



St Matthew's Primary School PTA - Registered Charity Number 288436

Chairs' Report for September 2019 – August 2020

At last year's AGM we elected Kat Parks as Secretary (a role she was co-opted into during the previous year), and Birgit Grothe as Treasurer (replacing Mossy Mustoe). Seb Wills was elected as co-chair with Laura Franks who was re-elected. Emma Willis joined the committee as Events coordinator, Tone Klausen continued as Classlist coordinator, and Georgina Scott was appointed as our first Social Media Tsar. Mossy Mustoe became a trustee of the charity, joining Alice Tranah and Georgina Scott (George). We are grateful for Sophie Martin-Hawkins' continued support as our teacher representative until the start of her maternity leave.

The mechanics of the PTA's operation was largely unchanged from previous years, with twice-termly general meetings open to all parents and staff, and committee meetings in between.

Classlist continued to be an important way for us to quickly get messages out to parents and help enable communication among parents. We have also used it effectively for online ticket sales. We are grateful to our Class Reps who are another effective channel for involving parents

Our plan for the year had been to organise all the usual events (plus perhaps some new ones) for the enjoyment and fun of St Matthew's families whilst raising money for the school. Little did we know that 2020 would not be a normal year. Co-chair Seb was also keen to increase the PTA's involvement in issues affecting the school community such as air pollution and traffic safety, as well as continuing the PTA's support for the Funding Shortfall campaign in the form of processing donations and passing the money to the school.

The usual popular events were held during the autumn term, including Mr Marvel for the new Nursery & Reception children, and year group cake sales. Due to the timing of half term, the autumn disco could not be Spooky, and was instead themed Funky Fall – with suitably autumnal decorations put up by Emma and her team of helpers. The change from the usual theme did not dent its popularity.

Our new Fairs coordinator Emma Willis did a fantastic job organising the Festive Fair, bringing on board quite a few parent helpers not previously involved. The weather was poor, and the event is limited by short daylight hours when held on a weekday as the school prefers, but despite this the event was a great success and healthy fundraiser.

Once again Kat Astley organised Christmas Cards, raising over £1000 for school library books.

In the New Year, we had a chance to run a few more cake sales and a final Bags2School collection before Covid-19 intervened. As coronavirus began to spread in the UK, we had to cancel the Spring Disco, and by its intended date the school had closed. Sadly, we were not able to run any of our events in the summer term for obvious reasons.

We made several improvements and modernisation of PTA communications this year, with the creation of PTA Twitter and Instagram accounts, run by George, who provided an energetic stream of news, jokes and pictures of cats to liven up people's days while informing them about the PTA's activities. Seb set up a website for the PTA which is easier for us to update than the old PTA page on the school's website. The goal here is to make it easier for parents to find out what the PTA does and distribute any documents and information we need to. In other technology news, we acquired a card reader and started accepting contactless payment at events and sales.

On the 'campaigns' front, Tony Davies gave a detailed update on school funding at a well-attended November General Meeting, and a further update in February. Details can be found in the minutes of those meetings on the aforementioned website. The Funding Shortfall campaign, organised by a group of parents with the support of the PTA, continued to attract generous donations from parents and carers, and by September 2020 had raised an impressive £53,000 towards its original £60k target, all of which goes directly to the school. The campaign will continue until it reaches £60k, and beyond in a modified form. The PTA was also involved in discussions about air pollution monitoring and a project to improve Norfolk street road safety.

The PTA also assisted the school with its planned bid for £75,000 of funding from the Football Foundation towards a £100,000 redevelopment of the 'cage' sports pitch. The school would need to find £25,000 to unlock this substantial investment in the facility to the benefit of pupils and the wider community. In the March, the PTA and parents prepared 50 letters to selected local companies seeking sponsorship for this project. Sadly Covid-19 beat us to it, and we have paused that project.

Money raised through events, as well as donations and through schemes such as Giving Machine, is spent fulfilling funding requests from teachers. Notable initiatives supported this year, despite the PTA's income being lower due to cancelled events, included £5000 towards the Year 1 outdoor learning facilities, £1100 for library books and £700 towards World Book Day activities.

We would like to thank the school for their continued support of the PTA. In particular, thank you to Tony Davies for his support, to the office and other staff, and to Kids R Us for relocating to the lunch hall during our events. Last but not least, thank you to all the parents and carers who have helped out in so many different ways.

Seb Wills and Laura Franks
Co-chairs
October 2020