

Great Wood PTA meeting

Wednesday 15th November 7pm

Attendees: Lucy Robinson (Secretary), Jhuliana Haslam, James Unsworth, Joanna Wilkinson, Robert Wilkinson

Apologies: John Ross (Headteacher), Louise Lyon (Treasurer), Alison English, Daniel Grimmitt, Amy Hewitt, Hannah Jackson

1) Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2) Calendar & Cards update:

a. Christmas Cards

LR advised that the Christmas products arrived today. LR is going to sort & distribute later this week or early next week. Paper based products will be sent out with pupils. Mugs will be collected from the office/foyer.

LR confirmed the process with the new company had been good overall, a few issues with parents not being familiar with the new process (e.g. not ordering online before submitting designs, not circling the 'directional tree' on the form) but Cauliflower Cards had been good at responding to support queries. Providing the product quality is good, LR would be happy to recommend continuing to use the company.

JW advised her digital image had come through & showed the group – she was very impressed with how it turned out.

LR stated that the project should raise just over £360 provided there are no cancellations/returns. Moving the submission date forward to avoid a collection during half-term brought it into one of the Early Bird periods and it looks like Cauliflower Cards are honouring this despite the official slots being full (revenue would have been just over £300 otherwise).

b. Calendars

JH advised that the manager of Carnforth Printers that she has been dealing with unexpectedly had her baby early, which had meant a lack of communications recently. All adverts were submitted and pupil pictures but JH is just awaiting a proof and confirmation of the print date.

JU complimented JH on managing the project, particularly handling advertisers.

LR advised that on Friday afternoon (deadline from pre-orders) 155 calendars had been pre-ordered through Parentpay. JR has requested an extra 70 calendars (total 170 calendars)

N.B. LR checked with the school office on Thu 16th November in case any had been purchased after the end of the school day. Final pre-order total 160.

JH will follow up with Carnforth Printers to check on the proof as this should be ready.

JW pointed out that we do have time as with the pre-orders being already done, distribution can be in mid-late December if necessary.

3) Finance Update & Requests for funding

LR summarised recent funding requests discussed & approved through the group:

- We had turned down the request to contribute towards the purchase of GW personalised 'lollipop children' bollards, as it was felt to not be within the PTA's purpose and aims.
- We agreed funding the difference in cost for 1LE's rescheduled trip to judge's Lodgings after their train travel issues.

Halloween Disco:

Treasurer Louise Lyon has advised that takings were £653. Entertainment costs were £125. Sweets costs are yet to be determined as invoice not yet received but LR expects this to be in the region of £175 based on the number of sweets given out.

LL also highlighted that entertainment cost will rise to £150 from the Spring Disco onwards.

Funding Requests:

- School Council: LR showed the group a letter written by the School Council requesting funding for yoga equipment. LR has already contacted Ms Dixon & Mrs Flaherty, who have advised that the yoga balls are unnecessary but that yoga mats would be much appreciated (suggested cost: approx. £210). All were impressed with the letter. The request for funding was agreed but treasurer Louise Lyon (via text) suggested that the mats were price-checked/quality-checked as the school Council have priced using Amazon.
- John Ross: School have been offered an opportunity for a free trip for 4 classes to the Abbeystead Estate to take part in activities run by Charity Countryside Learning. School had originally put forward the Y1/Y2 classes but have since noticed the activities are recommended for KS2 so this may get changed to Y3/Y4. JR has asked if the PTA would consider contributing towards the coach costs for the trip. JH advised that it would be good to know what the per pupil cost would be without funding – as a Y3 parent, she would be probably be happy to pay for this. The request was discussed but it was felt this could not be decided upon until costs were clearer. Decision postponed until a later meeting.
- John Ross: School are trying to improve their provision of lessons/information on Black History. They would like to purchase a class set (30/31 copies) of two books JR believes will be a good starting point for a subject that is complicated and potentially political. These are Black & British by David Olusoga and Stolen History by Sathnam Sanghera. JR has asked if the PTA would consider 50% funding of the books. This was discussed and members were in agreement that the books were an excellent idea, however, it was felt that these would surely come under vital curriculum purchases and not supplementary/enrichment learning that the PTA is designed for.

4) Christmas Fair Friday 15th December after school (approx. 1-1.5 hours)

LR briefly outlined the usual Christmas Fair for JW & RW.

Chocolate Tombola: JR has added a non-uniform day to Friday 8th December for chocolate/sweet donations for the tombola.

Secret Present Room: JH advised that the infant staff/volunteers that cover this have requested an increase in cost & spend (to improve presents & due to increased prices of usual gift items). It was agreed to increase gift spend to approx. £1.50 per item. It was undecided whether to charge £3 or £2.50. Alison English & Megan Matthews have already volunteered to shop for the items. LR to check cupboard for remaining stock of gifts & wrap/tags.

Bake stall: JH queried if we are doing a Bake Sale as part of the Fair, she is happy to volunteer in this – LR stated that we haven't had one yet this year so would be reasonable to include. RW suggested we could also sell drinks on the stall. There was some discussion regarding the practicalities of what drinks. It was agreed that we could definitely use the stock of water bottles & fruit drinks (similar to Fruit Shoots) left from the Summer Fair and still within date. We also have some cans of pop, these would need to be checked with JR before including in sales.

Knitted decorations: LR stated she had a collection of small handmade knitted tree decorations (santa hats & stockings) that she hoped to sell on a small stall, hopefully making use of a pre-lit Christmas tree in the PTA cupboard.

Santa: JU stated that he has a Santa suit & volunteered to take on the role. There was some discussion regarding the logistics of this. LR explained how visits to Santa were organised pre-Covid, with 2 or 3 minute time slots pre-booked by parents and initially available to EYFS/Y1. JU suggested a drop-in/queueing system instead. It was agreed that this needs to be discussed with school regarding both a location and how best to run it. There was also some discussion of 'gifts' – it was agreed it would probably be simplest to gift a selection box, perhaps a £2 charge & a £1 selection box gift.

JH drew up a list of required volunteers, it is estimated that 20 volunteers will be needed to cover the various stalls.

5) Nativity Raffles & Charity

LR stated we needed to decide on a charity to support with the raffles held at the school Christmas plays. It was suggested asking parents for suggestions and then holding a FB poll to decide, as this worked well last year.

JU to post on FB requesting nominations of charities.

Volunteers are needed to sell/fold the tickets. LR advised it has usually been 2 per performance, with 4 front row seats reserved (2 per volunteer) as a thank you as they are unable to queue. JH to co-ordinate volunteers for running the individual raffles.

LR advised there are 4 raffles in all, 1 at each performance & confirmed that it has usually been prizes of wine & chocolates (paid for by the PTA), sometimes with a school calendar. These are small token prizes with the aim being to raise money for the nominated charity. JH wondered about finding alternative prizes for the raffle, as some felt a little disappointed in the past.

JW volunteered to sell raffle tickets at the Wednesday EYFS performance.

6) Summer Fair

As previously mentioned on the WhatsApp group, Brian from R Leisure has advised that he will need to increase costs for the stage and also wanted to confirm/agree the number of complimentary wristbands he would supply for the inflatable zone.

Proposed cost for the stage is £600 (+VAT), which is a 20% increase. This was discussed and it was agreed that it would be best to accept this proposal, which is a reduction on the usual public rate.

Brian has suggested fixing the number of complimentary wristbands for the inflatable zone at 10. This was apparently an issue at the 2023 Fair, with more being requested on the day than had been agreed. JH highlighted that she had been unaware of the complimentary wristbands despite having been a key organiser and it was agreed this would need to be sorted and agreed during the preparations for 2024 to ensure those most involved in the planning are given the wristbands as a thank you for their contribution.

JH agreed to contact Brian to agree to the stage costs and number of wristbands.

LR suggested that a subgroup is created in early January to work on the 2024 plans.

7) Any Other Business

- LL would like to consider increasing the per child trip contribution. It was agreed that this would be best discussed at a future meeting, once Louise is present along with more detailed income/expenditure information.

Next meeting: January

Future agenda items:

- Bake Sale (provisional date in school calendar for before half-term)
- Spring Disco
- Film/bingo night or other social event?
- Book sale/swap?
- WBD costume sale?
- Sponsored event or 'big-ticket' raffle