

Parent Voice Newsletter

Spring 2019

Welcome back to the second half of the spring term. We can hardly believe we are over half way through the academy year already and would like to take the opportunity to update you on the PTA's recent activities and future plans.

Playground Improvements/ school environment

The end of last summer saw the installation of the vegetable garden as promised in the previous newsletter. We hope you agree that this is a big improvement to that area and the children really enjoyed the gardening activities. The Pta also funded some further items for the garden including the greenhouse and water butt. Hopefully the children will be putting their gardening skills to use once again as spring approaches.

We are aware that there is still some money left over from the 'Dragon's Den' bid to improve the playground. We have regular discussions with the school about what we can do, with such a limited amount of money. Please be rest assured that this money will be spent, but at present school are in the process of looking at the drainage problems around the yard and would wish to get this rectified before we put any more new equipment down. A proposal to remove the stage and create a football area using the current astro turf is being costed up, but the drainage needs to be sorted first, to ensure it is fit for purpose and will last. Please bear with us, as these things do take time. If you have any other suggestions on how we can improve the outside area please do not hesitate to email us on the email below.

IT

£3000 in raised funds was given to the school to assist in a much needed upgrade of the schools IT system. This included new server, staff laptops and pupil i- pads which has benefitted the school greatly.

Sports/Play Equipment

Last month £500 was given to the school to buy new play equipment to be used at dinner times in order to replace old/worn or lost equipment. This will include different types of balls, skipping ropes, stilts etc.

Grants

Further to our award of a gazebo and coffee urn, Rotherfed have provided us with a tablet for use at PTA events and to assist with research and organisation of events. As you may have already read, we were delighted to learn that our grant application to the Co-op had been successful just before Christmas. This is still ongoing so please vote for us if you shop in the Co-op and have a loyalty card. Our share of the funding is now over £600 but will increase with every vote so please get voting! We have also received £100 from the NHS CCG after participating in a focus group. Grant funding remains of great interest to the group with one of our members recently attending training on the subject so if you know of any scheme please let us know.

PTA Monies

Current funds are approx. £5000. As previously stated, the members of the PTA are very aware that this money belongs to all parents and families at St Joseph's. We discuss and consider every purchase made and every request from school for funds to ensure that it reflects your wishes and fulfils the aims of the group in enriching the school lives of our children. Apart from the spending previously mentioned, this academic year we have also contributed to the Y6 sleepover and substantially contributed to the cost of the 'pops' school trip in order to keep costs down for parents.

Charities

Embracing the catholic ethos of the school is also important to the PTA and we remain mindful to help others whilst on this journey, seeking to improve our own school. Hence we held the fundraiser for Macmillan at the start of the year, a non-uniform day in aid of "Teds" and donated money to CAFOD from the harvest festival.

Events

Following on from the success of the Christmas fayre, raffles and disco, we have arranged the following activities:

St Joseph's Got Talent – Friday 22nd March

Mother's day Present sale, Friday 29th March

Thankyou for your generous donations last half term. Prior to mother's day a shop will be set up in the hall and children will be given the chance to choose and buy a gift and help to gift wrap, write cards etc.

Easter Fayre, Friday 12th April, 3.15-4.30.

This will include a chocolate tombola, raffle, crafts and bake sale.

Sponsored Walk 17/5

More details to follow.

Volunteers needed!!

The money school receives in their annual budget has reduced considerably over the last few years, and as such school has to rely on fund raising events, to offer our children additional activities. Our school is a voluntary aided school and does not receive any additional funding like other maintained schools. Parents in the past have been requested to pay £25.00 towards the school maintenance funds, which school then have to send to the diocese each year, equating to approximately £2500, even though school no longer asks for this donation, the school still has to send the donation. Coupled with the fact, school does not charge for after school clubs or school events like the Nativity, school plays etc. balancing the books is becoming harder and harder ,these fund raising events are a lifeline and school appreciate everything parents do to help.

We are therefore in need more than ever of **new members** to this group following the loss of regular members due to work commitments and of course, Mrs Curran. The workload is so much easier when it can be shared and can also be very rewarding. We are all part of the same community and want what is best for our school. If you are willing to help in any way please see Mrs Briggs.

Thank you

A great big thank you for your continued support and donations.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions please email:

sjprparentsvoice@rgfl.org