

Thriplow School PTA minutes

AGM 30th April

Attendees

Meghan Bonner (Chair), David Aston (Treasurer), Jo Dugan, Natasha Burford (Duty Secretary), Lucy How (Head Teacher), Harriet Bannington-Howell (Duty Treasurer), Geri Kitley, Rachel Leech (Duty Chair), Stephaine Dods

Apologies: Helen Joyce (Secretary)

Welcome

MB welcome everyone to the meeting. There conflict of interest - no and previous minutes signed off.

AGM

- Chair report - see full document on PTA documents and further down.

MB gave an outstanding account of 2024-2025 - with much success for PTA fundraising and use of fundings by the school. A huge thank you to core committee members - DA and HJ for all support and time given up.

- Treasurer's report - see full documents on PTA documents and further down

DA provided a full report for 2024 - that had resulted in year end unrestricted cash of £34,000. From this amount £23,000 has gone towards the new playground build. Normal outgoing for PTA funded school events is a minimum of £5,000 at this stage. This coming term has approximately £500 for funding coming in for events. The PTA is in good standing moving forwards for next year's events and requests from the school.

- Policies

These are annual review and final drafts to be put on the Facebook page and school website.

(Action - MB and HB to look at possible changes and reviews prior to posting)

- Core committee elections

This year all core committee members will be stepping down and new positions will be available:

Secretary role - HJ to be stepping down after all her hard work - NB volunteered for role - seconded by SD - All in favor

Treasurer - DA stepping down but providing support til September for accounts handover (thank you) - HB volunteered - seconded by NB - all in favor

Chair - MB to be stepping down after many dedicated years of hard work - RL

volunteered - second by HB - all in favor

AGA continued by new chair RL

Requests for PTA funds

- Summer production

Core PTA had voted to continue supporting this.

- Year 3 / 4 - Off the Page

Mrs Forde has requested £250 for geology workshop by Off the Page - DA questioned if all classes are having equal funding for activities - LH has reviewed all historical events throughout the year and course of kids time at school and conclude funding does get fairly dispensed

Update on the solar panels grants

JD has carried out amazing work submitting grant proposal for solar panels. £28,600 has been requested in this grant with £2K offered from the PTA as flexible funding to show support from community and hopefully aid in the success of the proposal. At present due to short notice of the deadline for grant request a desk quote has been given. Once school has passed into final rounds of grant requests. Site visit will be required for a credible quote. The installation is predicted to save approximately £5K a year with possible 5 year pay back. Thanks to JD as well as SD, Liz Moore and Sam for all help regarding this project.

Date of the final round is 9th May. If successful funding is delivered quickly, with possible installation date over summer holidays.

Cornerstone update

Email from DEMAT regarding clarification for final payment. All remaining funds to be assessed and to be correctly allocated. Library request outstanding for £800 - LH believes £4,000 out of £5,000 allocated to library has been spent this far.

Playground equipment update

Redirection of summer solstice funds to playground kit out. Certification for safety has been sent. Installation company has requested photos of use - permission for children without forward facing to be obtained for this prior to sending. Company also request feedback for installation and use of equipment. No complaints from LH and MB about installation. LH spoke to Bees for feedback;

Very pleased, can climb high, swinging high, can walk with friends, challenging and fun, new colours better, more things to do and many more comments.

- Tractor

During installation of the new equipment, the tractor was assessed and found to

have a large hole under it that would be very costly to fill in. Due to recent repairs and as a dearly loved play equipment of the students, the tractor has remained on the playground. Thanks to MB and the Bonner family for its new coat of paint.

- Old equipment

Many of the old equipment removed from the upgrade has found a new home in wild space to continue being used by key stage 1.

Fundraising events

- Sports day

Year reps are to be contacted regarding organising tea and coffee for this event

*** Uniform swop - will not be happening at sports day - LH to coordinate with Sam for possible uniform swap days - also new entrance way is looking at mini version of uniform swap

- Summer production

Year reps to be contact to organise and to assess drink situation for evening event

- Summer Ice cream sales

To start looking at the date for ice cream sales - to start at this side of half term due to the short duration of the term. There will be a cash float and sum up machines in the office.

Core committee update

HB to start document for year rep sign up prior to end of school year. Also to start advertising for duty positions as required.

Job requests from the school

LH to draft lists of possible repairs / also parent body to highlight any damages or problems to be addressed. Jobs to be posted on facebook group for parent body to assist with.

- Gardening

Request to RL and gardening whatsapp group to be sent as lovely weather has brought about massive growth of plant life.

- Outside drains

Drains require cleaning on playground

- Skip run

In the bike shed large stack of items needing to go to the tip (PLEASE DO NOT

TAKE ANY BIKES). There are number of plastic boxes free to anyone

- School Hall

LH requested Hall to be painted. Hall to be emptied prior to the end of term for summer holidays - possible to start paint in July - Sam and LH to be contacted regarding planning of this.

- Outside painting

To contact LH if any areas need a touch up

AOB

Reading group will be gathering this Friday - RL to attend. LH very grateful to all readers and lead - Sarah for all help.

New starter evening - Thursday in June, uniform to be sorted for this, request to Ants for any outgrown items prior to event.

Summer solstice - to start the process for setting up and in preparation for next year's event. LH confirms can still be carried out on site.

DEMAT to do fencing across ladybird to in front of green house.

Dates for upcoming PTA meetings

- Tuesday 10th June 8pm Zoom
- To plan for next year

Chair Report - Meghan Bonner

2024/2025 has been an incredible year for Thriplow PTA.

After years of hard work, the children were finally able to start using the Cornerstone Classroom. Year 5 and 6 have been taught in the classroom all year and have benefited from a wonderful learning space. The official opening took place in October 2024 when we welcomed Mark Richer to the school to formally cut the ribbon in a special opening ceremony. It marked not only the opening of the classroom, but also the new staff room which overlooks the playground and the much anticipated STEM room for enhanced science, technology, engineering and maths teaching.

The hard work on the cosy library continues and it is hoped that this facility will be fully up and running later in 2025, offering a dedicated library and breakout teaching space for the children.

In addition to the Cornerstone opening ceremony, we have also now had the official opening of the new playground equipment which was installed over Easter and funded by the PTA. The new play equipment has transformed the playground and we look forward to the children enjoying the equipment for many years to come.

The Class Rep system continues to be a huge success and we are so grateful to all of the parents who have signed up and who continue to sign up to these roles along with the wider teams of volunteers. These roles are so vital in sharing the load among the school community. This year we have held numerous events and fundraisers including ice cream sales, sports day refreshments, Key Stage 2 production refreshments, a disco, a movie night, a Christmas hamper raffle, a School Tea Towel fundraiser and refreshments at the Nativity along with the occasional bake sale. We have also held our annual tea room at Daffodil Weekend which was incredibly well supported by the school community with the rota filled in record time. Combined, the events have raised many thousands of pounds for the PTA which goes directly to improve the quality and experiences of our children's learning. We cannot express how grateful we are to the whole school community for your continued commitment in not only hosting but attending and supporting these events which make such a difference to the education of all our children – thank you!

In addition to those that volunteer to host events, we are also so lucky to have a Gardening Team who keep the grounds of the school looking, quite frankly, amazing and we have a group of village volunteers who come into the school to help children with their reading on a weekly basis. We have also been lucky enough to have a parent volunteer apply for a £25,000 grant on behalf of the PTA to try to secure funding for PV panels so the school can become more sustainable and save money every year on heating and electricity bills. We are waiting to hear the outcome of this, but it is yet another example of our community's incredible support of the school.

By my calculations, including ringfenced sums, we have committed to spending over £30,000 on our children, their education, their school experiences, their school equipment and their school learning environment this year. This funding has included new sports and music equipment, school trips, school experiences (such as the animal experience),

the STEM room and cosy library kit out, support with school productions, equipment for classrooms and the installation of the new playground equipment. For a small school with less than 100 pupils, that achievement and contribution is quite simply unbelievable. I said this last year, but most of these investments would simply not be possible without the PTA. I'm not aware of any other community where the commitment and efforts of the PTA and wider community collectively have such a huge impact on the education and experiences of children. It is something we should all be truly proud of.

In accordance with the constitution, I have completed two years as chair and it is now time for the next generation of the PTA to take the reins. Whilst we still have the formal voting to go, I am so grateful to Rachel, Natasha and Harriet for signing up to deputise the Core PTA roles this year to ease the handover and for all the support you have given the Core PTA over the last few months. You have been wonderful and I have no doubt that you will do a fantastic job driving the PTA forwards over the next couple of years. Finally, I must say a special thank you to Nell and Dave. Both will be departing after many years of service on the PTA Core Committee. Nell will be leaving tonight and Dave has kindly offered to stay on for a few more months to help hand over the reins to Harriet. Both have been nothing short of outstanding to work with over the last few years. Without their input and support, we could not have achieved half of what we have. Thank you for your stalwart support, your positivity, your drive and determination, your willingness to always listen to concerns and issues and to find positive and proactive solutions. I feel very lucky to have served alongside you both.

I also could not leave without saying a special thank you to Mrs How, Mrs Baron and Mrs Sandford. You have provided us with so much support over the years for which we are so grateful. We couldn't have put on the events we have without your positive, can do attitude and willingness to support the PTA so wholeheartedly. Thank you.

As a Core PTA, we very much wanted to see money being spent so the children of those that had raised the money benefitted from enhanced experiences and education whilst still at the school. I feel we leave the PTA having achieved much of what we set out to and leaving it in a good position for the new Core PTA to take it forward in their chosen direction. I hope the parent body will agree.

With one final thanks to the whole school community for all your support over the years. Thank you.

2024 PTA Treasurer Report (covers 2024 calendar year) - David Aston

I would echo Meghan's thoughts of what a fantastic year 2024 was for the PTA in terms of fundraising.

The highlights of the year were the Tipi Party which raised £8k, and Daffodil weekend 2024 which raised £4.4k. Daffodil Weekend 2025 subsequently outdid this with £5.5k of funds raised!

Overall fundraising net of expenses came to almost £15k for the year, with Movie Nights, Ice cream Sales Christmas Hampers and Discos helping make up the contributions.

Year End unrestricted cash stood at around £34k. £23k of this was subsequently spent on the kit out of the new playground. Cash today stands at around £14k, but we have £2k of items still committed to, alongside regular items which are a further £2k on an annual basis. The PTA has earmarked £2k for solar panels should the need arise from the school.

The PTA's reserves policy is that it needs to cover outgoings in the normal course of business including that in an event year. The committee has agreed to try and keep £5k as a minimum in the bank account to comply with this policy. At this stage with the above commitments mentioned this means ~£3k is available to commit to the school on new projects outside of solar panels. This number has grown due to some older items being reviewed today which will be struck off the list

Year end restricted funds left from the Cornerstone project were £5.5k. This was used to kit out the library. There remains £2.7k in the Cornerstone account as of today.

The PTA made over £8k of donations to the school in 2024 to help support various items, including class trips, sports equipment, classroom accessories and online safety courses. The parent body continues to do an incredible job in fundraising for the school. I want to take this opportunity too to thank Mrs How and the teachers for finding things for us to spend on! Most of all I want to thank Meghan and Nell in all the work they have done as chair and secretary, and am incredibly grateful too to Rachel, Natasha and of course Harriet for agreeing to take over!

Thanks

David