**Chair Report: 23 March 2021**

The words ‘extraordinary’ and ‘unprecedented’ have probably never been used so much before, by so many of us, to describe what has happened around us in our lives in the past 12 months.

In the context of a formal report on our PTA’s activities in the last 12 months for our AGM, I have to use those words again because the COVID-19 pandemic has literally changed the face of how our PTA has functioned. I’ve reflected several times on how fortunate, trusted and appreciative we were to host events within the school, and as a PTA committee to have access to all areas as we set up, and then to welcome parents in as well. The pandemic changed all that. Let’s just hope in the medium term, with the vaccine rolling out at speed, we can return to those days which made for such an important community feel at the school.

The pandemic has of course significantly curtailed our fund-raising activities in the past 12 months. The first period to the end of the academic year of 2019/20 was, with the exception of online clothes sales, totally quiet as I think everyone came to terms with the situation around them.

Since the autumn term of 2020/21, I’m pleased to say that with the support of all parents and the school, we have been able to engage in a number of fund-raising activities and have supported the school in some key, tactical ways, reflecting their own immediate needs which also changed dramatically in the face of online learning.

Our activities have included the 2021 school calendar – and thanks to the teachers for supporting the creative activity for that – a very extensive Christmas Raffle, plus initiatives such as the Smartie tubes, the Easter hampers, ongoing second-hand clothes sales and parents use of Easy Fundraising and the log pile offer. It’s enabled us to raise funds for the visualisers that helped those at home see what the teacher was writing on the white boards, webcams, new playground equipment, a Christmas breakfast for all the children and even umbrellas to keep the teachers dry given the extra amount of time they now spend standing outside. We of course also gave all the staff at the school a little thank you gift earlier this year in appreciation of their fantastic work in turning the school day online, and also teaching two groups at the same time – the in class group, and the online group.

Looking ahead, as restrictions ease a bit, I’m sure we will look at some local trails for fundraising and we’re also exploring online, crowd-funding type activities with a specific focus around one big initiative for the school, which is likely to be the replacement of the outside log trail and climbing equipment. These things do take time and commitment to organize which has not been easy when most parents have until very recently been juggling home-schooling and work all at the same time.

I’d like to thank our committee for all their work over the past 12 months. The make-up of the committee has changed over the past 12 months and the AGM marks a further change again.

Earlier this year, Rebecca Steele stood down as Secretary, and I’d like to thank her for all her hard work over the past few years in that role. Rachel Holmes, who joined the committee a year ago took up the role of Secretary from September, and I’d like to thank Rachel for her contribution both in that role and over the past 12 months.

Alexa and Becky have, as always, been centre-stage in organizing so much of what we do and deliver. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with them over the past three years and I’m delighted that together they are going to jointly chair the committee as I step down from this role.

Since September, we’ve also welcomed Alex Zimmerman and Leah Farrer onto the committee, and they helped enormously with the range of online activities we ran pre-Christmas. I’m delighted that, led by Leah, and with Alex in support they will take on the Treasurer role from Becky who has done an awesome job over the past three years as our Treasurer.

On behalf of all of us, I’d also like to thank Mrs Howells and her team for their support as well, especially during the times we’ve lived through in the past 12-months.

Hopefully we’re now seeing a light out of the COVID-19 pandemic and with it an opportunity to upscale our PTA events and fund-raising once more. I for one am looking forward to pulling a pint, or pouring a glass of Prosecco in the field at a future event on a warm sunny evening!

Graham Munday, Chair

23 March 2021

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