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

*Fundraising for our children’s futures*

**Minutes of Meeting**

26 February 2015

**Attendance**: Mrs Grimsey, Mrs Thomas, Rebecca Evans, Susi Catchpole, Jude Woods-Ballard, Sam Miller, Sarah Ebdon, Victoria Geenes, Angela Forgken, Ed Mueller, Kay Bolton, Sharon Barraclough, Sara O’Connor,

**Apologies**: Julia Spittles, Elena Smith, Steph Dell, Sam Ward, Liz Patient, Helen Nichols

**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;

* Playground repairs: Paperwork relating to the original installation of the KS1 playground has not been available. Mrs Grimsey reported that a company has reviewed the playground and quoted for repair work. Initial repair of the holes would be £250 + VAT but it would cost a further £6K to sweep, clean and resurface the area.
* Happys Circus: Helen D was not at the meeting to update on whether the Circus has been discussed at the Speen School Committee but Angela was able to confirm that the flyer has been distributed to the children via their bookbags. Kay has not yet been able to speak to the farmer about parking on the night but will follow this up.
* The action to speak to the contact at Speen School for filming the Christmas plays is ongoing.
* Breakfast/After-School Clubs: It was felt that Windmills may not be able to offer these clubs but Mrs Grimsey reported that a provider has been found with discussions still ongoing.
* Sponsorship opportunities: Ed is meeting with Mrs Grimsey on Friday 27 February to discuss further.
* Y2 Violin Lessons: A letter will go out to parents after Easter.
* Storage cupboard: The sourcing of a new PA cupboard is still ongoing.

**Chair’s Report**

Rebecca thanked Jude for all her hard work to set up the new PA website, which should improve communication, enable parents to buy tickets for events and sign up for helping when required. A Parentmail will be sent out giving further details and we would like parents to register on the site, ideally including a photograph. In addition, we will be looking for sponsors of the site to help cover the costs of site management and Paypal fees of approximately £100 per annum and Rebecca proposed a sponsorship fee of £30 per annum. If any parents own their own company and would like to sponsor the site, please contact Jude. Angela offered sponsorship from her husband’s company which was gratefully received.

Rebecca also talked about Bucks Community Foundation Funding and will be submitting a request for a grant at the appropriate time.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Jude thanked Julia, Helen and Elena for all their hard work in organising the Pamper Evening/Boden Sale. The snowy weather kept some people away but the night was still well-attended with £418 being raised from the Pamper Evening and £100-130 commission from Boden sales (exact figure still to be confirmed as returns are still being processed). It was unclear whether this event would be run again at a later date. We discussed the value of having a standard evaluation form for attendees of events and external providers to provide feedback that could help the Parent Association to improve future events.

Jude drew attention to the voluntary contribution button when buying tickets through the website. The Parent Association is charged 3.4% plus 20p per transaction but this will be reduced to 1.4% in time once the account is registered as a charity. If parents were able to add the voluntary contribution to their purchase, this would help to cover the cost. However, it is entirely voluntary and parents are not obliged to pay any more than the set ticket price, as the PA funds will cover any extra cost if need be.

Jude informed everyone that funds have started to be spent on wish list items. All classrooms now have new clocks, there is new furniture for KS2, book racks and drying racks have been bought, there are new hand sanitisers and the hi-vis jackets with school logo have been ordered.

Mrs Thomas asked if the PA would be prepared to buy the prizes for World Book Day and it was

unanimously agreed that £140 would be allocated for prizes from PA funds. Jude will contact Vicki Scoble to see if discounted book tokens could be obtained through Book-o-Club.

**Action: JWB**

Ed asked if the school were happy to accept second hand books from home that children had grown out of. Discussion was held as to suitable criteria and it was agreed that books needed to be in very good condition and not part of a series. Ed has agreed to collect and store any donated books and will liaise with Mrs Thomas to see which books can be added to the library. Any books that are not suitable for the library at that time will be donated to charity shops in Princes Risborough. Rebecca will draft a note for the website with more details.

**Action: RE**

**Head’s Report**

Mrs Grimsey expressed her thanks for the tremendous efforts of the organisers of the Christmas Fayre and the Pamper/Boden Evening. She also reported that the staff are very grateful for the items from the Wish List that have been bought.

Planning permission has now been granted with regard to the KS1 outdoor area. Work will commence in the Easter holidays and will be completed before the children return to school. The construction company requested half the cost upfront but Mrs Grimsey has told them payment will not be possible until April, which they have agreed. The company has also said they need to re-measure and costs could be adjusted if anything has changed. Concerns were raised as to how anything could have changed since the start of the process and Mrs Grimsey has invited Rebecca and Jude to attend the site revisit meeting.

A quote has been received to repair the KS1 playground. Discussion was held as to whether we should make the initial repairs then look at how to improve the facility longer term, as it is likely that the surface repairs will only be guaranteed for 5 years. It was agreed that Mrs Grimsey will get two more quotes for repairs. The PA will pay for initial repairs to the holes to make the playground safe then we will look for grant funding to provide a long term solution.

**Action: GG**

Mr Bullock has asked if the PA would consider replacing the floor in the Hall as it does need replacing soon. It was agreed that quotes need to be obtained and it may be that there are grants available as it is sport-related.

**Action: GG**

Mrs Rodbourne is very appreciative of the funds being raised by the Ball Committee for IT requirements. She has been talking to other schools and has had meetings with the ICT co-ordinators to ensure we find the right solutions for St John’s. Rebecca asked if the eLearning Foundation had been contacted and Mrs Thomas thought this had happened. No decisions have been made as yet but work is ongoing, for example quotes are being obtained for wi-fi throughout the school.

With regard to Gift Aid, a letter will be going to parents soon and highlighting that only one form is required to cover both school and PA events.

Mrs Grimsey said that our new Bursar is trying to find an easier way to record school costs versus PA costs and Jude will follow up to assist.

The vacancy for Catering Supervisor has still not been filled and, whilst there are volunteers who do help with hot lunches during the week, there is no one who can help at all on Fridays. Despite many pleas, the situation is now so desperate that staff are having to cover this role. The teachers need to be in the classrooms so Mrs Grimsey has been taking on kitchen duties on Fridays. However, this cannot continue and, if help is not found, it may be that hot meals are only available for KS1 on Fridays. If anyone is able to offer assistance at any time, but particularly on Fridays, please contact Mrs Kimber in the office.

Discussion was held on how the vacancy could be filled. It was agreed that the timings were difficult for many parents, ie 11.00am-2.00pm, but it was asked if there could be alternatives to these times. It was also queried whether the cleaning agency could provide a member of their staff and Mrs Grimsey will investigate this option further.

**Action: GG**

Sarah said she would be able to place an advert in the Naphill Gazette and on the Naphill & Walters Ash website. Other options for advertising included a local leaflet drop, at Café@3 on the RAF site, and shops in in Princes Risborough such as The Crepe Escape and Costa. If anyone knows of anywhere else an advert could be placed, again please contact the office. Kay volunteered to ask parents in the playground if they could spare some time. If many people could volunteer, it may only need to be once a term. Mrs Grimsey will send out another parentmail soon.

**Action: KB/GG**

**Wishlist Update**

We have started spending the allocated funds but there are still more things to get. We have not bought all the required mobile whiteboards yet as we want to see how they work and if they can be shared across classrooms.

**Forthcoming Events**

*Christmas Fayre 2015*: Victoria Geenes and Johanna Young have taken over the organisation of the Christmas Fayre for 2015. Victoria put forward a proposal for a slightly different approach as a way of making even more profit from the event and this was discussed at length. Victoria and Johanna suggested that, in addition to the traditional Christmas Fayre, a cheese/wine/shopping evening with external suppliers could be held either before or after the Fayre. This would allow the children to enjoy all the festivities of the Fayre as usual but would enable parents to enjoy a calmer evening to indulge in some pre-Christmas shopping. Victoria asked the Committee to consider a £1000 allowance to buy necessary items for the Christmas Fayre and £500 to buy products to sell at the shopping evening.

Rebecca expressed concern if the shopping evening were to be held after the Fayre, due to the risk of being left with surplus stock. She suggested it would be better to hold the shopping evening before the Fayre to allow leftover items to be sold at the main event.

Discussion was held as to whether more money could be raised if the Fayre was held on a Saturday. One advantage is that more classroom space would be available, however, Mrs Thomas raised concern with regard to the Year 6 games as there would be no obligation for parents to bring them to the Fayre so they would miss out on a vital part of their curriculum if they could not attend on the Saturday. Jude explained she had conducted some research into Christmas Fayres at similar sized schools and it appears that our fundraising is at the upper end of the scale so felt that we would not really be able to raise much more, regardless of which day it was held. It was decided to keep the Christmas Fayre in its current format and hold an additional shopping evening in mid-November, potentially at the Village Hall. Mrs Grimsey stated she would be happy to stagger school finish time on the day of the Fayre to allow KS1 pupils to be picked up at 2pm and enjoy the Fayre with their parents, then KS2 would be able to attend the Fayre from the usual finish time. Victoria will contact Karen Hodghton to check availability on the Village Hall.

**Action: VG**

The Committee agreed a £1000 allowance to purchase items for the Christmas Fayre and it was agreed to postpone a vote on an allowance of £500 for the shopping evening until the next meeting so that further information can be gathered.

*Children’s Discos*: Forms need to be returned by **Monday 2 March**.

*Bag2School*: Bags have been issued to the children.

*Happy Circus*: Susi reported that all arrangements are in hand and thanked Sharon for her assistance with a marketing plan. Flyers have gone out to the children and tickets will be on sale from Friday 27 February with an “early bird” price for sales before Easter, after which the will increase. Class Reps have organised for their year groups to run a stall at the event. A tombola stall is required and Sara agreed to co-ordinate this. Stalls will be open from 5.00-6.00pm and then again during the interval, which will allow those running the stalls to still see the circus. Food and drinks will also be available. Mr Barnes and Mr Bullock have agreed to be teacher participants on the night!

Susi confirmed that everyone, even very young children and babies, will still need a ticket as the tent has a capacity of 600 and, to comply with safety regulations, all heads count.

Ed has been talking to estate agents regarding sponsorship and boards could be put up around the village to advertise the event. Susi will get an events licence to allow alcohol to be sold during the event and will also speak to Mrs Grimsey regarding a licence for the Big Top. Parking is a concern and Kay will follow this up Mr & Mrs West.

**Action: SC/KB**

*Summer Ball*: All is going well and the preparations are on track. Kay will meet with Ed to discuss sponsorship packages and advertising rates.

**Action: KB/EM**

*Camp Night*: The Committee are happy to organise a Camp Night as it has been a good fundraiser in the past. However, following discussion of dates given other school and PA commitments on the calendar, the only suitable date would be Friday 17 July. Class Reps will be asked to send a note to their year groups to gauge interest before we start to organise. If there is sufficient interest, Ed has agreed to organise the breakfast on the Saturday morning. Sam will co-ordinate bookings for the night.

**Action: SM/Class Reps**

**Any Other Business**

*Outdoor Club*: Ed updated the meeting on his plans and vision for the Outdoor Club. It will be very much family-oriented and children will need to be accompanied by a parent, with sessions lasting for about 1.5 hours. Some events will have limited places, depending on the activity. Ed already has many outings planned, including a trip to Stocken Farm, stargazing on Naphill Common, a visit to Drovers Hill Farm, moth trapping and bat tracking, micro-beast activities and camouflage games. In addition, two sets of parents have volunteered to run a sketching workshop and a wand-making workshop. Ed’s vision is that other parents will step forward offering to run an event/workshop based on their particular skills/interests. Susi has offered to help with the Club and suggested a sticker collection scheme to encourage children to attend the sessions. Sara is helping on the arts side and if anyone would like to offer assistance, please contact Ed. Leaflets will be distributed before the Easter holidays and it is hoped the first event will take place in March of April.

*First Aid Training*: Susi has found there is enough interest to run a First Aid course for parents. This will mean that the course leader is happy to run a free course for children and it was felt this could benefit Year 6 in particular. Susi will organise a convenient date.

**Action: SC**

*Sponsorship/Grants*: Ed has working hard to secure a commission-based deal with a local estate agency whereby the school will be paid a commission fee if a parent sells their house through the agent. There are still some details to finalise in order to get the best deal for St John’s but Ed is working towards concluding a deal in the next few weeks. Ed also agreed to speak with Mrs Grimsey regarding quotes required for works to be completed in order that Rebecca can pursue potential grant applications.

**Action: EM**

Summary of Confirmed Future Events:

Children’s Discos : Friday 6 March

Bag2School : Monday 23 March

Happy Circus : Tuesday 9 June

Summer Ball : Saturday 4 July

Camp Night : Friday 17 July (tbc)

**Next Meeting:   
Monday 20 April 2015** at **7.30pm**