

Great Wood PTA meeting

Wednesday 24th January 2024

Attendees: John Ross (Headteacher), Lucy Robinson (Secretary), Jhuliana Haslam, Mary Snelling, James Unsworth, Joanna Wilkinson, Robert Wilkinson, Daniel Grimmit (left 19:30)

Apologies: Louise Lyon (Treasurer), Alison English, Hannah Jackson

1) Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Cards:

LR clarified that the Christmas cards had raised approx. £328.

LR advised that 2 working on the project would be useful going forward. Process was straightforward but a couple of key stages (checking submitted forms for orders & collating items for distribution) were time-consuming.

Calendars:

6 calendars left from sales. Should be an easier process in future years if using the same printer. It was agreed that the pre-order option to know numbers was good and should be continued.

JU posting on parents' FB page to request feedback on both projects.

2) Finance:

a. Funding request – Mrs Bartlett – Computer Club headphones

Mrs Bartlett has requested funding for 15 sets of headphones for the use of Computer Club only. The school IT technician has advised an approximate price of £10 per set.

JR explained Mrs Bartlett runs the club every term for Y1 or Y2, meaning all potentially have the opportunity to benefit during their time at school. The club is popular and well attended. Although school has headphones for use, these often get fiddled with causing technical issues and constant checking would be time-consuming.

The request was discussed and it was agreed to fund the request.

b. Funding request – Positive Postcard Stamps

The request for funding of stamps for the Positive Postcards had previously been put to the WhatsApp group but no conclusive decision made.

JR clarified the scheme for those in attendance (Great Wood postcards are used by staff to send to children and/or their parents to highlight good work/effort/behaviour – a treat to receive a surprise piece of post with praise) which the PTA have funded the cost of both the postcards and stamps in the past.

LR highlighted the general concerns raised in the group regarding cost of stamps and frequency of books needing purchasing, especially as there is the potential for stamp price increases. JH noted feeling a little awkward that a stamp had been paid for to post to her house, just around the corner from school (although it is understood that Mrs Logue cannot be expected to be a manual postie!) LR advised that Mrs Marcellini has given out the postcards for the child to take home and that that can be equally special as it can be produced with pride.

After discussions it was agreed that while happy to fund the printing of postcards in future, the PTA is not comfortable funding the stamps and would recommend postcards being handed out instead.

c. Funding request – Countryside Learning trips

The request for funding towards proposed trips to Abbeystead Estate for free activities provided by Countryside Learning has previously been partially discussed but further information requested.

JR explained the opportunity presented to the school and hoped to make use of the opportunity for free activities in line with the school promoting understanding of our local environment. Activities are aimed at Y3/4 and JR has reserved a visit for these year groups on 9th May. Transport for the 120 children has been quoted as £720 (£6 per child). The PTA are being asked for 50% (£360) and school will either fund the remainder or ask for parent contributions.

The request was discussed. MS asked for clarification on whether this was a new opportunity (JR confirmed it is) and also highlighted that transport costs are currently extortionate and where help is perhaps most needed.

It was agreed to contribute the requested 50% this year. JH recommended this could be on a trial basis with the matter being discussed again next year if it becomes a repeat opportunity, rather than a guaranteed ongoing financial commitment from the PTA.

JR also queried if the PTA would be willing to donate an equivalent amount for Y1. JR explained that the Countryside Learning provision is targeted to KS2 but that as this topic is a curriculum focus in Y1, he has enquired if there is a possibility for a trip for them also. This was discussed and a 50% contribution agreed there also. Total contribution agreed £540 including Y1, Y3 & Y4.

d. School update on future projects

JR gave the group an overview of planned future projects at the school, so that the PTA will have an idea of either what to fundraise for or where possible requests may be made.

The plans for a Great Wood Nursery School have been shelved. Profits had been set aside from Sunrise/Sunset Clubs, after the charging scheme had been based on Shooting Stars, but provisional quotes for the building of the Nursery have proved to be much higher than anticipated, making the project unfeasible for now.

JR highlighted that the PTA have often requested a 'purpose' for bigger fundraisers as this encourages donations, an example being the Infant Climbing Frames, that were the focus of a sponsored walk.

As such, future school projects include:

- Solar panel installation
- Renewal of the Timber Trail as this has reached the end of its life (with some amendment made to location to improve drainage and leave space for a potential nursery at some point in the future).
- Encouraging growing in school – working with Lancaster & Morecambe College to install planting beds on the school site, using the existing mulch from the Timber Trail to avoid waste.

It was agreed that a replacement for the Timber Trail would be the most popular cause for future fundraising.

JR also clarified funding for trips, advising all trips are provide at cost price, that 50% discount for Pupil Premium pupils is funded from allocated school money and that school funds any non-paying attendees (this is not calculated into the costs parents are asked for). Unfortunately, in recent years, perhaps in part due to

the requirement to include 'voluntary' on letters, incoming funds for trips have decreased and this is putting pressure on the school budget.

3) Christmas Fair

LR gave the group an overview of funds raised, provided by Louise Lyon. Total profit over £1,300.

Overall response to the Christmas Fair was good.

New locations for the Chocolate Tombola worked well.

JR advised that more bins were probably required (particularly for Bake Sale rubbish).

LR confirmed we did eventually get enough volunteers, though it was challenging.

JR highlighted that the Secrets Room was still popular despite the need to increase costs, so could be considered very successful.

The Grotto was also a popular addition, and thanks given to JU for his part.

4) Future Events

a. Bake Sale

Bake Sale scheduled for Wednesday 31st January.

JW, JH & LR able to volunteer. JR advised a number of the staff can usually also assist on the stall.

JU posting on parents FB page to request volunteers, donations & remind of date.

JW & MS advised stocks of napkins, bags etc. may need checking. LR & JH to check cupboard stocks.

b. Spring Disco

Tuesday 5th March. Natasha Marcellini is booked. Usual times (KS1: 4:30-5:15, KS2: 5:30-6:30).

LR reminded the group that the disco costs have increased and queried if we are still happy to include a treat at the end to take home. It was discussed and agreed that fundraising from recent discos gives scope for continuing with the treats.

LR to contact Kelly Allen of Seaborn Stores as she has agreed again to provide sweets at cost price on sale-or-return.

c. Halloween Disco

LR asked JR to consider a date for the Halloween Disco. Initial thoughts were 29th/30th October.

MS queried if it were possible to have the disco before half-term, highlighting that it became a very busy week, returning after the half-term holidays, having the disco and then Halloween itself, especially for younger pupils.

This was discussed. JR advised the Thursday before half-term will be Parents Evening. JR contacted Natasha & Tuesday 15th October was confirmed.

d. Summer Festival

JH is setting up a sub-group. First meeting needs to be arranged.

5) Any Other Business

- In light of the reference to encouraging growing as part of the future school projects, MS advised she has a greenhouse that could perhaps be donated to school.
- JH advised that Lizzy Collinge would like to visit school. JR advised that he was unaware of this and that he would be happy to discuss this.

Next meeting: TBA