

CHAIR'S REPORT – AGM 2019

We have had a busy and profitable year, with lots of different activities going on throughout the whole school year.

At the end of the Summer Term 2018 the PTFA held a raffle and family get-together which was well attended by parents, staff and governors.

On a scorching Sunday in mid-July 2018 we took part in the Haverhill Bash running a soft toy tombola, making £297 for our efforts. Thank you to everyone who donated so generously. And thank you to our staff and PTFA parents who contributed their time on the day.

A sincere 'thank you' goes to Mark Fear for auditing the PTFA accounts during the summer holidays.

In the summer holidays the PTFA organised two picnic dates: at Nowton Park in Bury St Edmunds and Milton Park in Cambridge. This year neither of these days were particularly well attended, but those who did attend enjoyed a relaxed day out.

During the summer break Henry and Barbara Witton also completed a sponsored tandem ride around London, raising a stupendous £385 for Churchill School. Congratulations and thank you to them both.

In November we held a chocolate tombola for the students of the school to raise money for the BBC Children In Need fundraiser. We raised an impressive £154. Many thanks to all of our students, their families and our staff who contributed so generously to this charity event.

In mid- December the students all went to the Arts Centre in Haverhill to see the pantomime 'Aladdin' – thanks go to Tracey Hinshelwood for organising this.

At the end of the term the PTFA chose to acknowledge the 5th birthday of Churchill School by gifting each current student with a £5 Amazon voucher. We received lovely letters and cards from all of the students saying 'thank you' which was very much appreciated by us all.

We closed 2018 with a Christmas family-get-together. The children enjoyed a buffet and DVD's, while parents enjoyed mulled fruit punch and mince pies. The silver-lining to the event was the very successful chocolate and wine raffle which we also ran which raised £209.

In January we renewed our 100 Club for a further year. At the close of 2018 we had 54 members, with the venture generating more than £400 profit for the year. Many thanks to Barbara Witton for continuing with the administration of this venture for a further year.

On 14th February the PTFA organised our annual Valentine's Day cake sale. Many of our families baked cakes and biscuits which we sold in school, much to the pupils' delight. We raised a record-breaking £97, which paid for the chocolate eggs for our Easter egg hunt.

At the beginning of March parent Karen Holmes led a mindfulness and yoga session. She shared mindfulness techniques and yoga for parents, with a focus on uses for children with autism and high anxiety. It was very much appreciated by those parents who attended.

Finally, we closed the Easter term with a PTFA Easter Egg hunt and chocolate egg draw, for all of the pupils. Many thanks to all of the parents who came into school for your help with the running of this activity.

The PTFA Coffee Club monthly meetings have continued throughout the year, giving parents the opportunity to chat together. To keep families up-to-date with PTFA activities, our PTFA newsletter is written and sent out each term. Over the year, we have welcomed a number of new children and families into the school community this year. It has been lovely to also welcome some new parents to our PTFA meetings and coffee groups.

We have received various donations throughout the year. Most notably we do need to say a big 'thank you' to Mandy Fear who has continued to generously donate the profits of her car boot sales during the course of the year.

All in all, Churchill PTFA has had another tremendous year and I would like to thank Mrs Ellis and all of the staff, pupils, families and friends of the school who have helped to make it such a success. I would also like to extend an especially big 'thank you' to Tracey who has kept all of the accounts in order and to Barbara who has minuted our meetings and managed the 100 Club.

As you are all aware I will be resigning as Chair of the PTFA at this AGM. In the six years since the inception of Churchill PTFA I have seen it grow in strength and purpose. I have met many people and made many friends, one especially dear friend who has been with me from the start. Tracey and I have worked together to support the school and I am sure she would join me in thanking George and her staff, the parents and children for making us so welcome and for supporting our efforts. Under our six years incumbency we have raised in excess of £23,400 for the PTFA. This legacy is made up of various donations, (such as the Tesco Bags for Life grant, Jessie's Fund music grant, Easy Fundraising, Mandy Fear's car boot sales, school photographer commission and various individual fundraisers) as well as profit from various fundraising events, (such as the Race Night, the sponsored walk, raffles, Christmas card sales, Haverhill Bash/Fair events, 100 Club and cake sales).

Thank you also goes to all of our PTFA members who have worked so hard to nurture a robust and positive PTFA that can continue to move forward to support Churchill Special School in the years ahead. It is an exciting time for Churchill PTFA as it moves onto the next chapter, under the tenure of a new and enthusiastic committee. I am sure that our staff and families will continue to extend them the support that you have so generously shown us over the years. I wish you all the best for the future and thank you all for the memories.

Camilla Collins