**St. John’s School Parents’ Association**

*Fundraising for our children’s futures*

**Minutes of Meeting**

12 January 2015

**Attendance**: Mrs Grimsey, Mrs Rodbourne, Rebecca Evans, Susi Catchpole, Jude Woods-Ballard, Sam Miller, Ed Mueller, Annie Porter, Kay Bolton, Jane Bobbin, Steph Dell,

Sam Ward, Liz Patient, Helen Davies, Sharon Barraclough, Sara O’Connor,

Charlotte Downing, Helen Nichols and Elena Smith

**Apologies**: Heather Breed, Julia Spittles, Helen Isaacs, Emma Voss, Louise Lucas

**Agree Last Meetings Minutes & Matters Arising**

Rebecca read through the previous minutes, no amendments were suggested and they were duly agreed by those present as a true record of the meeting.

The actions outstanding from the previous meeting were discussed;

* Mrs Grimsey has spoken to Mrs Insley who has confirmed a music concert can be held in the marquee after the Summer Ball. It is likely to be Monday 6 July but this is to be confirmed.
* Gift Aid Forms: Mrs Grimsey confirmed the school fund has charitable status therefore Gift Aid forms only need to be sent to parents once and can then be used by both the school and the PA.

**Chair’s Report**

Rebecca wanted to thank Jodi Sangster and Sharon Wilkes for all their hard work in organising the Christmas Fayre, which was a huge success. She was delighted that two parents, Victoria Geenes and Johanna Young, have offered to organise the next Christmas Fayre.

Ed Mueller was thanked for raising over £600 for the Christmas Fayre through sponsorship. Ed said there is much more work to be done in the area of sponsorship/grant funding and would welcome any assistance from willing parents.

Rebecca then thanked Richard Crook, who has obtained a grant of over £5K from his employer, RBS. This is a fantastic achievement and will go towards supporting the ICT curriculum within the school. A well-deserved round of applause was given by all attendees!

Rebecca thanked Elena and Jodi for their hard work in organising the Parents’ Disco, which was a great success and raised a good profit, despite this not being its original intention. Karen Hodghton was thanked for co-ordinating the children’s discos. Rebecca thanked all the parents who have stepped forward as Class Reps. She asked everyone to offer any ideas they may have for future fundraising and stated that volunteers are always required to assist with events in any way possible.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Jude ran through the Treasurer’s Report (see attached). The main highlight of a great first term was that £10K has been added to the opening balance, mostly thanks to the Christmas Fayre fundraising efforts and the RBS grant. Jude thanked Emma and Madelene for their hard work organising the Christmas Cards. Emma had requested that Mrs Kimber also be thanked for her help and support with this.

Jude pointed out that, since the communication to parents about Easyfundraising just before Christmas, £135 has been raised through this site. It is worth noting again that this is a very simple way to help raise money for the school simply by registering on the Easyfundraising website (www.easyfundraising.org.uk) or app before online shopping. So far, 80 parents have registered and, if all parents could try to do this, we would raise a significant amount for the PA funds.

In the light of the RBS grant, Jude appealed to all parents who work for large, corporate companies to see if there was a possibility of similar grants through their Community Giving programmes. The School PA is a registered charity and, as such, would benefit hugely from these schemes that larger companies often run. Another opportunity would be through matched funding, whereby large companies are prepared to match the funds raised by employees for their chosen charity. It was suggested that, as a starting point, Class Reps could help to identify one such opportunity within their year group. Elena said she will ensure a thank you to Richard is written with the next PA Newsletter.

 **Action: ES & Class Reps**

Jude reported that there has not been much expenditure so far this year, with only a small amount being spent on maths resources. The main spending has been on items allocated for last year. Jude proposed to give the Summer Ball Committee a £500 float for Ball-related expenses and this was unanimously agreed.

**Head’s Report/ Staff & PA Wish List and Allocation of Funds**

Mrs Grimsey expressed her thanks to the PA for the handover that has taken place and requested a list of the Class Reps, which would be helpful for the staff.

 **Action: SM**

Mrs Grimsey also thanked those involved with the Christmas Fayre, stating what a fantastic event it was.

Discussion was held regarding items that staff had put on the Wish List. Mrs Rodbourne will be discussing the terms of the RBS grant with Richard Crook and will also talk with staff regarding the use of ICT resources, training, support and maintenance. Mrs Grimsey stated that the Governors are very appreciative that the PA is putting aside funds for teachers’ allocation and to support the school plan.

Mobile whiteboards feature heavily on the Wish List and, whilst it was agreed this was a good use of funds, it was felt that whiteboards could potentially be shared across classrooms. Kay suggested that other options for providing these, and similar items, could be explored, eg Freecycle or eBay. Steph offered her help as she works in the AV industry and would be willing to advise/offer assistance as necessary.

With regard to supporting the School Plan, Ed talked about the opportunities for SEN funding and will be following up various options to try and obtain any grants that are available for this area. It was also stated that staff from Princes Risborough Primary School will be coming in to train our staff on the maths resource Numicon.

Mrs Grimsey has chased Able Canopies regarding the KS1 outdoor area and a decision should be made by 9 February 2015.

There are a number of other improvements for the school such as a new door in the Year 2 classroom, an acoustic ceiling, flooring for Reception, Year 1 and the Hall, tables and chairs for most of the school (exceptions: Mrs Thomas and Mrs Rae) plus black-out lining for 3 classrooms. Mrs Grimsey is looking at other funding sources available to the school from the Diocese although sponsorships and grants are being considered.

It was reported that the surface in the KS1 playground is collapsing and in need of repair. Being only a few years old, the playground may still be under warranty. However, the work was completed when Mr de Wolf was Head and we will need to check on previous records and invoices.

 **Action: GG**

In addition to items on the Wish List, we discussed violin lessons for Year 2 pupils. Unfortunately, lessons have not been able to be offered this school year due to the cost of teaching. Mrs Laughton is now available to teach the children and it was felt that this would be so beneficial to the children. Mrs Grimsey will write to Year 2 parents to ask for a voluntary contribution of £12 towards the cost of lessons and, if there is still a deficit, the PA will make up the remaining amount.

 **Action: GG**

It was asked whether the Pupil Council had been consulted when compiling the Wish List. On this occasion, due to time constraints, they had not been asked for any input but they have recently had some of their previous requests implemented and, going forward, would be asked for their ideas again.

A vote was held on whether to agree to provide funds of £7030 for all Wish List items and was unanimously agreed.

*PA Store Cupboard*: Sara agreed to try and source a secure metal cupboard that could be used to safely store items for PA events.

 **Action: SO’C**

*Fencing*: Mrs Grimsey would like to replace the current fencing in the staff car park with a more secure 6’ high fence. Steph felt sure the Sports Club Committee would be happy to support the request by writing to the necessary authorities.

**Forthcoming Events**

*Pamper/Boden Evening*: Elena, Helen I and Julia have confirmed the date as **Tuesday 3 February** and are busy organising therapists and stalls in addition to the Boden clothes sale. It would be useful to have some more therapists – if anyone has any contacts, please let Helen or Elena know. Volunteers are also required on the night to serve refreshments and if anyone is able to spare an hour to help, again please let Helen or Elena know. It was suggested that a rota be drawn up with Class Reps helping to find parents from their year groups willing to help. Due to restrictions imposed by Boden, we are not allowed to sell tickets to the event but we are hoping to raise funds through asking for donations for refreshments. Mrs Grimsey has agreed that the ICT suite can be used for online ordering and one or two classrooms will be set aside for the clothes and changing areas.

*Happy Circus*: Susi confirmed the date will be **Tuesday 9 June at 6.00pm.** A marketing pack has been received and, once the Pamper/Boden evening is over, we will start promoting this event. This should prove to be a good fundraiser as there is the opportunity to have stalls outside the marquee in addition to, for example, a BBQ and bar area. It was suggested that each year group could have a stall and see who could raise the most money! There will be a maximum of 600 tickets to sell and, once we are aware of the ticket requirements at St John’s, we will also offer tickets to Speen School and Windmill Under 5s and then advertise to the wider community, ie local villages, other local schools and groups. Ticket prices are yet to be set but Happys Circus recommend around £7 per ticket. Helen Davies has offered to mention this event at the next Speen School Committee meeting. Discussion was held on marketing options, eg putting up posters, arranging press releases, an advert on Mix 96, an article in Hallmark and Steph said the Sports Club would put a link on their Facebook page. It was agreed to hand out posters for distribution at the next meeting.

We also talked about the impact of parking on the night as this is likely to cause a problem for local residents and it was felt a letter warning them of the potential disruption should be sent before the event. There will be limited parking available on the school site but it was unlikely the Sports Club could be used. Kay offered to speak to the local farmer regarding parking on his field. It was also discussed whether we could charge for parking in order to raise more funds but also as a way of discouraging people bringing their cars.

 **Action: KB / HD**

*Summer Ball*: Adrian Downing provided an update to Jude on the progress of the Summer Ball. The date will be **Saturday 4 July**, with the theme remaining a secret for a while longer until plans are further underway! The marquee has been booked and a ticket price of £40-42 per person will cover the Ball costs. However, a target of £8000 has been set to try and raise in order to support the upgrade of technology and infrastructure within school, which will come from auction bids, raffle tickets and any other ideas that are forthcoming. Adrian has a Committee which represents all year groups and Hugh Edwards is overseeing the budget. If anyone else would like to help in any way, please contact Adrian. Further information will be sent out over the next few weeks.

*Hallmark*: It was asked who would be writing the article for Hallmark that Julia has written in previous issues. The children have written articles in the past but it was felt this was not an appropriate time for them to contribute. It was agreed that Ed would submit the article this time.

 **Action: EM**

**Any Other Business**

*The Ernest Cook Trust*: Ed talked about The Ernest Cook Trust, which owns land around Bucks and is providing Forest Schools to children. There is no cost for children to attend the Forest Schools but arrangements will need to be made to transport them to the venue, the nearest one to us being to the west of Aylesbury. The Trust can provide sessions on a one-off or a regular basis, depending on need, and Ed stressed that they are likely to get booked up quickly. Whilst everyone agreed it seemed like a super opportunity for the children, the teachers would need to have much more information on the set-up and would want to conduct their own risk assessments. Ed will send the information he has so far to Mrs Grimsey and Mrs Rodbourne.

 **Action: EM**

*Christmas Plays – DVD/Recording*: Mrs Grimsey thought this should be addressed in September and stated that we need to clarify the rules where parents have requested their children are not filmed. Helen D said she will speak to the person who films the Speen School Christmas plays as it works very well there. Mrs Grimsey also suggested it might be a good idea to approach a college student to film the plays.

 **Action: HD**

*Camp Night*: It was asked if a Camp Night would be arranged this year and we agreed to add this to the next meeting’s agenda.

 **Action: SM**

*First Aid Training*: Susi talked about a very good First Aid course she has recently attended. The trainer has said that if a group of parents book a course, he will be prepared to run a course for some of the older children free of charge. Susi will obtain further information for the next meeting.

 **Action: SC**

*Breakfast/After School Clubs*: A question was asked regarding the situation with Breakfast and After School Clubs. Mrs Grimsey stated that she has been working with one of the Governors, Rebecca London, to move this forward. In addition to speaking to Early Years, the school has advertised for interested parties to tender to run the clubs and are currently waiting for responses. It was mentioned that staff at Windmill Under 5s might be interested in providing wraparound care and it would be worth speaking to their Business Manager, Paula Cunningham. Jude agreed to introduce Mrs London to Mrs Cunningham. Concern was raised that the advertising might not be exciting enough to generate interest from appropriate companies and Mrs Grimsey will discuss this again with Mrs London.

 **Action: JWB/GG**

*Alumni*: A question was asked as to whether anyone was looking at Alumni for the school. Ed stated that he has already made some progress in this area and has some useful contacts already. There is much more work that can be done and any parents willing to help should contact Ed. Rebecca suggested it may be worth adding this topic to our article in Hallmark.

*Sponsorship/Grants*: Ed has been very busy investigating sponsorship opportunities and grant funding. He has managed to secure a conditional funding deal with local estate agents, Bonners & Babingtons, and has many other ideas to follow up. Ed explained there are many bodies which can provide grants, eg Sport England, and he will continue to investigate ways to raise funds.

 **Action: EM**

*Outdoor Club*: Ed is very keen to run an Outdoor Club for the children which would most likely operate over various weekends between March and October. It is important to note that this would not be a school club but a PA run activity. His view is that parents would accompany their children and Ed would arrange a venue where everyone could meet and take part in an activity to learn about the particular topic, which could range from lambing to identifying mushrooms to star gazing! All agreed this would be a great idea and Ed will provide a list of potential activities and a plan of how it would be run for discussion at the next meeting.

**Action: EM**

*Lacey Green & Loosley Row Sports & Social Club*: Steph, as Secretary of the Sports Club, stated that she would like to rebuild the relationship between St John’s and the Sports Club in terms of communication and felt there were many links to be made.

*Film Club*: Sara had been keen to introduce a Film Club to school however, due to work commitments, has been unable to bring this in at the moment. She will continue to look at other opportunities, including theatre trips, at a suitable time.

Summary of Confirmed Future Events:

Pamper Evening/Boden Sale : Tuesday 3 February

Bag2School : Monday 23 March

Happy Circus : Tuesday 9 June

Summer Ball : Saturday 4 July

**Next Meeting:**Thursday 26 February 2015 at 8.00pm