

FODS Meeting: Minutes  
Monday 1st March 2021, 7pm via Zoom\*

Present: Louise Comley, Joanne Hyslop, Anne-Marie Marshall, Joanna Williams, Ruth Wood

Apologies: Alice Atherton, Emilie Mercer, Beth Newby, Fran Ogden, Danielle Still.

\*Note: The FODS constitution requires a meeting to be held each term as a minimum. In order to comply with this requirement whilst adhering to the lockdown measures introduced by the government to restrict the spread of COVID-19, the meeting was held via teleconference using Zoom. Notice of the meeting and invitation to attend was communicated in the school newsletter and on the FODS Facebook group. The meeting originally scheduled for 18/01/21 was re-scheduled until 01/03/21 due to work / home schooling pressures.

Anne-Marie (Chair) opened the Meeting.

**1. Welcome**

A warm welcome was given to everyone in attendance.

**2. Review of Recent Events**

Christmas Fun Afternoon & Film / Quiz Night (Christmas Sub-Committee)

We had a fantastic response to the Christmas festivities in spite of the annual Christmas Fair having to be cancelled due to lockdown restrictions. The children enjoyed a fun Christmas themed afternoon with their respective class teacher playing games, making crafts and each bringing home a selection box. A Christmas film night was also held for Reception (Elf Story and Ice Age Monster Christmas), Years 1 & 2 (Arthur Christmas) and Years 3 & 4 (Nativity 2). Years 5 & 6 had their own Quiz Night compered brilliantly by a very dapper Mr Jackson! Collectively a whopping £1867.17 was raised!

A raffle was also held with the star prize of a Eurocamp holiday up for grabs; two books of raffle tickets were sent home with each family to compensate for the sale of any tickets that would usually be purchased at the fair. This resulted in an amazing £1574.27 being raised with a further £500 secured through match giving by Ruth Wood.

The Christmas activities (including Santa's postcard – see below) cumulated in a staggering £3588.44 being raised for FODS! In spite of fundraising activities being severely limited due to lockdown restrictions, the profit made was commensurate with previous years without the need for the significant volunteer support (ahead of and on the day) that is required to run a Christmas fair. Only a £33 difference on the previous year!!

Thank you to all the teachers for helping to support these activities on the day and after school and, of course, to all the members of the Christmas Sub-Committee who helped make this possible – Alice Atherton, Sadie Hopley, Gemma Laverty, Beth Newby, Anna Hutton, Charlotte Horan and Dawn Leyland.

The feedback from children and parents alike has been fantastic. Jo said it had an old fashioned feel to it which the children really enjoyed and made it so much easier for the teachers and parents too. Parents were really pleased that FODS and school were able to do something given the current climate. It is recommended that we continue with the new format for subsequent years.

Christmas Postcard to Santa (Joanna Williams)

The children all brought home a postcard to Santa which they could complete and post in the Christmas postbox for sending onto Santa. This was warmly received by the children making a profit of £147 with minimal effort required. Thank you to Joanna for coordinating this; agreed that next time, some extra postcards would be made as spare for siblings etc.

**3. Review of Previous Minutes**

Lockers (Jo Hyslop)

Lockers have now been purchased for all Years 3 & 4 using the profit raised from the Christmas activities. This is a fantastic achievement and will be a lovely surprise for the children when they return to school. The key children who have already seen them love them! It helps to keep everything in one place, tidier, and safer which is even more important in the current climate. From a health and safety perspective its much safer for everyone. Thanks was given to FODS for all their hard work.

Happy's Circus (Ruth Wood)

Following discussion at the FODS meeting in November, it was agreed that reluctantly, having considered the pandemic, appetite, and time required to sell tickets etc, that we would have to cancel Happy's Circus who were scheduled to visit on Wednesday 15th September 2021. Ruth sought unanimous agreement from all elected committee members to cancel and forfeit the administrative fee of £84, and informed Happy's Circus of the decision thereafter.

To book a 2022 date, a new admin fee (£150) would be required with the event fee costing £3540 (approximately £200 more than previously). The format of the shows has changed to accommodate smaller audiences (in line with social distancing) with two 1 hour shows instead to allow flexible seating for 350 people seated per sitting.

There is currently good availability for September 2022 should the committee decide to proceed. A handover document has been created by Ruth Wood with all supporting information provided to Jo Hyslop and Tracy Manfredi in readiness. Joanna and Louise confirmed that they would be happy to coordinate the next event.

**ACTION (Ruth):** Share details with Joanna Williams and Louise Comley ahead of the next FODS meeting where agreement to secure a date will be sought.

Anne-Marie queried whether there would be any impact should the Casino Night (originally planned for June 2020) be rescheduled for June 2022. Ruth advised that consideration would need to be given to the timeframe for selling tickets to both events to ensure minimal clash. Although the two events are very separate (i.e. family themed vs adult audience) the cost of both might cause concern for some families if requested at the same time. Anne-Marie and Louise confirmed previous discussions regarding a payment plan (e.g. 50% deposit required to secure Casino ticket) with Jo suggesting a potential opportunity for a discount package were tickets to be bought for both events.

Joanna queried whether the Casino could be held at Davenham Royal British Legion given the recent refurbishment and desire to build on community spirit. Anne-Marie confirmed she had already made contact with Dan Pender to advise of postponed plans for a Casino night following a Facebook post to hold a community ball (or similar) however the venue would be too small to accommodate tables compared to Vale Royal Abbey. Louise confirmed to secure the date with the casino company is approximately £150 and enquiries would need to re-commence with Vale Royal Abbey.

**ACTION (Anne-Marie / Louise):** Review potential dates for discussion at next FODS meeting.

#### FODS Cookbook (Anne-Marie Marshall / Joanna Williams) – Carried Forward

Anne-Marie confirmed that the mood has changed during this latest lockdown and everyone may be fed up of cooking etc. so feels the original Lockdown cookbook suggestion is no longer relevant at this time given that there is a roadmap for exiting lockdown by June 2021. There may be opportunity to do a FODS cookbook in the future.

However, Anne-Marie suggested that it would still be nice to celebrate memories of lockdown in some way with the suggestion of a hardback book called “Chasing Rainbows 2020 – Our Lives, Our Words” whereby each child wrote a few lines to capture what lockdown had meant to them. The book would then be available for parents to buy. Having looked at all yearbooks it was suggested a hardback book retailing at £15 might be a possibility.

Ruth confirmed that this is the company we use for Year 6 Leavers books and the software is very intuitive; the ordering process is especially helpful as a link is sent to parents for them to order by a pre-determined deadline after which the book is sent to print. Staff approval is required due to the book relating to school. Jo and Ruth suggested a paperback version would be preferable taking into account cost and that the quality of the book is very good. We would need to be careful not to impact the Year 6 book.

After much discussion, it was suggested that a class or year approach be taken, with Joanna commenting that it should be a focus on happy events during lockdown rather than feelings. Jo confirmed that for the older years in particular it has been a hard year and suggested that a drawing may be more appropriate for Reception whilst a poem could be more suited for Year 5. Agreed the memories, irrespective of format, should be captured in school with the support of the teachers.

Taking a class / year approach for Reception – Year 5 children inclusive for a whole school book would ensure that families were not impacted by multiple book requests where they have children in different school years. It was felt that the Year 6 Leavers book should be kept separate.

The cost of the yearbook is £10 and it was felt that this was priced appropriately even though it wouldn't result in money being raised for FODS. The effort involved could be split and all agreed the idea is such a lovely one to give back to the children.

**ACTION (Anne-Marie):** To consider costs with all yearbooks and review in school copy of yearbook.

**ACTION (Joanna):** To consider indicative costs to print a B5 sized book at home.

**ACTION (Jo):** To discuss idea with teachers and what content each year could potentially provide.

#### **4. Upcoming Events**

##### Fashion Show (07/05/21)

Unfortunately due to current restrictions, group events are unable to be held until further notice. This event will be rescheduled for the Autumn term.

**ACTION (Ruth):** To discuss with Sarah Potts.

## 5. Finance Update

Louise confirmed the accounts as follows:

Main Account: £5946.68 (£3600 to be taken out to pay for lockers – see below)  
Ball Account: £0.10  
School Council: £15.48

The change in funds from last year include the Tea Towels (£150.74), Matched Funding (£500) and Amazon Smile (£18).

## 6. Funding Requests / Wish Lists

Funding requests (as agreed at the last meeting) are to focus on providing lockers for the remaining year groups until which time we can hold larger events and work towards bigger projects such as the renovation of the wild area. Lockers have now been purchased for all Years 3 & 4 using the profit raised from the Christmas activities.

## 7. AOB

### Online Payment for FODS Events

This was raised by a new parent at the parent council with some feedback raised suggesting that online payment should be an option for FODS activities.

Louise confirmed that the difficulty with online payments is trying to reconcile hundreds of different transactions to parents / child(ren) and then events themselves if they're not referenced correctly especially when very small amounts are involved. We have provided details as an exception for some where there genuinely hasn't been an alternative (rather than preference).

Some PTAs use PTA Events to help with this for larger events but they then take a percentage of profits. The service itself is free to use with a platform fee of 1.75% on transactions made through the site plus card payment processing fees which are 1.2% for registered charities. Other PTAs use ParentPay for PTA and school costs which parents are familiar with; this could be a preferred alternative if a workaround could be identified.

Other online payment options such as Stripe (1.2% +20p), PayPal (1.4% + 20p), Peoplesfundraising (2.7% + 7p), Donatepal (2.9% + 25p) and Raffall (10% commission) have also been considered. A member of the public enquired about PayPal but they don't allow it to be used for gambling (which include raffles) so that was not a viable option.

There wasn't a detrimental impact on the raffle or Christmas fun activities as a result of cash / cheque being preferred nor were FODS asked for an alternative payment option directly either. It is also expected that cash will still be required for in school activities (e.g. charity requests, smarties etc.) It is important to know how much has been raised for certain activities to enable matched funding to be secured.

We have committed to using SumUp machines for larger ticketed amounts once we are in a post-lockdown environment (e.g. casino night). All agreed that the effort involved in reconciling transactions outweighs the benefit and additional costs incurred from online platforms.

#### Year 6 Leavers Party

Jo confirmed that the Year 6 children have enquired about a leavers party and that, with the lockdown roadmap as currently outlined, it would seem more than possible to have one in July. This would be a really lovely end for their time in primary given that they have missed out on so much including the London trip. Ruth confirmed that this is usually organised by Year 6 parents and has details of entertainer and props to pass on.

**ACTION (Jo):** Discuss with Year 6 parents re. organising the event.

#### Summer Fair

Building on the success of the Christmas Fair, Jo said it would be lovely to hold a Summer Fair in school too for the children with activities led by their teachers. This would provide an opportunity to raise money for the remaining Year1/2 lockers. All agreed that it could follow a similar format building on the party type games, some outdoor games and having an outdoor (weather permitting!) film night. Joanna volunteered to help organise this and look into options. Ruth confirmed a date would need to be agreed for a raffle and suggested a cash amount as first prize.

**ACTION (Joanna):** Consider activities for the summer afternoon.

**ACTION (Ruth):** Consider prizes for raffle.

#### Secretary Role

After 6 years in role, Ruth confirmed her intention to step down as Secretary after the September 2021 AGM. A handover document has been prepared in readiness.

**ACTION (Ruth):** Add to next month's agenda for discussion on succession.

### **8. Date of Next Meeting**

Next Meeting: 7pm, Monday 19 April 2021 via Zoom.