

Whiteabbey Primary School PTA

Trustees' Annual Report

Year ended to 30th June 2023

The trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 30th June 2023.

Registered Charity Name : Whiteabbey Primary School PTA

Charity Registration No. : 101751

Principal Office : Whiteabbey Primary School

20 – 30 Old Manse Road

Newtownabbey

Co. Antrim

BT37 0RU

The Trustees in office on the date this report was approved :

Catherine Dwyer

Alison Graham

Nadine Fraser

Kathy Hamilton

The following persons served as Trustees during the year ended 30th June 2023 :

Catherine Dwyer

Heather Owen

Silke Gushurst

Alison Graham

Nadine Fraser

Kathy Hamilton

Structure, Governance & Management

The Charity's governing document is a constitution.

Objectives and Activities

1. Charitable Purposes

- Improved relationships between home and school. The benefit which will flow from this purpose includes funding for additional resources for the school, and links built with the local community. This continues to be demonstrated by having an active PTA that works in partnership with the school and engages parental support. This purpose does not lead to harm. The benefit is for children of Whiteabbey Primary School. Charity Trustees (PTA Committee members) are usually parents at the school which their children attend and hence gain benefit in the same way as all other beneficiaries. This benefit is incidental and necessary to ensure the benefit is supplied to all beneficiaries.
- Advancement of the education of pupils in the school. The benefit which flows from this purpose includes increased educational progress and attainment within the school and links built with the local community. This is demonstrated through pupils having access to resources, events, activities, and links with the local community which are not available through direct school funding. This purpose does not lead to harm. The benefit is for children at Whiteabbey Primary School. Charity Trustees (PTA Committee Members) are usually beneficiaries. This benefit is incidental to ensure the benefit is provided to all beneficiaries.

Charitable Activities

At the AGM in Sept 2022, the committee members formally announced their intention to step down with immediate effect after many years of dedicated service to the school community. A period of discussion followed across two meetings to inform whether the PTA should continue in its current form, create a more informal "Friends of Whiteabbey" or cease activity altogether. At a meeting in October 2022, sufficient volunteers were found to form a committee, enabling the PTA to continue operating as a charitable organisation. Committee roles were filled as follows, and the Charities Commission notified of the changes:

Co-Chairs Catherine Dwyer, Heather Owen and Silke Gushurst

Treasurer Nadine Fraser

Secretaries Kathy Hamilton and Alison Graham

The committee members sought input from the wider school community to establish reasons for parental involvement decreasing over recent years and discuss ideas to encourage more parents to join. One of the key issues affecting attendance at meetings was childcare for those working shift patterns and the inflexibility around the days meetings were traditionally held. To combat this, the committee offered a dial in option via MS Teams and conducted meetings as a hybrid of in-person and virtual attendance. In practice, this had

mixed success as Internet provision in the school is locked down for security purposes and the mobile signal is weak. The committee persevered for a few months and tried various options to improve the connection with limited success. This resulted in the majority of meetings being held virtually. There are pros and cons to this approach, however attendance and participation in meetings remained high throughout the year. A shared drive was created to store documents and all members were provided with access to negate the requirement to issue agendas and minutes via email.

Early priorities for the new committee included the transfer of member details held by the Charities Commission, changing signatories on the PTA bank account, planning activities for the children and making improvements to the PTA uniform shop. Ideas were discussed at PTA meetings and where members agreed to proceed, a smaller sub-group of volunteers formed to take ideas forward to implementation. There was a heavy reliance on WhatsApp to enable day-to-day communication within these sub-groups with mixed results; inevitably, this form of communication worked better for some, however comments are open to interpretation which can and did lead to misunderstandings. In the second half of the year, there was less reliance on the sub-groups. Messages between monthly meetings were sent using a "PTA members" WhatsApp group. This had the advantage of informing all members of progress but inevitably resulted in significant volumes of messages and some members feeling overwhelmed. Further discussion will take place in the new school year to establish consensus of the best means of communication going forward.

The open invitation issued resulted in 38 parents and teachers attending the meeting in Oct 2022. Feedback from parents on the night identified interest but also concern around the time commitment required. The committee decided the best way forward was to divide parents into two distinct groups. One group, "PTA members," made a commitment to plan and deliver events, attend and participate in monthly meetings. The second group, "PTA helpers," formed a group to provide ad-hoc assistance with specific events. The helpers had no participation in monthly meetings but provided a means of securing help and input where required from parents unable to commit time every month. The outcome was a PTA Members group of 20 including committee members and teaching staff, and a PTA Helper group with an additional 25 parents.

The PTA uniform shop has always been a welcome addition for parents and the committee sought to establish how to make it operate more smoothly with an accurate means of stock control. The shop was open at various times during the year for parents. Two committee members (Kathy Hamilton and Heather Owen) researched its operation, established the constraints of the current technical solution and discussed optimum stock levels and order procedures with previous committee members. An online uniform shop was created to allow parents to order and pay online with fulfilled orders delivered to classrooms or collected by a parent. The sales offering was also expanded to include donated pre-loved uniform items available for purchase in exchange for a donation. The online shop opened for advance orders in June via a link on the school website to facilitate the largest annual uniform order for the new school year. More than 80 parents placed an advance order for September 2023. The uniform shop team with some additional volunteers opened the shop across 5 dates in

August, including evenings and weekends, for orders to be collected and to allow parents to purchase items. This is one of the committee's most significant achievements this year and feedback from parents has been very positive.

In line with previous years, the PTA continued to support the school with a donation towards the Accelerated Reading Scheme. The P7 leavers fund was provided with an increased donation this year to reflect the increase in costs associated with organising events. Teddy bears were sourced for all incoming P1 children and distributed by P1 teachers during familiarisation visits in June. Teams of PTA volunteers also put up and took down the school Christmas decorations and marshalled parking in the school grounds for the Carol Services in December.

PTA members and helpers arranged the following fundraising and school community events over the course of the year:

October 2022	Whiteabbey Pumpkin Patch	Children were invited to bring their carved or decorated pumpkin to the Forest school area. Classes were brought to the area by teachers to allow the children to view the pumpkins on display.
	Fancy Dress day	Children attended school in fancy dress in exchange for a donation.
December 2022	Pre-loved Christmas Clothes sale	Jumpers, pyjamas and costumes were collected, sorted and sold in the school assembly hall along the theme of reduce, reuse and recycle.
	Wreath making workshop	An evening workshop for parents and friends with all equipment and foliage provided to make a door wreath. Refreshments were included in the ticket price and tickets were sold via Parentmail.
	Refreshments at the Carol Services	Tea/coffee and traybakes collected and offered to parents before junior and senior school services in exchange for a donation.
	Carol Service recordings	USB video recordings of carol services were available to purchase via parentmail to be collected from school on Christmas Eve or delivered to classrooms at the start of term.
Feb 2023	Love yourself day	Children attended school in whatever clothing they felt most comfortable in exchange for a donation.
	Pre-loved costume sale	Costumes collected, sorted and sold to children in the school assembly hall in advance of World Book Day as part of the drive to reduce, reuse and recycle.
March 2023	Money March	Spare change was collected in each classroom during March and children in the class with the highest total received an ice-cream from Mauds.
	Easter craft workshop	Two small workshops were held in the hour after school for the children to make an Easter garland and egg decoration. Places were booked via Parentmail.
	Quiz	This event was organised and run by Paula Millar in the Transport Club in Jordanstown. It included a ballot with prizes donated by local businesses sourced by PTA members. Tickets were sold via Parentmail.

April 2023	Silly Hair Day	Parents donated for their child/children to attend school with a zany hair-do
May 2023	Odeon Cinema private screening	A private screening of "Mummies" with the option to purchase a snack pack. Tickets were sold via Parentmail.
	Sports Day Tuck shop	Drinks and confectionery available for visitors and children to purchase on the day.

Collectively, the Committee is pleased with the volume of activity and the events arranged this year. Whilst some events proved more popular than others, this must be viewed within the context of the absence of activities during the pandemic and the lack of volunteers following the pandemic to assist the exiting committee with organisation and delivery of events. It is hoped that a period of adjustment will allow parents to become more familiar with PTA activity within the school and increase support for events. The committee also intend to encourage new members to provide fresh ideas and input.

The committee would like to thank all volunteers and teaching representatives for their advice and assistance during the year. As ever, we remain indebted to parents and friends who support the activities and events and for the generous donations received.

Achievements and Performance

The Charity received income of £20,839.72 in the reported financial year, and of this, £10,092.64 was spent directly on resources and activities for the school.

As at 30th June 2023, the charity holds £17,282.84 in reserves.

Note – the amounts submitted through governance reporting have been rounded up to the nearest £/pound.

The Trustees' annual report was approved on 16th October 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of Trustees by :

Catherine Dwyer

Co-Chair 2022-23