



Friends of Fernhurst Primary School

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Chairs Report May 2022

Welcome everyone and thank you for your online attendance at our AGM. This report covers the period from Jan 2021 (our last AGM) to April 2022.

Our last AGM was held online last January of our second full lock down with school partially open to key children and the remainder working online. We welcomed new members to our committee, thank you and continued to develop ways to support the school practically and financially whilst access to the school in person was more complicated. On behalf of the school community, I would like to acknowledge the dedication of the entire school team to support the children, and their families, through this challenging time and thank every member of the Fernhurst team for their tenacity in delivering high quality learning online opportunities alongside a supportive and safe environment for the children in school.

FOFS held our first online community event during February Half Term, booking Lucas Jet to perform his interactive circus show via zoom. This was repeated in April with a science show opportunity. Both events were fun and entertaining providing some light relief from the situation in the outside world. Whilst they worked well in practice, there was limited interest in continuing with this format once school resumed for all pupils just before the Easter holidays in 2021.

With the children working in Bubbles and having staggered start and finish times it was not possible to arrange events where bubbles would mix during the summer term 2021. However, we were able to run our regular Freeze Pop Fridays, thank you in particular to Emma Quinell Spencer for providing freezer space and supporting with selling lollies each Friday after school. This is a popular and cost-effective fundraiser through the summer months

Work parties on the first Sunday of the month resumed from May 2021 with varying turn outs. Some months were extremely well attended with a variety of jobs being completed such as library renovations, display changing, gardening, weeding, clearing of the chicken coop, painting and leaf clearing. As extra-curricular activities started back up attendance has fallen, and we should consider changing this to a less regular event to try and maximise turn out going forward and ensure it is not only Mrs Thornton and Mr Reilly attending.

The volunteer group of cleaners: Emma Cotton; Ruth Berger; Christine Asbridge; Miranda Prudente, Louise James and Lana Kelsey continued to visit the school each day to clean the children's desk and frequent touch points in the children's bathrooms. This daily volunteering (in empty classrooms) saved the school the cost of trying to recruit lunchtime cleaners and saved already stretched school staff an extra job in the middle of the day.

A new initiative from Emily Rowley offered 'Wish Bracelets' to be sold via the Hickory Fox online shop with profits going to FOFS. Thanks to Emily for setting this up.

The end of the summer term and the easing of some restrictions meant that we were able to hold our first in person whole school event for 18 months. Mrs Thornton and Lucy Dixon worked together to bring a range of outside providers together with singers and bands to create a memorable end of term Summer Party. The school talent show finals took place as part of the event which was a highlight for all involved. The feedback on the event noted



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how wonderful it was to be together in the sunshine after so long. Enormous thanks to Lucy and Mrs Thornton for pulling this event together and to Caroline Parry for coordinating the raffle.

The end of the Summer holidays was marked by The Revels on the bank holiday weekend. We ran our popular toy stall with the addition of sweets and as usual split our profits with Fernhurst Pre-school resulting in sharing £40 each. Thanks to all the parents who helped on the stall.

The return to school in September 2022 brought back some sense of 'normality' from the previous years. With children no longer in bubbles and with everyone on the playground together in the morning it has offered the welcome opportunity for community members to 'bump into each other' at school again. The introduction of 'Club Key' and the daily afterschool clubs has meant there are now two pick up times, 3:10 and 4:15 which has brought an adaptation to our after-school sales that has been embraced by volunteers where needed.

Regular mufti days on the last day of each half term have become a staple of the school calendar and provide a regular source of income. Messages about events such as this have communicated a suggested voluntary donation either in the cash tins, via ScoPay, BACS payment direct to the FOFS bank account or volunteering time at a work party. The committee are conscious of our events being accessible and not financially overwhelming, whilst still generating much needed funds for school.

Other staples that returned included our ever popular school discos. Under the direction of Tessa Crowder and Susie Williams we held a disco in October and February. Thanks to them both for their efforts to put these events together and to our DJ John Reilly entertainment.

October 2021 also brought about the London Marathon, for which two incredible parents, Louise James and Miranda Prudente ran in aid of FOFS, raising over £2000 via their Just Giving page. Their route of just over 26 miles took them all around the hills of the area culminating in an emotional finish at school cheered on by a large group of family and friends. FOFS were pleased to put on a fun run around the school field which started with a fun Zumba style warm up run by Sara Jeffrey, thank you to our wonderful running mums and all those who supported them.

With Christmas approaching our Christmas Party was held at the end of November with the idea being that outside stall holders offered a range of activities and shopping opportunities. This proved popular and was well supported. The revised plan meant we needed to call on less volunteers than previous years and generated an income of £1700 (£300 more than the last Christmas Party). Thanks to Louise Chalmers for her efforts to create stunning raffle prizes hampers from the donations that were received from our mufti day in October. The Christmas Pudding and Christmas Card sales were an excellent fundraiser again. Our enormous thanks to Crossways Fruiterers and Dylan's Milk Barn for their support in making the pudding sales such a profit making exercise with minimal input from FOFS volunteers.

As has now become tradition each child in the school was given a book for Christmas, and an Easter Egg at the end of the Spring Term. Thanks to Susie Williams who has become chief purchaser of toys and books for organising this and to Robyn Patterson for organising the Easter Eggs to be delivered to school. Excess Easter eggs were sold after school, in the same format as Cake Sales which also made a welcome return in the Spring Term 2022. Alongside this our efforts to support recycling of school uniform continue with regular afternoons of having uniform out to browse through and purchase on a donation basis. Thanks to Laura Bates, Emma Cotton and Hannah Porter for their support of this. The textile recycling bank in the school car park continues to be filled weekly and provide a steady passive income for the school. Thanks to Claudia Vargas for coordinating this.



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Thanks also goes to Laura Lindsey who has taken on the mantle of creating all the posters needed to advertise events. This is much appreciated.

As we move into the summer term and prepare for the moving on of our eldest children special thanks must go to our longest serving parents who will be standing down from FOFS when their children leave at the end of this term. Ruth Berger, Claire Cole, Claudia Vargas, Caroline Parry and Robyn Patterson have between them filled nearly every role on the FOFS committee, helped with countless events and donated hundreds of hours of their time both in person and behind the scenes. Thanks, is also extended to Anna Ward and Hannah Porter who as FOFS parents working within school have given countless extra time beyond their school role to support FOFS. You have all been greatly appreciated for how you have supported FOFS in your many years as parents at Fernhurst Primary School.

I look forward to another year of working together to assist our lovely school. Thank you all for your support in doing so.

Lana Kelsey
Chair
May 2022



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