

PTA MEETING MINUTES - 27TH JANUARY 2026

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:

Attendees - Mrs Vassallo, Mrs Erasmus, Evette Martins, Brooke Hennessy, Michelle Martin, Veronika Holes, Laura Jackson, Francesca Fear (non-committee member) and Stacey Butler-Vaughan

Apologies - Michelle Godenho, Tanya Charlie-Kadambari & Mrs Tracey

CHAIR UPDATE:

Just a huge thank you to everyone for your support this winter term. Despite a few challenges, we pulled off the fair and made a great profit in our first term. And a special thank you to the PTA committee for all your support.

TREASURER UPDATE:

Evette ran through the numbers listed below.

Donna confirmed the easy fundraising (smas cards) commission money should be paid imminently - £1219.14

Current profit for 25/26 is £14,571 (exc cards).

Evette discussed the recent change in Lloyds and that is now charging for charity accounts for everything inc cash withdrawals, processing fees etc., December alone they charged us £36 and therefore we have decided to move across to NatWest who currently don't charge charity accounts.

We also discussed Matched funding and how we could encourage parents to ask if their employers offer matched funding. This year we have been fortunate to receive over £5K in MF so far - one parent managed to get £2.7K and Barclays have been very good contributors but we need to encourage more parents to ask.

Can resend poster out of companies we know that support but any more ideas people may have.

HEADTEACHER UPDATE:

Mrs Vassallo thanked PTA for their efforts and gave an update on the amphitheatre.

The work is still in progress with a few more finishing touches needed. Isobel explained as much as it doesn't necessarily have the wow factor it will be another classroom when its finished and used more regularly during the day and for extracurricular activities.

She will also do a launch day once it is complete.

Mrs Vassallo has asked for the PTA to fund the extra electricity costs - approx. £2K - £3K (Agreed)

Donna - suggested some comms needs to go out about it as parent esp. KS1 may not be aware of it and how it will be used.

Brooke also mentioned her fundraising idea of plaques similar to the bricks we have that parents can pay to have a message engraved on it. Brooke is investigating costs for this - Fran suggested contacting St Edmunds as they have recently done this for the organ fund and Veronika suggested a shop in Sydenham.

Mrs Vassallo - other 2 wishes for fundraising

- Reading ecollins books / replacement books for classroom libraries - possible cost approx. £200 per class (14 classes) - £2.8K (Agreed)
- KS2 Playground - quiet area, updating it for those not interested in the ball games.... School are going to ask the students what they would like to see and come back with a plan. The new heritage project, no cost assigned to it yet. (Agreed)

CHRISTMAS 2025/2026

Feedback from the fair was largely positive. Some suggestions for improvement included updating certain stalls, adding more games for children, and the ongoing challenge of encouraging parent volunteers - resulting in begging closer to the event. On a positive note, the PTA committee received recognition and thanks for the hard work involved.

We also discussed how parent engagement has changed over recent years, with increasing difficulty getting parents to read messages, donate, or commit time to the fair. We need to consider whether there are ways to address this.

Fran noted that parents receive a high volume of messages and may feel overwhelmed, and asked whether stalls could require less preparation. Donna explained that this is covered at curriculum meetings: while the first term is intense, demands reduce significantly for the rest of the year (aside from summer support). Donna also highlighted that the Christmas fair is largely self-funded by parents, which is why it remains our biggest fundraiser.

Mrs Vassallo confirmed that teachers will attend future fairs.

Donna suggested trialling a change to how the fair is run this year. Elfridges will move back into the main fair, held in the amphitheatre and run by Year 6. The PTA will supply the gifts and manage tickets, while Year 6 parents will provide volunteers. Although Elfridges may raise slightly less money, this will be absorbed into the overall fair income.

Non-Christmas crafts will be removed from Year 1, with Year 3 taking responsibility for all craft activities. Year 1 stalls are to be confirmed but are likely to include three games.

Discussion held around whether we give more responsibility to year 5 and 6 running their own stalls and selling their own ideas, may also help parent volunteers - happy to consider this for the summer but not so much for Christmas as space is limited at Christmas fair.

Panto - Evette confirmed that ticket availability has been challenging but she has now secured 450 tickets for 15th December at mixed rates (PTA and group discounts). Numbers to be offered and final pricing will be confirmed closer to the date. Donna also explored a cheaper option with Fairfield; however, as this requires an upfront payment, it is unlikely to be pursued.

GOVERNANCE:

We discussed an instance of money being unaccounted for at the fair. There's no indication that it was lost or taken, and we all recognised how busy the event was. It was a good moment to pause and reflect on how we can better support volunteers by keeping things simple and consistent when handling money.

Donna / Mrs Vassallo reassured everyone that there was no fault or blame. We agreed that tightening up a few processes will help protect everyone. Going forward, money will be counted and kept on site, and only the treasurer and a small number of agreed people will use the office.

We also agreed to make sure key checks, like first aid cover and fire safety, are confirmed before each event. These steps are there to support volunteers and keep everyone safe.

SPRING ACTIVITIES:

Brooke spoke about music bingo - Paul Preston (Ginger fitness) will compare the night and all is in hand. Tickets are on sale now and all is going well. Michelle / Brooke will start collecting prizes for the night.

Easter Treats - Donna / Brooke have already bought the Easter treats from the PTA.

Bunny Hop Challenge - next fundraiser!

The Bunny Hop Challenge is a fun, inclusive Easter fundraiser where all children take part in a bunny-themed obstacle course. Children can be sponsored to join in or for the number of circuits they complete, with all funds supporting PTA and school activities. Every child will receive an Easter treat, with bunny ears for those who raise £3+, an Easter goodie bag for those raising £15+, and a class prize awarded to the class wearing the most ears.

Mrs Vassallo to confirm a couple of dates for us to consider to run it.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

Donna advised that Evette would like to step down as Treasurer so we are on the hunt for someone to replace her. If anyone has any suggestions or can convince anyone to apply, please do let us know. Evette will happily support for the next year but we would ideally like new person in the role for Sept 2026. Normal treasurer term is 2 years.

Preloved uniform - With Brooke stepping up as chair in Sept we need to find either a new way of working the uniform or someone / some people to take on and help support with preloved uniform. This is a very profitable fundraiser and is popular but needs help sorting through donations and sorting uniform requests. A discussion was held and suggestions included a team of volunteers who help on an ad hoc basis rather than committee members - could request via Friday Flyer / announcements.

AOB:

Nothing raised.