

Minutes from the PFA meeting, St Alban's Catholic Primary School

2pm, 13th December 2019

In attendance: Jane Burke (Chair) Carolina Stannard (Treasurer) Irenka Lennon (Secretary), Maria Goddard (Parent Governor), Anja Irwin, Sara Lear, Susan Melican.

Apologies: Angela Bennett (Vice-chair), Mr McCrossan.

Treasurer's update

- We effectively started the 2019/2020 school year with no savings. This is because last year, an impressive £25,000 was raised and allocated to the KS2 playground project.
- However, gift aid has yet to be claimed on last summer's *3 peaks challenge* event. This will be around £1,000. **Action:** **Carolina/Jane** will arrange this.
- We have made a good start to the year. Around £80 was raised at the uniform sale in the first week of term.
- So far we have had three after-school cake sales, all of which went well. These were hosted by Years 6, 5, and 4. One raised almost £80 and two raised over £100.
- The total amount collected in after the advent fair (06/12/19) was £2,168. After deductions for expenses and the float, this generated a profit of £1,549.
- Around £600 of the advent fair profit came from the raffle. Thank you to Jill for her hard work in organising this.
- Two Year 1 pupils (Henry and Jaden) recently held a joint birthday party for their class. Guests were invited to make donations to the PFA instead of buying birthday presents. This raised £166. A thank you message will appear in today's newsletter. **Action:** **Irenka** will arrange thank you cards for the two families concerned.
- Bags4schools (09/12/19) raised £132.

Ambitions and goals

- Jane proposed the following fundraising goals, which are based on those of recent years:
 - £1,000 for the minibus
 - £1,000 for Year 4 music
 - £1,000 for science week
 - £700 for the coach for Year 6's Hilltop trip
 - £600 for theatre performance
 - £1,400 for classroom materials (new)

- £500 for the bike shed roof in the KS1 playground (a one off expense)
- This is a total of £6,200.
- Jane noted that in previous years the PFA subsidized various school trips, but as this led to reductions of only around £2 per child, the impact was minimal. She proposed spending more money on classroom materials instead (but continuing to fund school trips for pupils in particular need). Liz sent an e-mail of support for the idea of funding classroom materials.
- Maria raised the question of whether it is within the constitutional remit of PFAs to fund essential items for schools. Jane clarified that central advice to PFAs has shifted in this area, and that the funding of core budgetary items is allowable.
- This suggestion was therefore agreed upon by all present, together with the other goals (above) which comprise our core commitment to the school. Hopefully we will raise more and be able to respond to in year requests from the school.
- The question of whether or not to resurrect the St Alban's Foundation was discussed. This would provide an additional route for parents to make regular donations – particularly those who are unable to attend events in school. Some felt that standing orders etc. could potentially damage the school community and we should not focus on this area. At present, few families make regular donations to the PFA which amount to around £70 per month. Ways of increasing these numbers were discussed. Much effort has been put into this in the past, but with very limited success. A clear way forward was not apparent, but it was suggested having a concrete and tangible target for direct donations, such as more bike racks. Carolina suggested enabling PayPal donations. Having a poster of ways to donate was also suggested and supported. (**Action: Jane** to design a poster.) Jane concluded that the Governors will need to decide what to do about the foundation first.
- Maria reported that the Governors have not indicated that they'd like the PFA to make a big push for anything in particular.
- Year reps all commented that after the huge fundraising push for the KS2 playground, many parents felt that events had been too focused on money (ok in short term but not to be permanent) and were tightly packed in the summer term.

Calendar of events

- The existing calendar of events is:
 - Pumpkin party (run by Years 2 & 4)
 - Advent fair
 - Spring social (run by Year 5)
 - Sponsored event
 - Summer fair
 - Bags4schools
 - Year 6 leavers' event
 - One cake sale and one ice cream sale per year group

- Christmas lunch and summer concert (presence, not run by PFA)
- Angela proposed (by e-mail) that we replace the pumpkin party (usually held around Halloween time) with an All Saints party on 1st November. This idea was well received by all. Maria suggested having a harvest festival party, slightly earlier in the autumn. This idea was also well received. It was agreed that we will revisit these ideas at another PFA meeting closer to autumn when Angela is present.
- It was noted that St Alban's day, the summer fair, and the school's Global day all happened around the same time in 2019. There was also a cake sale on the same day as St Alban's/Global day, which led to an excess of food on a Friday afternoon. Ideas for timing and/or combining these events more strategically were discussed. **Action: Jane** will give this further thought prior to our next meeting.
- Otherwise, it was agreed that we should retain the existing calendar of events. **Action: Jane/Irenka** will prepare a calendar of events for 2020 and send it to Mr McCrossan/Flower to check that PFA events don't clash with school events.
- Ideas for the next sponsored event were proposed. A sponsored bike ride (how far can the school ride collectively in a week?) was a popular suggestion. It was noted that this should be made accessible to all, possibly by making it simply a sponsored ride, which could use any environmentally friendly form of wheeled transport.

Barbecuing

- The school owns one BBQ but needs two. One of our families is offering us a free BBQ. It was agreed by all that we should accept this kind offer. Maria explained that a school shed is currently being cleared out. **Action: Maria** to ask Steve whether the donated BBQ could be stored there.

Review of the advent fair

- Well done to all involved. It was a great success! The following points were made:
 - The organisation of donations (no categories) reduced pressure on parents.
 - Fewer donations were made, but they were better ones.
 - There were a few complaints of items being too expensive and too cheap. On balance, this probably means that the pricing was about right.
 - Some children returned home with money.
 - The combined carol service was lovely. The singing made the whole event more child-focused.
 - We bought too much hot food (hot dogs and rolls in particular).
 - Due to inclement weather, the hot food had to be brought inside. This felt a little dangerous at times.
 - Having a single purchaser worked really well. Thank you, Susan.
 - The event finished at 6pm. This was a bit too long, particularly for younger children.
- The following changes were recommended for next year:

- Have a donation box at the end for unspent money that parents wish children to donate.
- Limit hot edibles to perhaps just mulled wine and mince pies.
- Start the carols at 4.30pm rather than 5pm.

AOB

- We are looking forward to seeing the costed plans for KS2 playground at the next meeting, in order to be able to sign off further spending towards a fixed final design.

Date of the next meeting

- This will be 2pm on Friday 24th January.

Summary of actions

Who?	What?
Carolina/Jane	Claim on last summer's <i>3 peaks challenge</i> event.
Irenka	Arrange two thank you cards for Year 1 families.
Jane	Think about events and timings for St Alban's day, the summer fair, and the school's Global day.
Jane/Irenka	Prepare a calendar of events for 2020 and cross-check it with Mr McCrossan/Flower.
Maria	Ask Steve about storage space for the donated BBQ.
Jane	Design a 'ways to donate' poster