

Chairperson's report 2017-18

The past year of PFA activities has created a great chance for parents, children and teachers alike to celebrate our school community. We would like to thank everyone who has attended our events. Special thanks particularly go to those who have gone the extra mile and volunteered to help: manning stalls, painting canvases and baking and decorating amazing cakes for our bake offs and cake sales. The volunteer force has been really fantastic - the events are so dependent on their help, so thanks to everyone who came and mucked in. I would also like to thank Steve Ostler, who has built everything from a Living Fruit Machine to the wooden stocks for Joe McCrossan's annual Summer Fair soaking, he has been incredibly supportive and is an important but under-acknowledged member of the PFA events team.

We've had a really good year of fundraising; after a bit of a slow start we more than caught up by the summer. Over the year we have held: two second hand uniform sales, seven cake sales, two Bag2School collections, a Pumpkin Party, an Advent Fair, an Internet Safety talk, a Quiz Night and class art auction, two bake offs, five ice cream sales, a sponsored marathon, and a Summer Fair. The addition of the class artwork afternoons was well received and reintroduced an opportunity for the PFA to host a parents/children craft activity which had been missed. I wish I could say more about the events, particularly the Marathon, but I'm told I must be brief.

The drawback of these events unfortunately is that the same few people organise them all. We felt it would be beneficial for parents to become more involved with a few events, namely Years 2 and 4 with the Pumpkin Parties and Year 5 with the spring social. We desperately need their assistance to run these events and I hope their involvement will build stronger relationships between the parents, school and PFA community. A new events team will share the organisation of the Advent and Summer Fairs and sponsored event.

To my best knowledge we are unusual in that we have a substantial £4,500 core annual spend, which soaks up the first two terms of fundraising efforts but these funds go to important school activities such as Science Week, live performances, classroom activities and school trips. We have found avenues for 'retaining' funds which have helped to boost our finances, developing relationships with local businesses who have helped us to reduce expenditure: Woodfines sponsoring the Summer Fair BBQ, Mooi the bouncy castle hire, Coop ice creams, Tesco Easter Eggs and Waitrose Christmas crackers. We are very grateful for their support. We've also explored new avenues such as the Waitrose green token fund and other opportunities will hopefully be utilised at Asda and John Lewis over the coming year. These have all helped to channel more funds to projects supporting our children's experiences at the school. With the agreement of the school and the Foundation, we have also been able to accept online donations over the past year - thanks to everyone who has donated and quickly established this as an important funding source.

With the KS2 playground project the PFA have accepted a considerable challenge. This project is both appropriate to our constitutional objectives and is an area in great need of revitalisation. I feel that it's beneficial for the PFA to have a significant fundraising project which has the attention of the children and parent/carer community. The focus on improving this slightly neglected area will hopefully have the positive effect of drawing greater attention and building more support from the school community for PFA fundraising activities. It could also build momentum to enable us to follow this project with improvements to the KS1 playground. Thanks to Tom and Megumi who are already helping to push this project forward.

Over the past year we have carried out a parent survey, the overall response to which was extremely positive. There seems to be no 'best' time to organise events, so we will continue to provide events at varying times so that everyone will have an opportunity to take part in something. One in six didn't know what the PFA raised funds for and one in five didn't know who their class rep was, but we should be able to resolve both areas over the coming year through planned communications.

It has been incredibly fulfilling and a real honour to be the Chair of the PFA for the past three years. I am indebted to an amazing committee and a very supportive school throughout this time. Jane Burke our Treasurer, Maria Silva: Secretary, Maria Goodall: assistant Secretary, Marcus Koehler: H&S coordinator, Tom Bedingfeld: Vice Treasurer with Liz Callery who needs special mention having provided me with her unflinching, stalwart support, attending to every last infinite detail for each PFA activity we have run over the past few years. Huge thanks to our indispensable team of Year Reps whose help and support in reaching class parents and arranging the cake sales is invaluable. We owe enormous thanks to Celia for organising our school Christmas cards and gifts, Joanna for second-hand uniform sales, Ingrid for Easter eggs and everything else she does, Teeba for Bag2School collections and Anja and Aidan for producing our posters. Last but not least, I would like to thank Joe for being so fantastically supportive over these years, not least facilitating our online donations scheme and also being so enthusiastically soaked in the stocks at the Summer Fair. Thank you, you have all been an amazing team of people to work with.