

PTFA Virtual AGM Spring term 04.03.21 Minutes

Present: Marghanita Spooner (Chair, Y2 & REC parent), Jonathan Parr (Treasurer, Y4 parent), Sophie Broadbridge (Secretary, Y5 parent)

Vicki Webb (5Y & 3L), Sarah Powell (REC), Michelle Mahlke (Y2), Francesca John (Y1 and Y3), Paget Gaunt (5E & 1M), Lena Corner (Y4), Stuart Doxford (Y3 & REC) Selwyn Renton (Y5 & REC), plus 1 unrecorded

1. Introductions & attendants' details:

Separate to the Committee, there were 9 parents at the meeting. They wrote their name and year their child was in, on the Google Meet chat box. See above. Karen Law sent her apologies, as was unable to attend, but gave us a letter which Marghanita read out.

2. Recent events & fundraising:

Marghanita explained the online Donorbox that was set up to fundraise during the Pandemic. The total raised at the time of the meeting was £4,006 of a £5,000 target, to buy 20 laptops for the school to loan to students needing them during the pandemic. So far there have been 174 donations and the average has been £23, with 4 people setting up a recurring donation, the average of this being £9.29 per month. The PTFA can claim Gift Aid on this. The Donorbox is still up and running.

The Christmas Polar Express Grotto and Trail was a highlight of the year, with very positive feedback from lots of parents. Paget Gaunt created and built the Grotto, with the help of 45 volunteers, coordinated by Vicki Webb. Vicki also organised the trail. A thank you was made to them. The music was run by Andy Dragazis, and David McKeran the caretaker helped all day on construction and facilitating the day. 290 students had tickets and 20 under 3's also attended.

The PTFA made the tickets free with voluntary donations where possible, so no one was excluded, and raised approximately £1,200 from this, plus £346 in cash donated on the day into Covid safe buckets.

Two other donations were kindly made last term by parents via their work:

Charitable Foundation, where the company does annual donations at Christmas, whereby a set number of nominations are selected by the trustees each year for the donation. Our school was selected when nominated by an employee (and parent of our school). **Matching Gift programmes**, where an employee donates an amount to a charity and it is matched by the company they work for.

If other parents are in a situation where one of these is possible through their employment, the PTFA would appreciate it and can advise.

Christmas Craft Day: all years did Christmas crafts on a day in the last week of term. The craft ideas were sourced by Paget (a parent), and the school selected activities for each year. The PTFA funded these crafts for to help with the Christmas festivities.

PTFA shed was tidied up and lots of unused items were removed. The PTFA hallway cupboard still needs tidying up, when parent access to the school is allowed. New tables

were bought last year, plus extension leads, a step for the shed entrance (lives in the shed). The difficulty of getting in via the playground flower bed, which is a steep climb up, is hazardous when going in and out. To avoid an accident, we would like this improved, with some permanent steps. If it is possible to have a key for the private gate on Church St that would help when first unlocking the shed, to get the step out. This could be looked into.

Paget told us that all Grotto presents had now been used, so for the next Grotto, more presents would need to be bought.

A parent asked what was typically made at fairs in terms of profit. Jonathan said a conservative estimate was £5,000 per fair. He said lack of finance hasn't been an issue currently as the projects the PTFA fund have not been running during lockdowns, so we spent a lot less last year. The issue will be now the school is open, we want to support the students, so money will be going out but not coming in as reliably.

3. Treasurer's report:

This is attached in the email, and it corresponds to the accounts Jonathan sends to the Charity Commission. He explained the report initially shows Accounts for Sept 2019 to Aug 2020, and although we had the Christmas Fair, several other events didn't happen that had been anticipated pre-pandemic.

The lottery money that has been building up, to £8,000, had been collected separately in the Lottery account and only transferred to the PTFA account at the beginning of this year, so that boosted our funds. We have been funding playworkers for the playground when the school is fully open, and investments in the early years playground infrastructure. We normally fund several workshops, (animation, cycling, claytime, New Adventures dance), but none of this has been able to go ahead, so although we didn't raise as much as we normally would we didn't spend as much either.

Money continues to come through from Donorbox, they take a small amount of commission (1.5% platform fee), but if people tick the **gift aid** donations, we can claim this back which will more than cover commission.

We have paid for the laptops for the school ahead of fundraising as they were needed urgently (15 x Huawei tablets, 8 x Lenovo Chromebooks, 2 x HP Chromebooks, 10 x Lenovo laptops, total £5,132).

We have also funded things needed for the Grotto, like gifts from Santa, and bought several outdoor artificial Christmas trees with lights, extension leads and some Christmas lights, that can all be re-used.

We have just over £31,000 in the account. We are in a strong position to fund a number of activities, and can currently support the school.

A parent mentioned there had been conversations with other parents who have IT specialist experience that they could offer to the school. They would be able to advise the school if it was needed, on upgrading the IT infrastructure.

A parent asked if we have fulfilled the need for laptops. Jonathan said we had, but the current IT infrastructure of the school was in need of updating, and online teaching has really brought this to their attention. The school will review this when looking at their budgets and let us know if they need support for this. A parent asked if we would continue funding the playworkers. Jonathan replied saying we would continue with it as it's proven very helpful.

4. Proposed PTFA funded items and activities for 2021:

Marghanita read out this letter from Karen, to share at the meeting:

From Karen Law:

Laptops – we have brought 15 tablets, 20 Chrome books and 15 laptops. They have been given to all those families who have requested them. PPG families were prioritised. They have also been given to families where there was more than one child to support with remote learning. We will not be asking for them back yet, as they will continue to be used by children for homework and if a bubble were to close, children will need them to access the remote learning.

We will be looking at the technology in school, it is very apparent that the school devices (ipads, laptops etc) need updating. When the new budget has been finalised at the end of the month and we have reviewed the IT three year infrastructure / devices plan, I will get back to the PTFA regarding specific fundraising.

Sensory room – the room on the ground floor of the house (Dynevor Road entrance) has been hugely successful and supported those children with additional needs well. The number of children identified, who would benefit from the space means they can only access it once a week. Some children with very specific needs and an EHCP access it daily. Ideally we would like to have another room, so that more children can have more than one session. We have discussed this before I think. The PTFA very kindly enabled the first sensory room and it would be great to have another one. Cost for the first one was £4000. It would be a similar cost for the second room

Playworkers – the PTFA said they would find a third playworker and we have asked FFS to provide three adults from Monday 8th. The additional playworker would be based in Reception.

Activities – we are planning a whole school 'Protest project' for the final half term. Nursery to Year 6 would be involved. Each year group would look at protest from a different angle and it would involve support from Hackney Museum, as the starting point would be the Hasbudak family who were threatened with deportation in the 1980s. The children attended WP and the school community supported the family. The children had been born in the UK and the parents overstayed their visas, so were deported.

We have already contacted a number of artists who have worked with us before and are thrilled to be working with us again. We would be looking at £5000 to subsidise the costs of the workshops.

Other things- we will be looking at other visitors / artists to provide workshops in school to support our curriculum, as I do not think we will be travelling anywhere soon. Cost would be in the region of £4000. Something for each year group.

Year 6 – they have missed out on their residential due to the pandemic, and we are unsure about the usual end of term activities (boat club etc) so we are thinking of what we can do to make sure they have a good send off. We did sweatshirts last year and I would like to do those again. But I would like to do something special to make up for the loss of the residential. I am looking around, but the cost would probably be in the region of £2000 £3000, The sweatshirts are £1000 alone. Am thinking a circus skills workshops, ice cream van, film trip etc

Marghanita asked if we would still be funding workshops we have done in previous years, on top of these ideas. Jonathan said we should discuss it more with Karen, to confirm this. He suggested we review Karen's ideas and decide if we felt they are the right projects to spend money on. If we did fund them all, it could come to approximately £20,000. We could see it as exceptional times, and accept that our funds will be reduced, or look at some but not all in a more cautious approach.

A parent said they felt it was important for year 6 to have a good send off, and where possible we try to help this. Another parent asked if we have helped parents with the residential costs in the past. Jonathan said possibly we had, and perhaps asking parents that can afford to, to donate more to the trip costs than their child's, to help another year 6 family. Another parent re-iterated that we should support the year 6, where possible. They made the point that the parents of this year would have supported the PTFA in the previous years and it would be good to acknowledge this and try to help make their last term at school fun, as they are missing the residential trip. The parent suggested an activity where the year 6 walk around the local community, a trail perhaps, to help them with their independence. Several parents liked this idea.

Sophie asked what the new campaign for the Donorbox could be, and would it be fair to make it a year 6 topic, but it was agreed this would exclude a large section of the school, so fundraising might not be as strong. Sophie suggested we help fund any ideas Karen has for year 6, like the cinema idea, if that would be helpful.

Jonathan asked what we thought stood out in terms of ideas like another sensory room, the protest project, and artist workshops. A parent liked the idea of the art workshops. Another parent said opening it out to 'makers', a wider creative spectrum would be good.

A parent asked what space would be used if another sensory room was made. Sophie said she thought it was in the existing back school house, but we would ask. She said it would be useful to see photos of the existing sensory room so parents could understand what it was like.

5. New ideas for fundraising and events

Sophie said it would be good to speak to Karen to find out when parents are likely to be allowed in the school. Marghanita said as there is a lot of unknowns still, a summer fair would be unlikely as there wouldn't be enough time to prepare once restrictions were lifted in mid June.

As the emphasis might be on outdoor events for the next 6 months to a year, Paget said the idea of an event where students pass through the playground, like the grotto, or an outdoor cinema, might be worth looking at. A trail in the summer term around local streets was also suggested to support those students who would be able to walk to school on their own in

September, and could also be good for the current year 6 pupils. A parent said they would be happy to support Karen in any activities the school plans outside.

It was suggested we should research an open air cinema idea. A parent mentioned they do an event on Stoke Newington common. It was agreed that some parents would form a sub group and look into it and report back.

A parent asked about future cake sales, as they are always popular, and whether they could be run outside. Marghanita said she would check with the school on the timeline for this as it requires parents to be on the school site with students and it would need to work with the year bubbles.

6. Lottery Update

Selwyn Renton has taken over running the Lottery, from Jasmin. The information and instruction sheet was updated by Selwyn and circulated by the school via email on 19 Oct. The lottery is open to anyone connected to the school, parents, grandparents, friends.

From Selwyn:

- *I've taken over the lottery effective October 2020 from Jasmine who has done a great job running the lottery for many years and has been very helpful with the transition and with distributing prizes during the lockdown period.*
- *The visibility of the lottery has reduced during school closure, as raffles used to be drawn in the school ground, so any ideas on how to promote the lottery and attract new members are welcome. A Lottery information sheet was sent around late last year which saw some new members (parents and staff) joining.*
- *The net membership is slightly down though (around 60 members), however a positive is that the chances of winning a prize are very good. Currently we see an average £260 per month net after prizes are paid, and monthly standing order amounts from members can range from £1 to £20. The lottery bank account is accessed by going into the branch so there may be scope for moving it to an account with online facilities.*
- *The 2019/20 annual accounts have been completed and submitted with a net of £4057 raised for the PTFA.*
- *I am looking for thoughts on how to promote the lottery and attract new members (one suggestion is more through school social media channels), and for thoughts on how the lottery should work so that it is not detracting from the other PTFA fund raising initiatives.*

7. PTFA Chair position vacancy and other volunteer opportunities:

A new Chair or Co Chair is needed as soon as possible as Marghanita has new work commitments and needs to step down.

A social media volunteer would be great to have for the PTFA. They could support the different platforms.

A new Grotto designer for Christmas 2021. Paget has done this for many years, and is stepping down. She is happy to give advice (and some great ideas!) to somebody who would like to do it, and the PTFA will then find volunteers to support them.

8. AOB

A parent suggested we thank the staff for all their hard work during the lockdown, and we agreed we'd ask Karen what might be a suitable gift.

Paget mentioned how many people enjoyed the Grotto being outside, and if the Christmas fair does return to the inside of the school, she suggested you could keep the Grotto outside

and people visiting the Grotto use the Lancell St entrance, and then go into the school after the Grotto. This would help space out the fair. We agreed that using the outside space was possible again, provided we had a rain check day.

Jonathan said he had shared the accounts and they would be shared in the minutes. It was agreed they looked fine, and were approved.