



Walmsley School PTA

2021/22 Chair's Annual Report

Tuesday 8th November 2022

Introduction

We as the PTA have a charitable objective to help improve school life for our children. We work in partnership with school and parents to try and achieve this objective. We aim to do this in a manner that is not disruptive to the running of school and is not overly burdening for our volunteers and the school community.

2021/22 Year in Summary

The last academic year started with PTA activities restricted due to concerns related to the spread of COVID. School worked tirelessly through the pandemic to minimise the spread of the virus and to ensure our children could continue to be taught in a safe environment. We understood that any PTA activities that could worsen the spread of COVID had to be put to one side during this difficult period.

Organisation

We welcomed two new members to the Committee at the last AGM, namely Sarah Talbot (Treasurer) and Emily Robinson (Secretary) who have both been valuable additions to our team. Amongst many other qualities, Sarah brought her attentiveness and diligence and Emily her liveliness and creativity to compliment Kate Wicklen's (Secretary) reliability and dedication. This year allowed the Committee to gain experience of working together as a team within the framework of our constitution. Although Vanessa Mason resigned as Chair part way through the year, the objectives and plans laid prior to her departure allowed us to press ahead with our plans. As the previous Vice Chair, it became my responsibility to step up to the role of Chair. Lily Grafton agreed to fill my previous role of Vice Chair. Her enthusiasm and drive have been a very welcome asset to our team.

Objectives

During the quiescent period forced upon us by COVID, the Committee continued to work hard behind the scenes along with school to set our objectives in preparation for when restrictions are eased. The school playgrounds were identified as the main objective. Improvement to the Infants Playground, which had worn prematurely during the pandemic, was considered paramount.

We obtained quotes for renovating the Infants Playground from two companies and chose ESP as our preferred supplier. We agreed a scope of work, which after several increases in material and labour cost, came to ~£17k. School and the PTA felt that we had a chance of raising the required money in a timely manner such that the renovation works could be done before the start of the 22/23 academic year. We were eager to achieve this target within the set timeframe.

Fundraising

During Spring Term 2, following the relaxation of COVID restrictions, the PTA started to plan fundraising events with agreement from school to help achieve our fundraising target. The ideas we identified and executed are listed as follows:

- **Summer Family Fun Day** – The event was supported by many local businesses and a wide group of volunteers – a massive thank you to everyone involved. The non-stop entertainment was combined with a BBQ, a licensed bar, soft play and games for the kids and many other stalls selling toys, snacks and crafts. The sun came out too, which made for a wonderful day all round for those who came. It was a huge fundraising success bringing in a net profit of ~£3000. This vindicated our decision to avoid outsourcing our stalls, which would have eaten into our profit.
- **Doughnut Days** – We organised two of these, one at the end of each summer half term. They brought a much-needed sweet ending to each half term along with a profit of ~£400. A big thank you to Kate Wicklen and Lucy Binks for transporting the doughnuts.
- **Easter Egg Bongo Bingo** – School's Out pulled out all stops with this one raising ~£200 with the support of School's Out parents and children. A huge thank you to them.
- **Clothes Bag Drop** – Saving threads converted our old rags into riches – they clad our fund with a cool and stylish £370. We are extremely grateful.

In addition to the above, many fundraising incentives operated in the background such as Asda tokens, EasyFundraising, Amazon Smile and the School PTA Lottery yielded healthy profits for the PTA. Thank you to everyone who supported us with these.

Outcome

I'm proud to say that we met our £17k target and were able to achieve the installation of the new Infants Playground in time for it to be completed before the start of the 22/23 academic year. We take a lot of joy from seeing the children having fun on their new playground. It serves to remind us why we volunteer our time and effort towards our PTA and brings satisfaction to us every day as a reward for our efforts.

The work we have put in has brought us all closer together and we feel like a stronger team as a consequence. This set us up nicely to enter the new academic year with lots of energy and positivity.

2022/23 Outlook

In stark contrast to 21/22, this academic year began without any obvious restrictions to fundraising. The Committee met during the first week back to outline a plan for this year which was followed by a meeting with the school Staff Leadership Team who helped us refine our plan.

Objectives

The objective for 22/23 is to raise money for improvements to the school outdoor environment, particularly the areas around the Juniors Playground. We look forward to school's guidance on this, with input from Mrs Atherton, in due course. As many of us have children in or about to move up to KS2, we are determined to raise lots of money so that our children get to enjoy/ benefit from new additions/ improvements in and around the Juniors Playground.

We will also continue with other charitable work, including supporting the Walmsley Parish Hall and Christ Church Walmsley. We also feel that we must support good causes beyond our community where appropriate, given the difficulties posed to wider society and the rest of the world by the current times.

Organisation

We have a strong Committee comprising of enthusiastic members who continue to grow in experience in charitable/voluntary work and working within the rules of our constitution. The core group is supported by a very strong cohort of volunteers, many of whom are now considered regular and reliable helpers. It is wonderful to see such an increase in the level of dedication and support. The

group in general have enjoyed working together and many good relationships have formed as a result. We look forward to the upcoming PTA social, which will consolidate these and remind us to continue to have fun while doing our charitable work.

The Committee started the new academic year comprising of the following individuals:

Chair – Mukhtar Valli

Vice Chair and Business Development Manager – Lily Grafton

Treasurer – Sarah Talbot

Secretary – Kate Wicklen and Emily Robinson

I have decided to step down as Chair in order to increase my focus on my work as School Parent Governor. I would like to say thank you to the Committee for all their support and hard work during my tenure as Chair and would like to express my best wishes to them and the new Chair going further forward into this year. Needless to say, I will still be available to support and guide the Committee. I would also like to express my thanks to the wider PTA group and school, without whom the success of the previous year wouldn't have been possible.

Fundraising Plan

In recent years, we have organised some big events such as the 2022 Summer Family Fun Day and the 2019 Brewhouse Bake-off Competition. We have really enjoyed such events, but we recognise significant amounts of time and effort were required to make these events a success. Some of our successful fundraising in recent years has simply involved entering online competitions for cash prizes and obtaining sponsorship from local businesses with relatively insignificant amounts of time and effort. School parents live busy lives with many having full or part time jobs in addition to parental responsibilities. We, therefore, would like to reassure our members that we will continue to take the amount of time and effort required into account when planning our fundraising.

We also recognise the impact of the current cost of living crisis on household budgets. Therefore, we endeavour to fundraise in a responsible manner, whilst also offering opportunities for our children to really enjoy themselves.

On this basis, we recognise the following preferences for our fundraising ideas:

- **Enjoyable** for the children/ end users and organisers.
- Involving **low effort** with a high potential for profit.
- Attract money from **outside of the school community** (e.g. businesses, wider society).
- **Minimise asking for money from parents**, especially activities that make parents feel pressured that their child has to participate because other children will be.

The following ideas have been identified and agreed in principle:

- Dress to Impress Disco
- Christmas Fair (led by school)
- Valentines Disco
- Easter Egg Bongo Bingo (led by school)
- Summer Business Enterprise (led by school)
- Summer Fair
- Saving Threads
- Business Sponsorships

- Prize money competitions and grant applications

Final Word

This year has seen the PTA bounce back into action following the pandemic. After a slow start, it turned into a great year of fundraising where we achieved our target and enabled the Infants Playground to be installed. In doing so, the current group have grown in experience and formed good relationships. I am confident this will hold the PTA in good stead for the upcoming future where we look to raise money for the Juniors Playground.

I thank school for constantly supporting our fundraising work and bearing the additional workload that it brings upon school staff. I would also like to say thank you once again to everyone in our school community.

This has been a challenging period for me where I have had to step up into the role of Chair, a challenge that I have thoroughly enjoyed. I hope my unexpected tenure has not been disruptive to our group and I wish our new Chair all the best in their tenure.

Thank you

Mukhtar Valli