon Witherspoon

### **1. Review of previous minutes and matters arising**

Previous minutes proposed by Dawn Brown and seconded by Suvidha Narayanan.

Actions carried forward:

- Small group of parents to work with Student Council and SLT to review PC funding for Awards Ceremony – JP.
- Produce a Risk Register for PVG (DB).
- Communicate with parents and carers and local community and co-ordinate donations with school (CA & CR).

### **2. Treasurer's report**

- DB had a meeting with AW to discuss funding support for school.
- Trustee Indemnity insurance required to protect PC members as trustees. It was agreed that trustee indemnity insurance would be purchased.
- Gift of £50 agreed for Penny Fuller for work as the independent examiner undertaking the annual account audit.
- An agreement will be drawn up for the funds held on behalf of Together for Teens.

Actions:

Arrange for Trustee Indemnity insurance to be purchased (CR).  
 Draw up an agreement for the funds held on behalf of Together for Teens (DB).

<b>Balance as of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025</b>	<b>£8,382.89</b>
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Income	.	
Easyfundraising	.	£101.37
British Assessment Bureau		£1,200
Outgoings		£0.00

<b>Balance as of 23rd September 2025</b>	<b>£9,684.26</b>
<b>*Balance after ringfenced projects</b>	<b>£3,906.94</b>
*Ringfenced projects:	
£4,027.32 Co-op funding for Outdoor Space project	
£1,700 Together for Teens	

### 3. Sub-committee updates

#### Fundraising

- Will look at wider funding opportunities.
- School lottery – looking at forms required.

#### Communications

- Survey to be sent out asking parents and carers views on how they would like to communicate with the PC.

#### Actions:

Apply for Local Authority Lottery Licence through Aberdeenshire Council (CR).  
 Send out survey to parents on PC communications (DB & CM)

### 4. Head update (Mrs Wotherspoon)

- Google classroom Family Learning event with 30 parents and 4 staff members.
- S2 sector day with employers.
- Hill to Grill - workshop with employers making venison burgers.
- Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) Bronze Ambassador Award - pupil ambassadors to talk to parents at parents evening about pathways.
- Senior Boys Football Cup match won.
- DSM Foundation visit.
- Activities Fair - extracurricular activities provided by staff and pupils.
- S1 & S2 Assembly – learned Makaton for National Sign Language Week.



- SQA results – good results from National 3 to Advance Highers. This year fewer pupils are not achieving any qualifications. Next PC meeting to discuss SQA results.
- Attainment reviews – AW met with Deputes and Department Heads looking at data from prelims and final exams.
- SLT focusing on learning and teaching.
- Asda funding providing free toast for pupils at breaktime.
- Invitation to parents for drop-in event to mark Campus 10 years.

#### Staffing:

- School is currently fully staffed.
- Interview for Principal Teacher for Excellence, Equity and Wellbeing.

#### **Depute Head Teacher (Learning and Teaching) update**

- Analysing SQA data from last year, other school and virtual comparator.
- Supporting SQA pupil appeals for markers check.
- Tracker report for S1-S3 (Broad General Education) and Senior pupils S4-S6.
- New set of continuing professional learning for staff.
- Working with chaplains for UNCR for assemblies.
- MS, SC and GS working on SCQF Ambassadors.
- Family learning event.
- Working with 4 other Academies to support staff.
- S1-S3 moderation working day.

#### **Depute Head Teacher (Curriculum)**

- Looking at alternative pathways – National Progression Awards, Foundation Apprenticeships, college courses.
- S2 Sector Day with Business and Finance (5 different sectors throughout year leading to project-based learning in S3).
- Senior phase Foundation Apprenticeships – 71 on work experience throughout Aberdeen and Shire.
- S5/6 Mock interviews – 12 employers and 88 pupils.
- Activities Days May 2026 – 3 residential trips and 1 local, non-residential trip information given to parents. Ensured parents have more time to pay for activities.

#### **Depute Head Teacher (Pupil Support) update**

- New S1s settled into Academy.
- Focus this term and next on mental health and wellbeing.
- DSM Foundation – theatre company in for sessions with pupils, staff and parents.
- Together for Teens to facilitate talk for parents from Mike Scotland about mental health and Murry Collies on programme for positive mindset for pupils, staff and parents.
- S1 parents evening for pupils to show parents around school.

SN thanked staff for the Google Classroom training and highly recommended it to parents.

#### **5. School toilets update**

- No further update since last raised, awaiting guidance from Scottish Government.
- Younger pupils not feeling comfortable using same toilets as older pupils. Toilet areas are now assigned to 2 year groups for use during break, lunch and after school with staff ensuring pupils go to the correct area.
- During class time pupils can use closest toilet.

#### **6. AOB**

#### School photos

- Seen as expensive for single photo.
- Photos used to update school records on SEEMIS.
- No obligation for parents to buy a photo.

#### Swimming lessons

- School have not had swimming lessons for a while, no plans to change this.

#### Mobile phones

- Cllr McKail asked about mobile phones in school.
- Mobile phone policy developed 2 years ago in consultation with staff and PC members.
- Signs in classroom to show if phones can be used or not.
- No expectation for pupils to have phones, school have Chromebooks.
- AW spoken to pupils about how to use phone and headphones safely in school.

#### Together for Teens

- Just awarded charitable status.
- Aims to provide support to parents about mental health of teenagers.
- November - workshops with Mike Scotland and Laural Simms, a licensed mental health professional.
- January - online mental health session.
- March - suicide prevention training.
- Submitted application for grant for adult mental health with the support of PC.

#### Study areas

- Updated policy for private study areas.
- Study areas were changed during prelims with Library being used instead of areas outside classrooms where pupils were not focused on studying.
- Alternative areas available for ASN pupils and when Library closed pupils use the canteen.
- Teaching staff are in the Library during college catchup time.
- Since the change, fewer pupils out of class, corridors quieter during lesson time, more learning taking place in Library.

### **7. Date of next meeting**

Monday 17th November 2025

#### **PC meeting dates 2025/2026:**

Tuesday 23rd September (AGM)

Monday 17th November 2025

Wednesday 21st January 2026 (online only)

Monday 16th March 2026

Tuesday 16th June 2026 (P7 parents welcome meeting)

#### **Parent Council Members 2025/26 (Quorum 6):**

Lindsey Duncan (S1)

Suvidha Narayanan (S2)

Rowena Ruden (S2)

Emyr Bell

Crystal Anderson

Tanya Viliene (S4)  
Ingrid Huldal (S4, S2)  
Dawn Brown (S5)  
Charlotte Milburn (S5)  
Nicole Scherer-Dickson (S6, S2)  
Linda Purkis (S5)  
Joe Purkis (S5)  
Frank Sewell (S5)  
Coralie Robertson (S6)