

# Standards & Quality Report

Session 2014 / 2015



## Alford Academy

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**Aberdeenshire**

COUNCIL



## The School in Context

### Mission Statement

Alford Academy recognises that one size does not fit all. Our young people are born individuals and should leave school as individuals. Alford Academy is committed to unlocking each youngster's potential, raising their aspirations and helping them to be all they can be, in a safe, healthy and caring environment.

### Our Values

The work and life of our school is underpinned by the 4 values of wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity.

### Our Aims

- **Attainment and Achievement**  
To raise standards of educational attainment and wider achievement for all our pupils, especially through the skills of literacy, numeracy, health and well-being, information communication and technologies and working with others.
- **Learning and Teaching**  
To promote the highest quality learning experiences for pupils by investing in professional development to create knowledgeable, confident and skilled teachers capable of raising the attainment and achievement levels of our pupils.
- **Inclusion and Equality**  
To provide equality of opportunity to access education in a way that is engaging and appropriate to the pupils' interests, physical and intellectual needs.
- **Values and Citizenship**  
To work with pupils, parents and employees to promote self-respect, respect for others and interdependence within society. In turn our pupils will understand the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.
- **Learning for Life**  
To equip pupils with positive attitudes and expectations, encourage creativity, ambition and entrepreneurial skills that will help them prosper in our changing society.



Alford Academy is a six-year secondary school located in the Donside village of Alford, approximately 25 miles to the west of Aberdeen and within easy reach of the Cairngorms National Park. The village of Alford and its surrounding area is rich in local culture and heritage, including the 'Doric' dialect, the famous poet, Charles Murray, the Sculpture Workshop at Lumsden, Craigievar Castle and Castle Fraser as well as Alford's Transport Museum and Heritage Centre.

The school shares a campus with Alford Primary School and Community Learning and Development and includes a swimming pool, dry ski slope, community library and a Design and Print unit which serves the Academy and wider community. A short distance away is the school's own forestry plot, gifted by the Murray Park Trustees. In October 2015 the school will relocate to a new campus on a site to the west of the existing school campus. This new Alford Community Campus will be a shared campus, providing a new 'home' for Alford Academy and Alford Primary, as well as being a community and leisure hub for the local area.



Alford Academy works closely with its thirteen associated primary schools to ensure pupils experience a coherent education and effective transitions. Cross-sector links are developing, on a formal and informal basis, to support curricular change, pastoral care and welfare as well as professional development.

Our Alford Academy Parent Council is a supportive forum for parents. Parent Council members are very interested in the work and life of our school and actively engage in consultations, influencing the direction of the school. An important link with the Student Council has now become established.

Office bearers for this session are

Chairperson:	Mr C Turnbull
Treasurer:	Mrs P Fullen
Secretary:	Mrs L Strachan

Alford Academy has a very positive inclusive ethos. We are a welcoming, caring, ambitious and proud school and committed to continuous improvement through self-evaluation. Through an open door, approachable leadership style, a culture of dialogue and open communication, transparency is encouraged across our school community as we further develop our culture of ambition and achievement.

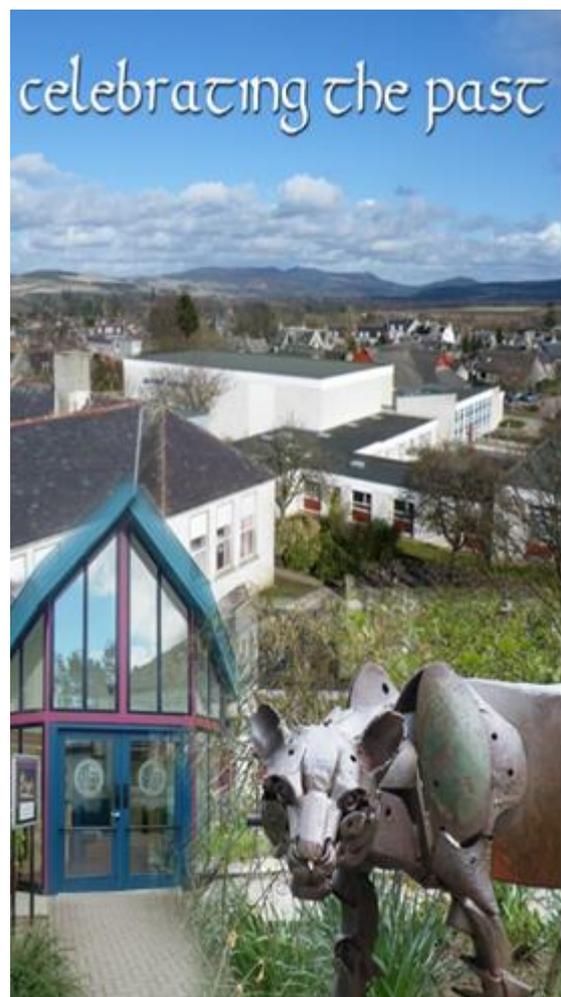
*Alford Academy is not just a school, it is a learning community that recognises teaching and learning does not start and stop at the school gates. Through development of partnerships in and out of school, we work as a team to provide the very best learning and leadership experiences and opportunities. In turn we aim to support and furnish each individual youngster with the knowledge, skills, experiences, insight and drive that will set them on their path to a prosperous future, effectively contributing to life and work in Aberdeenshire, Scotland and world wide*



Improvement Priorities 2014-15	Progress made during 2014-2015 session
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Higher qualifications developed and implemented in the majority of subjects.</li> <li>• Curriculum rationale and design reviewed. Curriculum architecture further developed to take account of new asymmetric week in consultation with pupils, staff and parents.</li> <li>• Opportunities for interdisciplinary learning have been planned for session 2015-16 in our revised curriculum design.</li> <li>• Literacy Toolkit and Numeracy Preferred Methods have been shared with staff and pupils.</li> <li>• Saltire Awards piloted. Increased pupil input to S5/6 wider achievement programme.</li> <li>• Course Choice / timetabling processes take account of feedback from staff and pupils. Increased uptake of YASS programme. Directed Study introduced for S5/6 and evaluated.</li> <li>• Partnership with SRUC re-established and Rural Skills offered for session 2015-16.</li> <li>• On-going discussions with local businesses about skills development and pathways for our learners.</li> <li>• P7- S1 curriculum transition with focus on skills development and use of Glow, piloted.</li> <li>• HMIE Technologies Review commends and shares work of Alford Academy technologies teams and their partners.</li> </ul>
Learning and Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperative learning practice shared with staff.</li> <li>• Growth mindsets professional learning for all staff.</li> <li>• 'Visible learning' (research based practice) shared with all teaching staff.</li> <li>• Emerging innovative practice using technologies.</li> <li>• Effective assessment, moderation and verification in place in almost all faculties.</li> <li>• Increasing focus on sharing practice evident at faculty meetings.</li> <li>• Ongoing development of tracking and monitoring progress in learning (in particular in the Broad General Education).</li> <li>• Focus on the quality of feedback to learners, target setting and learner interventions at all levels across the school.</li> <li>• Learning 'walk throughs' continued.</li> <li>• Increase in number and 'standard' of wider achievements recorded and celebrated.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interhouse systems further developed to promote, record and celebrate wider achievements.</li> </ul>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RRSA Recognition of Commitment achieved.</li> <li>• DHT Pupil Support trained as Trainer in Restorative approaches.</li> <li>• Increasing use of Restorative Approaches during all situations of conflict being handled by the Senior Leadership Team.</li> <li>• GIRFEC worker role developed to support young people across the school and Cluster with social and emotional issues.</li> <li>• ‘Jobs Club’ set up in partnership with CLD to support pupils and members of wider community to develop skills to enable them to secure future positions.</li> <li>• Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) developed as appropriate, focusing on cognitive targets.</li> <li>• 4 S6 pupils planned and delivered a ‘Business Lunch’ for all S6 pupils and business partners. Raised awareness of mutual benefits of business-education partnership discussed. Commitment to future engagement made.</li> <li>• ‘Listening lunches’ professional learning opportunities in place.</li> <li>• Strong partnership between Student Council and Parent Council established through mutual attendance/discussions at meetings.</li> <li>• Links with Alford Community Council established.</li> </ul>
Leadership and Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased number of pupil and staff leadership opportunities. Non promoted teacher joined extended Senior Leadership Team. All teaching staff participated in at least one Collegiate Improvement Team, contributing to our school improvement agenda.</li> <li>• Leadership of Student Council highly evident along with increased profile of the council.</li> <li>• Improved focus of pupil led assemblies- particularly House leaders’ input at assemblies.</li> <li>• Informal and formal mentoring in place for staff.</li> <li>• Senior Leaders and Middle Managers engaging with Insight data. All staff aware of National dashboard measure and trends.</li> <li>• Improvement in analysis of data and actions leading to impact on learning at whole school level and in most faculties. Improved target setting at whole school level.</li> <li>• All teaching staff have opportunity to share views on</li> </ul>

	<p>school improvement agenda. Improved focus and increased evidence of learner's views at whole school, faculty and classroom levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement of all teaching staff with Professional Standards, Professional Learning and Professional Update (as appropriate). Some improvement in quality and focus of professional review meetings. Some evidence of positive impact of professional learning on pupil experiences and attainment.</li> <li>• Collegiate Time Agreement – 100% of returns in agreement for session 2015-16. Faculty time allocation provides time for professional dialogue.</li> <li>• Ongoing review of systems identifying excessive paperwork identified and revised.</li> <li>• New campus- transition plans in place and progressing as per the timeline. New campus vision consulted on and agreed. Campus Management board established.</li> </ul>
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## 1. How well do our young people learn and achieve?

	Evaluation
QI 1.1 ~ Improvements in Performance	4
QI 2.1 ~ Learners' Experiences	4

### In arriving at these evaluations, we considered the following evidence.

- Analysis of and response to attainment data including STACS, MidYis and Insight data at a whole school, faculty and classroom levels. Records of meetings, improvement and action plans.
- Evidence of conversations with learners.
- Learner's profiles.
- Other accreditation i.e. Open University awards, volunteering awards.
- Feedback from learners, staff, parents and businesses/ organisations/visitors to the school.
- Analysis of evidence from classroom visits.
- Pupil attendance and behaviour.
- Pupil involvement in leadership opportunities, activities and events.
- Annual Awards Ceremony and Leavers Presentation evening.
- The work of the Learning and Teaching Collegiate Improvement team.
- Focus on learning evident in Senior Leadership Team and Faculty Team minutes.
- Evidence from learning walkthroughs, visits and observations.

### Our key strengths in this area are

- Leaver's attainment in Literacy and Numeracy has improved over the past three years and is above our Virtual Comparator data at Level 4, and at Level 5. In general terms the attainment of our leavers was above or in line with our Virtual Comparator data. There was a decrease in S4 pupils attaining 5+ level 5 awards with a correlation to our most able S4 students not attaining as well as other pupils. S5 and S6 attainment exceeded the Virtual Comparator data and Aberdeenshire and National average figures. The consistent National pattern in which higher levels of attainment are associated with lower levels of deprivation is not always evident within the data for Alford Academy. There is little evidence of the "national deprivation gap in attainment" based on the SIMD measures, for the S4 year stage in 2014. The percentage of Alford Academy leavers securing positive destinations is slightly higher than the national average.
- Our positive school ethos and classroom environment.

- Learners are given responsibility for aspects for their learning in most classrooms i.e. their role in groups, choice/selection of tasks, presentations.
- Range and uptake of wider achievement opportunities.
- Development of the 4 capacities in young people.
- In most lessons, learners are on task and well behaved and feel their learning is important.

**We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area**

- Further improve positive relationships and mentoring approaches in our classrooms and highest expectations of and aspirations for, all learners.
- Improve consistency in recording, tracking and monitoring of pupils progress and achievement (including opportunities for personal achievement). Improve interventions to support learning (target setting/feedback) and wider achievement for all pupils.
- Inspire, encourage and share new and innovative practice including research based pedagogy (including Visible Thinking and John Hattie's Visible Learning). Re-establish professional dialogue through learning communities.
- Trends in attainment at whole school, faculty and classroom levels fully discussed and strategies put in place for individual learners, groups, cohorts and teachers.

## 2. How well does our school support children to develop and learn?

	Evaluation
QI 5.1 ~ The Curriculum	4
QI 5.3 ~ Meeting Learning Needs	4

### In arriving at these evaluations, we considered the following evidence.

- Our curriculum rationale
- Insight data- leavers destinations, vulnerable groups of learners
- Feedback from learners, staff and parents, informing curricular planning
- Destination of pupils post school
- Pathways for pupils
- Self evaluation using core quality indicators and Education Scotland Inspection Advice Notes
- Feedback from learning visits
- Analysis of performance of all learners
- Planning with partners- CLD, businesses, education and training providers
- Appropriate plans for learners with additional support needs.
- Records of review meetings, care plans, LAC reviews etc
- Feedback from learning visits, from learners and views of specialists

### Our key strengths in this area are

- Partnership working to support flexible learning pathways for learners
- High quality pastoral care
- P7-S1 transitions (care and welfare) including extended transitions for vulnerable pupils
- Consultation on and rationale for curriculum development
- Positive and sustained leaver destinations

### We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area

- On-going review and development of our curriculum with a particular focus on transitions, including skills development, increased and appropriate learner pathways.
- Focus on differentiation, role of class teacher and role and deployment of support staff to better meet needs of all learners
- Improve identification, tracking and intervention of groups of pupils including LAC, ASN, young carers

### 3. How does our school improve the quality of its work?

Evaluation

#### QI 5.9 ~ Improvement Through Self-Evaluation

4

#### In arriving at these evaluations, we considered the following evidence.

- Whole school and faculty and individual self evaluation using 5 core QIs and also Education Scotland Advice Notes with increased expectations.
- Learners' views from whole school, faculty and class questionnaires, surveys, discussion groups
- Records of Senior Leadership Meetings, Faculty meetings, Attainment Review meetings, pupil reviews and meetings with CLD and other partners.
- Improvement planning based on self evaluation evidence.
- Identifiable improvements following self-evaluation
- Staff engagement with leadership opportunities including school improvement teams and professional learning.
- Whole-school and faculty Quality Improvement calendars

#### Our key strengths in this area are

- Focus on core QIs and commitment to acting on evidence for self-evaluation
- Student and Parent Council's increased involvement in analysing feedback from pupils and parents.
- Focus of QI process on key aspects for learners
- Development of leadership at different levels in the school
- Joint evaluation of events and programmes carried out by the school and CLD (and other partners as appropriate).

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#### We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area

- Review whole school, faculty and class teacher approaches to self-evaluation and improvement planning including QA calendars and activities, robust analysis of data.
- Share increased expectations and HGIOS 4 with all staff, increase rigor, improve consistency and clearly focus on impact on learning (including tracking progress in learning).
- Tackling bureaucracy agenda in all work of the school.
- Wider achievement leader identified, clear plan to co-ordinate and evaluate wider achievement shared. Opportunities for wider achievement to develop specific skills and 4 capacities.
- Develop a clear strategy to allow "The Pupil Voice " to be heard and influence planning at classroom, faculty and whole school level

#### 4. How do we ensure equality and inclusion, and promote diversity across the school?

##### In arriving at these evaluations, we considered the following evidence

- Our school community and relationships amongst learners, staff, parents, agencies and the wider community
- Feedback from learners, staff and parents (verbal and from surveys)
- Comments from visitors to the school and members of the public.
- Analysis of data re subgroups (e.g. LAC, ASN)
- SIMD data for the school

##### Our key strengths in this area are

- Ours school ethos.
- S5 pupil participation in Youth Philanthropy Initiative
- S2 pupils leading annual Holocaust memorial assemblies
- Interact Club – led by pupils and focussing on fundraising and developing leadership skills
- Focus on learners as individuals
- Opportunities for pupils to represent groups i.e prefects, house reps, class reps, student council reps, Health & Wellbeing leaders

##### We have identified the following as priorities for improvement in this area

- Review courses and programmes to identify potential interdisciplinary learning to promote diversity
- Further development of senior phase curriculum, including opportunities for skills development
- Increasing staff awareness of needs/support plans for a range of individual learners
- Further develop 'Listening lunches' for staff and plan 'Listening lunches' for learners and parents as appropriate
- Continue work towards Rights Respecting school status and continue to embed restorative practice into work of school.

##### Key :-\_Evaluation

- 6 **Excellent** -outstanding, sector-leading  
5 **Very good** - major strengths  
4 **Good** - important strengths with some areas for improvement  
3 **Satisfactory** - strengths just outweigh weaknesses  
2 **Weak** - important weaknesses  
1 **Unsatisfactory** - major weaknesses

## **SUMMARY OF IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRIORITIES FOR SESSION 2015-2016**

### **1. Improving Learning and Teaching**

- Develop and implement strategy, policy and practice for the promotion of growth mindsets, positive relationships/behaviour and environments for learning including restorative practice approaches, Children and Young People Scotland Act (2014) and Rights Respecting Schools Award).
- Improved consistency in recording, tracking and monitoring of pupils progress and achievement (including opportunities for personal achievement). Improve interventions to support learning and wider achievement for all pupils.
- Inspire and encourage innovation through further development of pedagogy and sharing practice (including Visible Thinking and John Hattie's Visible Learning).

### **2. Developing Leadership at all Levels**

- Increased leadership capacity through a distributed leadership model in turn improving outcomes for all learners.
- All teachers familiar and engaging with Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL).  
Increased opportunities for staff development including opportunities for staff to shadow, to lead and to work collaboratively with colleagues and other partners.
- Further develop 'Pupil voice' at whole school, faculty and classroom levels.
- Further develop leadership in learners.
- Further develop 'Parent voice', engagement and communications with parents and information and feedback to them. Focus on supporting parents to support their son/daughter's learning.

### **3. Self Evaluation**

- Improve self-evaluation and improvement planning at whole school, faculty and class teacher levels. Increase rigor, improve consistency and focus on learning (including tracking progress in learning).

- Further develop understanding and consistent use of data to identify priorities for improvement at individual teacher, faculty and whole school levels.
- Develop and share clear plan to co-ordinate and evaluate wider achievement. Opportunities for wider achievement focus are planned to support progression in young peoples' development and are open to all learners – ability, gender, age, proximity to school.

#### **4. Transitions**

- Implement and review new National Qualifications and BGE.
- Increase number of Youth Achievement Awards, John Muir Award and maintain Green Flag Eco schools status.
- Further develop and implement primary – secondary curriculum transitions.
- Further develop learning pathways through BGE and Senior Phase (including industry standard qualifications) and increase range of partners (agencies, businesses, industry, organisations and parents) the school works with.
- Develop and implement whole school approach to Learning for Sustainability including international education, global citizenship and global learning.
- Develop Cluster, Whole school, Faculty of Modern Languages approach to 1+2 Languages and begin implementation.
- Skills development planned and further developed including Skills for Learning, Life and Work.
- Develop and implement a clear strategy for improving Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Well Being (includes joint approach with parents and partners).
- New campus transition.

## At Alford Academy this session.....

*The school encourages an ethos of achievement through:*

- *opportunities for pupil participation in a wide variety of activities, in and beyond the classroom*
- *recognition and celebration of achievement*
- *high expectations*

## CITIZENSHIP

- S4 boy is an elected member of the Scottish Youth Parliament representing Aberdeenshire West and also a member of the Aberdeenshire Youth Council.
- S5 girl is a member of the Junior Climate Challenge Fund Panel and reached the Scottish final of the Money for Life Challenge.
- S3 boy achieved the Chief Scout Gold Award.
- S1 girl delivered a thought provoking talk to all S6 pupils at their last assembly, sharing with them her personal concerns in school and in turn receiving outstanding praise from these older pupils.
- S6 boy provided outstanding support to the Music department including setting up and running the Alford Academy Ceilidh band.
- The student council made a difference, researching and leading changes to the dress code, consulting widely with pupils on a range of topics.
- S6 girl provided outstanding support and service to the congregation of a local church community over the past three years.
- S4 boy represented Great Britain at the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan.
- S5 and S5 girls research and share the History of Alford Academy.
- Pupil leadership roles - Student Council, Senior Executive, Prefects, House captains and vice-captains, class captains, class buddies and peer listeners, Health & Well Being Leaders, Sports Leaders and Sports Ambassadors, Alford Youth Forum and Marr Area Forum.
- House assemblies are planned and led by House Captains.
- Interact Club which led charity fund raising and annual Rotary Young Musician of the Year competition.
  - Prefect training led by Senior Executive.
  - ACES (Alford Countryside and Environmental Society) continued to meet informally to discuss topics of their interest, plan visits and speakers.
  - S5 pupils participated in Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI). Improved standard of presentations.
  - Two pupils take part in the Aberdeenshire Pupil Voice group.
  - Eco group led and promoted Fairtrade event including 'Earth Hour'.



## ENTERPRISE and FUNDRAISING

- S3 girl's passion and creative approach to fundraising.
- Enterprise projects were delivered through PSE, S2 Enterprise through Enabling Technologies and S5/S6 enrichment programme.
- S5 pupils attended the annual Petrochallenge.
- Nepal Earthquake coffee morning.
- Sponsored Walk – 20% of all funds raised were donated to the Safe Anaesthesia charity.
- Further to the sudden death of our Principal Teacher of Drama, Music and Media, pupils fundraised for the British Heart Foundation.
- Alford Interact Club continue to lead fundraising including for
  - Jeans for Genes.
  - Poppy Scotland
  - Safe Anaesthesia.
  - Befriend a child
  - Children in Need 2014 ('Super Hero' theme).



## HEALTH & WELL BEING

- S6 girl is youngest female runner in this year's London Marathon, running to raise money for the Alzheimer Scotland Charity.
- Crash Live event delivered to all S4, S5 and S6 pupils in June 2014.
  - Safe Drive, Stay Alive, November 2014.
  - Extended transition programme (P7-S1), multi-agency and school support at transition stages.
  - Residential trip to La Fosca.
  - Tree of Knowledge (motivational workshops) worked with P7, S2, S3, S4, S5, S6.
  - Interhouse team spirit promoted throughout session.
- Range of activities, including creative arts and sport delivered through Active Schools Co-ordinators.



## SPORTING

- S2 girl was placed first for show jumping at a North East Riding event.
- S4 girl qualified for the British Eventing Dressage Championships and is a member of the winning junior team at the British Riding Clubs National Championships.
- S2 girl was placed 2nd and 3rd in the Murrayfield Open Ice National Dance competition.

- S1 boy was placed 4th in stockjudging at the Black Face Sheep Breeders Association event.
- S1 boy is a Scottish Champion, winning the Champion of Champions Racing Pigeon Competition.
- 2 S3 boys selected for the Aberdeenshire Schools team.
- 3 pupils qualified and compete in swimming at District level.
- 8 pupils qualified and swim at National Championship level.
- 7 pupils swim at National Championship level and have reached and swam in the finals.
- 1 pupil qualified for the British Summer Championships.
- S3 girl won bronze and silver medals at Scottish National Events and qualified for the British Championship.
- 2 pupils were selected for Grampian Flyers U16 basketball squad.
- 2 pupils were selected for Grampian Flyers U18 basketball squad.
- S3 boy is selected to the Scotland U15 boys squad.
- S2 boy is selected to represent Scotland at U13 level in basketball.
- S4 boy competes and achieves 5th – 8th place in cycling at Scottish Level in road and track disciplines. He is on the British Cycling Regional School of Racing training programme.
- S4 boy competes at Scottish & British levels in the U14 Scottish Cross Country mountain biking Series, He was placed 3rd at the British Championships.
- S3 boy is winner of the Scottish Triathlon Nationals and the Scottish Youth Road Series. He has represented Scotland at the Inter-Regional Championships and takes part in the Great Britain Cycling Team Olympic Performance Pathway Programme.
- S2 boy is ranked 5th in Scotland for the 80m hurdles.
- S4 boy was placed 2nd in U21 triathlon in Texas, USA.
- S2 boy won Silver in the East District Championships for 1500m track and field and won the RGC/Albyn Invitational Cross Country championships.
- S4 boy is No 3 in Scotland in the U17 800m. He won Gold in the Scottish East District Championships.
- S3 boy is a member of Junior British Development Team competing at International level.
- S1 girl won her last 5 races in the U14s National Ski Championships (Scotland).
- S3 girl is a member of U16 Scottish Ski Team, competing in British and Scottish Championships.
- S2 boy won gold at every competition this year. He has qualified for the Scottish Diving Squad.
- S3 boy is competes in the Scottish Schools Sailing Championship.
- S2 boy won bronze and silver medals in the Scottish National Taekwondo competition.
- S4 girl won 3 silver medals at the Scottish Taekwondo Championships and is a member of the Scotland team.
- S3 boy is currently in 2nd position in the Scottish Junior Rally Championship. He was 3rd overall in GMSC Junior Stages.
- S1 Girls Swimming Relay Team won two bronze medals at the Scottish Schools National Championships.

- Alford U14 Boys Basketball Team won the Grampian Cup and the north of Scotland U14 regional development league. The team finished in 3rd place in the U14 Basketball National challenge.
- S3 Boys Cross Country Team won gold at the Albyn and Robert Gordon's College Invitational Cross Country Championships.



- Alford Ski Teams won 4th place at the Scottish Schools Finals in Glen Nevis.
- Senior Boys Football Team are North of Scotland Semi-finalists and Aberdeenshire League runners up.
- Alford Boys U15 Basketball Team won the Grampian Region U15 Boys Schools League and progressed to the semi-final of the U15 Scottish Schools Cup.
- S4 girl is Scottish Junior Champion and Captain of the Scottish Gymnastics team. She is Aberdeenshire's Young Female Sports Personality of the Year.
- S6 boy achieved excellence in trampolining at Scottish National and British National championships:-champion in a number of categories including U17 male trampoline champion and overall men's DMT National Champion.
- S6 boy is top goal scorer in the Aberdeenshire Select Football team and won Individual Silver Medal in Scottish Secondary Schools Ski Championships.

## CULTURAL

- S4 girl took in the Aberdeen and North East of Scotland Music Festival and performed in the National Festival of Youth Theatre, the largest gathering of Youth Theatres in the UK.
- S4 girl has a place with the Scottish Youth Theatre's Summer School.
- S3 girl was first in the British Cheerleading Pom dance, Hip Hop and 2nd in National Championships.
- S4 girl is Grand Champion for Senior Individual Cheerleading in the National Championships.
- S5 girl was 1st overall at the Pre Champions Highland and National dancing and won medals at a number of local Highland Games.
- S2 girl competes at Championship level has a number of prizes at 2nd/3rd place and gained championship points.
- S3 girl played with the National Youth Pipe Band of Scotland as a drummer last year and achieved a number of 1st, 2nd and 3rd places in solo competitions.
- S1 girl was placed 1st in 2014 and 2nd in 2015 in the National Association of Accordion and Fiddle Clubs Competition.
- S1 girl was the best youngster across all categories at the Strichen festival winning a number of trophies and shields for Junior Doric Verse.
- String Orchestra, Concert Band, Pipe Band, School Choir and Ceilidh Band showcased their talent in the Christmas concert and Leaver's Ceremony.
- School choir performed at NEX Factor.



- Partnership with Bangladeshi schools (British Council Connecting Classrooms) continued with visit from Bangladeshi educationalists.
- Alford Academy's on-going commitment to an art competition, 'My Aspirational Self', organised by recruitment company Thorpe Molloy for Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City schools.
- Doric words of the week promoted through assembly and plasma screen.
- Well attended Christmas Dances and Leavers' Ball.

## INNOVATION

- S1 boy was 3rd in the National Minecraft Competition.
- S3 boy for his commitment to and organisation of the Alford code and Robotics Club.
- Education Scotland commissioned a film to share the excellent work of the Business Education and Computing and Enterprise and Creativity Faculties (part of the Technologies Impact Review).
- Alford Community website is being developed by Robert Gordon's University student and S4 pupils.
- Our Young Engineers club continue to work on an extensive range of activities including the STEM Challenge and F24 Challenge in which they were placed 2nd in the unmodified car class at the Grampian Transport Museum.



## PARENT/COMMUNITY/BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT

- Tree of Knowledge seminars for all year groups.



- 32 business representatives attended a business lunch for and organised by S6 pupils.
- Alford & District Rotary support, annual Young Musician of the Year competition, RYLA experience for two pupils, leadership awards for senior prefects.
- Strong partnership with Robert Gordon's University with staff mentoring AH pupils and curriculum inserts.
- Work experience placements secured for S4 cohort.
- Parent Council and wider parent forum engagement with school including Parents' Evenings and Information Evenings.

## CURRICULAR AND VOCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

- 10 pupils achieved credits in the Princes Trust XL (Personal Development and Employability Award).
- 5 pupils achieved British Health and Safety Council awards.
- 13 pupils attained a unit in Decorative Painting.



Higher Geography Field Trip Dunnottar Beach and St Cyrus

- 11 pupils attained Skills for Work courses North East Scotland College.
- S6 Advanced Higher Geography residential field trip at Kindrogan. Higher and National 5 field trips to Dunnottar Beach and St Cyrus.
- S1 Humanities learning outdoors field trip to Burn o' Vat, Dinnet.
- Grampian Children's Book Award winning author Dave Cousin, worked with S2 pupils.

- S3 Hospitality class planned and organised a coffee morning.
- Visits to University and College Open days.
- 9 achieved YASS programmes delivered by the Open University.
- 16 achieved bronze Duke of Edinburgh.
- S4 pupils took place in work experience week
- Improved pathways for learners though work placements.
- Adv H Chemistry pupils visit the University of Aberdeen twice to carry out 4 different practical experiments and experience a lab at University.
- S6 Adv Higher Physics pupils visit Aberdeen University for an introductory lectures. Retired lecturer from Queens University Belfast mentored Physics students with their Advance Higher projects.
- S6 Advanced Higher Biology students attend Aberdeen University for a lecture on drug discovery followed by a practical experiment.

