

Friends of the Abbey JMI School
Registered Charity 802214
Annual report 2021-22

Friends of the Abbey JMI School
c/o Abbey CE VA Primary School
Grove Road
St Albans AL1 1DQ

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Trustees Report

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report for the year ended 31 August 2022.

Charitable Purpose

The object of the Friends is to advance the education of pupils at the Abbey CE VA Primary School by:

- Developing effective relationships between the staff, parents and others associated with the school; and
- Engaging in activities or providing facilities or equipment which support the school and advance the education of the pupils.

Activities during the year

Coming out of the Covid-19 crisis, restrictions were lifted and fundraising by the Friends was resumed, albeit with many families wary to gather in large numbers.

We were thankfully able to hold both Christmas and Summer fairs during this accounts year, albeit that many of the fund raising activities on offer at the Christmas fair were stripped back to ensure social distancing and, where possible, to keep people outside or in the most ventilated spaces. For these reasons, we raised a lower than usual sum of £1,195.79 at the Christmas fair. The Summer fair was less impacted by Covid concerns as it is almost entirely outside by habit, and raised £4,743.73.

For the first time in perhaps six years, a Ball was held in March for school parents and friends. This was by far the biggest earner for the Friends, raising £10,882.98. It was pitched as a premium event and held at St Michael's Manor, a luxury boutique hotel close to the school. Tickets were accordingly sold at premium prices and bolt-ons such as a gambling table, auction and raffle helped increase donations through the evening. All agreed that in order to ensure such generosity is not abused, the Ball will likely not become an annual event; people definitely "splurged" because the event was a one-off and as it was well timed with the lifting of Covid restrictions.

The Wild Camping was once again a popular conclusion to the school year, raising £2,743.04. Income was from ticket sales as well as bolt-ons such as help putting tents up, food (BBQ and pizza) and drink (bar and soft drinks) stalls, face painting and water guns and a popular sweet shop.

Aside from that, the annual Quiz night raised £252.66 and the Pilates and Prosecco night raised £60.

Smaller events provided real boosts to the fundraising totals: the mini marathon raised £2,564.32 and generated a fabulous spirit amongst the children, who were thrilled to run laps of the school. Bake sales continued to perform well, raising £1,274.07, and the calendar to which the children contributed their own artwork raised £1,300.86. Popcorn nights, where the children stay behind after school to watch a film and eat popcorn, were extremely popular, raising £855.08. Smaller but valuable contributions were made up of second hand uniform sales, "Break the Rules Day", ice cream sales and the School Disco.

Easyfundraising and AmazonSmile payments continued to provide us with a boost, totalling £587.58. Marshalling at the local half marathon earned the Friends £1,291.40 and parents contributed generously to sponsored events such as the sponsored bounce, non-uniform days and miscellaneous donations.

The Friends' committee also continued to play a role as an informal sounding board for the Head for discussing other school issues with the parent body, contributing towards our first object.

Donations to the school

The Friends donated £3,302.82 to the school. This was largely on IT projects – sixty Chromebooks were funded, as well as the 'back end' needed to run Google Classroom.

This provided the school with a more modern platform for online learning and more flexible ways to set and receive work. This future-proofed home learning to a degree, noting parental concerns about the quality of learning during the lockdown and the importance of learning from pandemic lessons.

This donation also provided the school with more up-to-date IT for use in school, which could be moved around between classrooms. This helped during the late Spring and Summer, when classes were bubbled – it being easier to sanitise IT and move it between classrooms than to move children around the school and try and sanitise the whole IT suite. Older, obsolete IT could then be redeployed by the school to families struggling to provide a laptop or tablet for online learning.

The Friends donation also laid the groundwork for the learning hub project

Financial position

At the end of the year, the Charity held £51,559.41. The cycle of giving has been such that we raise funds first, and then donate these to the school. Historically, our policy has been to keep around six months of fundraising expenses in reserve, to enable us to both continue with our planned cycle of events and take advantage of new as yet unplanned fundraising activities. Traditionally we raise a lot of funds in late June and July - and we only agree spending of these at the start of the next term. The effect of this was less this year but had been starting to earmark funds for the 'Abbey Cabin' project, described under 'Future Plans' below, although these have not yet been formally designated by the Trustees.

The financial statements are prepared on a cash basis (i.e., without accruing for spending commitments or income pledged but not yet received). The money (apart from a cash float of £140) is held in an account at HSBC. The general cycle of raising funds to be donated to the school within twelve months means that the charity does not currently have an investment portfolio and therefore has no investment policy.

Future plans

Over the last year, the Friends have been developing a longer-term vision for funding.

- The 'Abbey Cabin' project was an imaginative plan to provide additional space to the school, with a purpose-built wooden cabin in the grounds. One of the biggest challenges to enriching the school's provision is lack of space – space that could also be used by the wider community as provision in this part of central St Albans is sorely lacking. This project captivated the imagination of the school community and provided the "YO" for the Ball and several other of the larger fundraising efforts during this accounts year.
- At the time of concluding this accounts reporting, the Abbey Cabin has been reconsidered owing to a feasibility interrogation carefully initiated by the incoming new Head and Chair of Governors. However, during the reported accounts year it was the vision and driver and accordingly merits referencing. A reimagined version of the Abbey Cabin project is under formulation and focus has merely shifted as opposed to waning.
- The new Headteacher's vision for a Learning Hub in an area which used to house computers which are now stored in classrooms – is well underway. This will meet the educational needs of the school, whilst also allowing greater flexibility in community use – not least because the hall would have breakout space immediately next door rather than in a separate building. This is in effect a 'virtual' cabin project – allowing the school (with support from the Friends) to deliver the cabin's aims at a lower cost, with less financial and execution risk.
- Fundraising to date – and during 2022-2023 – will also allow:
 - transformation of the school entrance area – providing a warmer welcome for the

- community and parents; and
- other key projects to both enhance the school day for the children (e.g. refreshing some of the outside classroom areas and forest school area).

These plans will also enhance the attractiveness of the school to prospective parents -- recognising that maintaining pupil numbers is necessary to maintain the current staffing mix which delivers so many of the additional extras the school offers in the curriculum.

Governance

The Friends are an unincorporated association, registered as a charity (802214) with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. The Friends adopted the current constitution in 2018-19, following the model set out by Parentkind, the representative body through which we get our insurance as well as advice, resources, access to discounts and our voice at a national level to government. The advantage of adopting this model constitution is that it is pre-approved by the Charity Commission. The revised constitution also enables the Friends to register for Gift Aid.

The Trustees who served during the year were Astrid Rees (chair) and Richard Gillin (treasurer), each of whom served throughout the year, together with Emma Fenn (headteacher) who resigned at the June AGM (in anticipation of her leaving the school at the end of August) and Harriet McTurk (secretary) who formally became a trustee in Emma's place. Natalie McEvoy became a Trustee in October 2021 in order to transition into the Treasurer role fully by September 2022 on Richard Gillin's departure from the school. Astrid and Harriet stood down at the June 2022 AGM and Sasha Brooke-Williams and Caroline Trotman were appointed as co-chairs supported by Louise Abel as secretary; these roles to take effect once the necessary Charity Commission declarations have been completed in July.

As ever, the Trustees were supported by a wider committee of parents – including class representatives, our secretary (Harriet McTurk), second-hand uniform co-ordinator (Catherine Burgess and Caroline Trotman), bursary team (Harriet McTurk and Louise Abel), auction and advertising co-ordinator (Jo West) and other keen volunteers. Danielle Crossman has ably assisted with the Treasury role, volunteering a large number of hours to the Friends, especially in relation to the preparation of these accounts. The Trustees are grateful to them, and to the large number of other parents who have helped put on our programme during the year to raise funds for the school. Special thanks go to Wayne and Karina Gardner who have also clocked up seven years of service – Karina has been a member of the committee since her daughter started in reception, organising several big parent events including a "Cheese and Fizz" event still talked about years later, and Wayne has provided his professional DJ skills for free at a lot of events whilst supporting the school with technical and video skills and designing many of the posters used to promote Friends' events.

Public benefit

In carrying out their activities, the Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

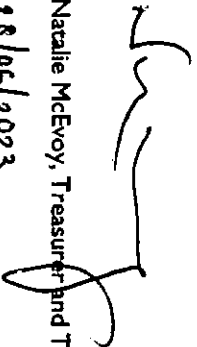
Safeguarding

The Trustees have adopted the School's safeguarding policy in full, save that (as a matter of law), concerns must be reported to the Trustees rather than to the School. In practice, as the headteacher is the Trustee nominated to deal with any concerns, this makes no substantive difference. The Trustees received no concerns in respect of safeguarding during the year.

Farewell

Speaking personally, this annual report has been Richard Gillin's last act as treasurer and trustee, as Ben's time at the school comes to an end. Even before the recent summer fair and next month's wild camping, during Richard's time on the committee the Friends raised over £134,700 towards the school – the Friends really do make a difference! Having worked with Sasha, Caroline, Natalie and Louise over the more recent years, Richard has every confidence that they will continue to lead the parents in supporting the school with a wide mix of events and activities, whilst ensuring the parents and children have fun, generating lots of positive buzz about the school!

Approved by the Trustees



Natalie McEvoy, Treasurer and Trustee
28/06/2023

Friends of the Abbey JMI School
Receipts and Payments Accounts 2021-22

	Receipts	Payments	Total
	£	£	£
Fairs			
Christmas	1,337.39	(141.60)	1,195.79
Summer	5,184.83	(441.10)	4,743.73
	<u>6,522.22</u>	<u>(582.70)</u>	<u>5,939.52</u>
Parent fundraising events			
Quiz	464.95	(212.29)	252.66
Plates and Prosecco	60.00	-	60.00
Ball	16,251.58	(5,368.60)	10,882.98
Wild camping	3,973.97	(1,230.93)	2,743.04
	<u>20,750.50</u>	<u>(6,811.82)</u>	<u>13,938.68</u>
Smaller events			
Uniform sales	140.02	-	140.02
Mini marathon	2,564.32		2,564.32
Popcorn night	966.74	(111.66)	855.08
Bake sale	1,274.07	-	1,274.07
Beak the rules day	153.49	-	153.49
Calendar	1,657.86	(357.00)	1,300.86
Leaver's disco	-	(275.00)	(275.00)
School disco	680.76	(275.00)	405.76
Ice cream sales	268.00	(43.20)	224.80
	<u>7,705.26</u>	<u>(1,061.86)</u>	<u>6,643.40</u>
Charitable Income			
Sponsored skip/bounce	434.36	(60.00)	374.36
Treasury	97.00	-	97.00
Easyfundraising and Amazon Smile	587.58	-	587.58
Half maraton marshalling	1,291.40	-	1,291.40
Green week donation	90.00	-	90.00
Miscellaneous giving	1,100.12	-	1,100.12
	<u>3,600.46</u>	<u>(60.00)</u>	<u>3,540.46</u>
Charitable giving			
Donations to school		(3,302.82)	(3,302.82)
		<u>(3,302.82)</u>	<u>(3,302.82)</u>
Governance expenses			
Bank charges		(82.45)	(82.45)
Parentkind (formerly PTAcouk) membership including insurance		(116.00)	(116.00)
		<u>(198.45)</u>	<u>(198.45)</u>
Total	<u>36,578.44</u>	<u>(12,017.65)</u>	<u>26,560.79</u>

Friends of the Abbey JMI School
Receipts and Payments Accounts 2021-22

Opening balances as at 1/9/21

Bank	24,858.62
Cash In hand	140.00
	<u>24,998.62</u>

Receipts	38,578.44
Payments	(12,017.65)

Closing balance as at 31/8/22

Being	<u>51,559.41</u>
Bank	51,419.41
Cash in hand	140.00
	<u>51,559.41</u>

Surplus to date	29,863.61
Donations	(3,302.82)
	<u>26,560.79</u>

Balance sheet i.e. statement of assets and liabilities as at 31/8/22

Bank	51,419.41
Cash In hand	140.00
	<u>51,559.41</u>

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Friends of the Abbey JMI School

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Friends of the Abbey JMI School for the year ended 31 August 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of Friends of the Abbey JMI School, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable

Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *El Heycock*
Name: ELIZABETH HEYCOCK, ACA
Address: 22 ABBEY VIEWS ROAD, ST ALBANS, AL3 4QL
Date: 26th JUNE 2023.