

**Friends of the Abbey JMI School**  
**Registered Charity 802214**  
**Annual report 2022-23**

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 2023.

### **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**

After a couple of years badly impacted by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, this year was back to normal in terms of the Friends' pattern of fundraising. However, we suffered a reduction in usual number of parent volunteers, so events had to be rationalised for practical reasons. Reasons for this may vary and are speculative; no question there was some reticence to crowd closely post - pandemic, combined possibly with a reaction to the upheaval felt as a change in school leadership bedded down, for example.

Notable events this year were:

- *The first Welcome Back Barbecue ever held!*

This outdoor, barbecue-centred, early-evening event in the school grounds featured a bar and a large cinema screen and proved a very popular start to the academic year. It was perfectly judged as a post-summer social and executed very successfully thanks largely to the new co -Chairs Sasha Brooke-Williams and Caroline Trotman. We raised over £2,125 and plan to repeat this event.

- *A Ball and Auction at the Horn; a Spring Social!*

This event was held on smaller scale than the previous year's St Michael's Manor school ball. A local bar was hired and hosted music, dancing, a live band and auction through the evening. Despite its relatively small scale, the evening raised an impressive £5,338.

- *Yet another record-breaking summer fair, raising £4,732!*

Benefitting from good weather and an enthusiasm and zest for a fair that only the previous years' Covid cancellations can explain, this fair again topped previous records.

- *A Winter fair back on the schedule after last year's cancellation.*

The Winter fair was busy and families were incredibly generous with their spending, allowing this event to chase hot on the heels of the summer fair in profit terms, raising £4,693.

A wide range of other fundraising events took place – a mini marathon, the third Abbey Calendar, popcorn nights and school discos, as well as a new concept, the Abbey Challenge, which encouraged every child to plan a fundraising event and to cast their donations net wider than the usual school community – took the total raised for the year to £32,774. The Trustees would like to thank every single parent, child and wider family and friends who helped to do this – we can't name you all, but it was a huge achievement – every penny counts, and we couldn't have done it without you.

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 £12,555 to the school, funding amongst other things a new phonics scheme, a visiting planetarium, sports equipment, the school website and a new video to attract applicants to fill school spaces. Last year's accounts spoke of a surplus build up to support the Learning Hub project, which has been being designed for next financial year by re-jigging existing spaces in the school to better effect.

### **Financial position**

At the end of the year, the Charity held £64,626. 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. With the Learning Hub project to save up for, we agreed with the School's Governing Body that we would hold this money to fund that in the second half of Summer 2023.

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**

The main focus of the year was building funds for the Learning Hub project, which will transform the existing space in the school – breakout spaces, places for group work, an area for children to use IT equipment, a calm environment for quiet study or a place to relax with a book – allowing for better learning for all the children, more space for extracurricular events, a wider range of options for children of differing abilities to learn at their own pace, and more! We are pleased to announce that the Hub will now be implemented in late Summer 2023, with a grand opening in the new school year from September 2023.

### **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:

- Sasha Brooke-Williams
- Caroline Trotman
- Natalie McEvoy
- Louise Abel

**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. The Trustees received no concerns in respect of safeguarding during the year.

Approved by the Trustees

Natalie McEvoy, Treasurer and Trustee

	Receipts	Payments	Total
	£	£	£
<b>Fairs</b>			
Christmas	5,908.90	(1,215.52)	4,693.38
Summer	6,929.83	(2,198.08)	4,731.75
	<u>12,838.73</u>	<u>(3,413.60)</u>	<u>9,425.13</u>
<b>Parent fundraising events</b>			
Welcome back BBQ	3,371.93	(1,246.37)	2,125.56
Ball and auction	6,219.00	(880.67)	5,338.33
	<u>9,590.93</u>	<u>(2,127.04)</u>	<u>7,463.89</u>
<b>Smaller events</b>			
Uniform sales	27.39	-	27.39
Mini marathon	1,812.51	-	1,812.51
Challenge Abbey	1,581.16	-	1,581.16
Popcorn night	675.00	(560.00)	115.00
Bake and ice cream sales	659.61	-	659.61
Sponsored litter pick	101.40	-	101.40
Artwork sale	415.15	-	415.15
Calendar	730.00	-	730.00
School discos	1,011.65	(802.20)	209.45
	<u>7,013.87</u>	<u>(1,362.20)</u>	<u>5,651.67</u>
<b>Charitable income</b>			
Treasy	112.50	-	112.50
Easyfundraising and Amazon Smile	486.47	-	486.47
Gift aid	637.57	-	637.57
Sponsored sports kits	1,401.57	-	1,401.57
Yoga event	156.00	-	156.00
Art competition	335.50	-	335.50
Miscellaneous giving	201.21	-	201.21
	<u>3,330.82</u>	-	<u>3,330.82</u>
<b>Charitable giving</b>			
Donations to school		(12,555.13)	(12,555.13)
		<u>(12,555.13)</u>	<u>(12,555.13)</u>
<b>Governance expenses</b>			
Bank charges		(88.33)	(88.33)
Parent/dnd (formerly PTA.co.uk) membership including insurance		(161.00)	(161.00)
		<u>(249.33)</u>	<u>(249.33)</u>
<b>Total</b>	<u>32,774.35</u>	<u>(19,707.30)</u>	<u>13,067.05</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 2023.

**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 Legrock*

Name: ELIZABETH HEYCOCK

Address: 22 ABBEY VIEW ROAD, ST ALBANUS, AL3 9QL

Date: 30 JUNE 2024.