

PTA Newsletter

St Mary's Catholic Primary School, IP4 4EU
1st November 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Please find below the minutes of our Annual General Meeting and 'dates for your diary'.

If you are having a clear out please could you consider donating the following. Thank you.

Toys – we would love your good condition toys /complete games and jigsaws etc for the toy tombola. Anything suitable for primary aged children Reception up to and including Year 6 would be great. Teddies and soft toys are welcome for the adopt a teddy stall.

Unwanted gifts – we've all got them lying around. Those smellies that you got from the office Secret Santa, very nice but not your brand? The brand new fluffy scarf from Great Aunt Sue that just wasn't your colour? Gift sets? Bath stuff, mini gin with glasses, real ale, candles, candles, and more candles? Bring them in. We'd love to find them a new home, either in the raffle or on a gift stall.

Books – this year we're going to try a book stall, so if you have books in very good condition we'd be very happy to accept them. Good condition baby board books are fine but ideally we'd like the majority to be suitable and enjoyable for primary aged children.

For all donations, please either catch a member of the PTA on the playground, or leave it with the office and we will move it into the PTA shed.

And finally, **business raffle prizes / sponsorship** - parents and carers please can you find out if your workplaces, or businesses known to you, could provide anything in support of the Christmas fair. This fits in with our drive to work with the local community. We've had some incredible local business parent sourced donations in the past year - cash donations from Farthings and Greenspace to sponsor the fair and boost the raffle prizes, Wacky Warehouse passes, Mariners' vouchers, Clip and Climb, PartyMan World, Jimmy's Farm passes, the list goes on.

It all helps to make the fair an enjoyable experience if we can offer good quality and varied prizes that are worth winning. We're essentially looking for raffle prizes, sponsorship, or potentially sponsoring some good quality signage so we could alert the local community about the fair.

If any of you can help in any way, we would be incredibly grateful.

If needed, I'm happy to add detail about what we're fundraising for, how the sponsorship would be used, what we can do in return. I can also speak directly to business contacts or send something in writing on headed Friends' of St Mary's paper – If you can help, please catch me (Marge Jessop – mum of Hollie Year 1 and Lily Year 5) on the playground or send me a message 07739011619. Thank you in advance.

Dates for diary:

Non uniform day – Friday 15th November for bottle donation please

Christmas Fair – Wednesday 27th November at St Mary's church hall – from 2:30pm to 5pm. Year 1 – 6 children will be brought over class by class within school hours, parents and carers can pop in before pick up, and all are welcome with their children after pick up.

Friends of St Mary's Parent Teacher and Friends Association

Registered Charity No. 1036532

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

16th October 2019

Held at St Mary's School, Woodbridge Road Ipswich at 7pm

Minutes – Barbara Pink/Marge Jessop

Attendees: Jo Berry (head of St Mary's and teacher rep), Nicola Campbell (current chair), Margaret Jessop (incoming co-chair), Barbara Pink (current secretary), Lauren King (incoming treasurer), Naomi Gornall (current vice chair), Rimante Atkoauniene (committee member), Anna Dixon (committee member), Elena Biondi (committee member), Rosemary Mason (incoming co-secretary)

Ordinary Business

1. Apologies for absence - Apologies received from Amanda Canham, Carla Wilson, Helen Connors, Claudia Kelly, Lucia, Claudia Marco, Abel Gomez, Jane Wong, Jemma Maria Louis, Milena Kaczmarczyk, Sharon Green, Denise Lavender, J. Jose, Romilly O'Driscoll, Rosalia Sortino, R Abraham, Leena George, Sheeja John, Matthew Thomas, Jincy Joy, Benoy Michael, Simi Gibson, Juno John, Joby Joseph, Johnson Devasia, Jisha Johnson, E Sebastian Varghese, Shajan Matthew, Jessy Matthew, Jiss Kollara Vangless, Shaji Mathew, Shiji Mathew,
2. Minutes of the Annual General meeting held 27/09/18 – Made available for viewing.
3. Matters arising from the minutes of 27/09/18 – none to discuss.
4. Chairs and Treasurers report for the year ending 31/07/2019 – copies of both circulated within the meeting, and will be published alongside these minutes. Discussed the fantastic work that has been done this year throughout the school, and thanked all involved. Agreed that we would like to focus on involving the wider community this year.
5. Appointment of an Independent Examiner of Accounts for the year ending 31/07/19 – there has been the same independent examiner for the last few years, we discussed the need to establish if she is happy to continue going forward, or if we may need to approach someone else. Lauren and Anna both know a lot of accountants so said they would be happy to look into this if required.
6. Election of Officers and Trustees of the Committee –

Chair - Nicola Campbell has elected to step back from the chair role. There was one nominee, Margaret Jessop, nominated by Nicola Campbell and seconded by Barbara Pink. The committee voted in Margaret Jessop to co-chair with Nicola Campbell who will remain as co-chair in an advisory capacity.

Vice chair – Naomi Gornall is content to remain in post as vice chair.

Treasurer - Milena Kaczmarczyk has elected to step down from the treasurer post. There was one nominee, Lauren King, nominated by Margaret Jessop and seconded by Nicola Campbell. The committee voted in Lauren King to act as treasurer.

Secretary – Barbara Pink is content to remain as secretary but will take on a more community focused role as ‘community ambassador’. There was one further nominee, Rosemary Mason, nominated by Nicola Campbell and seconded by Margaret Jessop.

The committee voted in Rosemary Mason as co-secretary.

Note – the committee received 19 x nomination slips for Bijoy Abraham to act as Ordinary Committee Member. Bijoy did not attend the AGM but contact will be made post meeting to welcome and make arrangements.

Special Business

7. PTA purpose for coming year and how we will run.

Purpose – Discussed that Friends of St Mary’s PTA purpose is twofold – fundraising and community.

Fundraising specifics to be covered in point 8.

Our main target is to revamp the Willow Garden and other outside spaces. We will fundraise throughout the year in various ways to make the Garden available for the children. This will include events and initiatives, but also bid writing and applications to external bodies.

Chris Griggs has had a great deal of success on our behalf and has raised a significant amount towards the total with bids. The school has applied for a grant to use in the Willow Garden for climbing equipment, and will get the Lottery Fund decision in 6 weeks.

We will also fund specific bids from the school for enrichment activity or equipment wherever we can, these are listed in point 9.

The community focused work is an equally important part of the school and FOSM. It is essential to bring the people together.

In support of this, we examined the new role of Community Ambassador. Barbara Pink has kindly agreed to take this forward beginning with the introduction of termly coffee mornings for all parents, either after drop off or before pick up. Discussed the potential to use the Hive or the school hall, these will need to be booked in advance.

We are very keen to involve the school community in events, actions, and decisions taken. We intend to put out a questionnaire via ParentMail to start this off. We also discussed our communications methods – What’s App groups, ParentMail, separate FOSM newsletter, potential pin boards in the playground, and sticking labels in children’s diary to alert parents.

FOSM would like to work more closely with the fundraising team and the school council - Miss Mudd and Mrs Ahmed respectively head up these initiatives. FOSM are also keen to work with the

teachers, and to that end Mrs Berry has volunteered to act as the teacher representative and attend one FOSM meeting per term.

We also discussed the potential for a community project within the Willow Garden, such as 'work parties' at the weekends. There was a sense that families might like to get involved together, and it could provide a balance of the sexes. Anna Dixon said her husband could be a potential lead for this and she will check with him.

How we will run:

Agreed we would continue the success of project based working where possible, with key people taking a lead and then sub committees – so everyone does not have to attend every meeting unless they wish to. Chair to maintain an overview and to lend support to each lead where required.

Discussed the potential limitations. These were mainly around people being willing or able to take a lead. The group all have many other responsibilities including but not limited to employment, businesses to run, elder and younger children, and other caring and volunteering commitments. We agreed that we will only do what we can.

Discussed our own internal communications. We have a What's app group which we will run down and set up a new one for active members for this school year. We have been using Slack to run meetings with some success, however the uptake from active members has been limited with about half signing up for it. Discussed how we can make it easier for people and Nicola was open to running a session to demystify it. Naomi also suggested a function called 'House party' a video call app. Hope to aim for at least one face to face meeting a term, and then others as and when required via different platforms.

Agreed to keep the chair and the Head teacher as a single point of contact between the school and the FOSM. Termly meetings will be booked to go over any outstanding items, but the main things to organise will be dates at the start and end of the school year.

8. Fundraising plans for 2019/20

Christmas fair - We set a date of Wednesday 27th November 1:30 til 4:30 or 5pm

Rosemary Mason has kindly volunteered to project manage the fair so that it is still held, she and many others view it as a tradition which would be sad to lose. Rosemary will head up the committee with Marge's support. Marge, Anna, Barbara, Rimante, Lauren and Nicola all said they would be available to assist on the day, and Elena and Naomi will be able to assist later in the day.

Mrs Berry agreed that the children can be brought over class by class as usual, they will take a view on whether Reception children will attend or if it will be too overwhelming for them as a class.

We then set dates for potential events through the year in conjunction with Mrs Berry who could give the school's perspective and speak for their diary / the busy times for the teachers / availability.

Event dates agreed:

Non-Uniform Days –

Friday 18.10.2019 (pre agreed) £1 donation

Friday 15.11.2019 - Bottle donation for the Christmas Fair

Friday 14.02.2020 – £1 donation

Friday 03.04.2020 - Chocs for Socks (the children can wear funny, odd socks for chocolate donation)

Friday 16.06.2020: Bottle donation for Summer Fair

Potential discos (organisation allowing) – Friday 16.06.2020

Summer Fair (organisation allowing) – 03.07.2020

Other fundraisers –

Discussed Christmas cards and agreed it has been left too late to be a viable option this Christmas. However we may consider doing end of year tea towels in July.

Discussed Father Christmas visit, will see if we can include him in Christmas Fair instead as school is very busy. *** Update – Mrs Berry is open to Santa visiting / distributing gifts on the Christmas Dinner day when children may also wear festive, red or green jumpers**** TBC.

Bags for School – Elena has this down to a fine art but could do with assistance when the letters have to go out / bags have to be moved. We also wanted to put the details in the church newsletter and open it up to the church community – Rosemary may have a contact she can speak to.

Second hand uniform – Denise Lavender is doing a brilliant job with this.

Hampers – Sarita Ramos Watts has kindly agreed to create hampers for the FOSM.

9. Bids for funding for the coming year.

Note - The funds for the Willow Garden obtained by bids are ring-fenced to go towards that specifically. The treasurer report indicates this is close to 8k in the FOSM account.

In addition to this, Mrs Berry asked the PTA to fund the following:

- Artist for Art Week 2020
- Bassistry workshop for whole school
- Author visit for whole school
- Contribution towards coaches
- Year 6 leavers books.

The estimated costs are £3000. Discussions were had about specifics such as potential to put the 'artist in residence' opportunity out for tender next year so that local artists might have the chance to apply for the job. Mrs Berry is happy to discuss this going forward but the usual artist Mr Etheridge has been booked for this year. The group voted in favour of those expenditures and also asked if there was anything else that would be desirable in case there were more funds.

We discussed replacing a whole reading scheme set of books (potential cost around 3k). We discussed supporting a multicultural day that the school council are keen to set up. Discussed forest school training workshops for the staff. The committee also noted that the staff room is run down and queried whether it might be appropriate to put a small amount of funds towards some functioning equipment such as a hot water tap. It could be used for teachers and volunteers and also make it easier to host parent events.

10. Communication plans and 11. Allocate tasks... - both covered off earlier in the meeting.

11. Any other business: Confirmed class reps for the coming year –

Year 1 – Naomi Gornall

Reception and Year 4 – Barbara Pink

Year 2 – Anna Dixon

Year 5 – Margaret Jessop

Year 3 – Claudia Kelly

Year 6 – Rimante Atkoauniene

The meeting closed at 9pm.