

PTA Annual Report 2022/23

Well, what an amazing year it's been. With covid finally behind us we were able to run our full programme of fundraising events. We kicked off the year with our nursery welcome event on 27th September and the kids had a spooktacular time at the Halloween Disco on Wednesday 26th October. Keeping with some of the events created during lockdown we once again had our spooky treat buckets raffle and our cook, carve, create competition, congratulations to all the winners.

Christmas was a very busy time starting with our annual Christmas Tree Sale on Saturday 3rd December and followed by our Christmas Fair on Saturday 10th December. Both events were a fabulous success and once again exceeded all expectations and raised thousands of pounds for the school. Thanks again to all involved as it really is a team effort and needs lots of volunteers to make the events a success. We held our first ever Christmas Cash Call at the end of term and were all looking forward to meeting up again on Thursday 29th December to see the Snow Queen at the Lyric. Unfortunately, due to factors outside everyone's control the show got cancelled so we've carried tickets forward to this year. To make up for the disappointment, the Belvior Players very kindly offered everyone the chance to attend a special Stranmillis showing of Mother Goose the following week and completely free of charge.

We returned after Christmas to the great news that Mr Arneill had agreed to take over as PTA chair. For those of you who may not be aware, Mr Arneill is not only the deputy principal but also a parent at the school. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Paul for stepping forward and to assure him that we have a fantastic group of parents in the PTA and the wider Stranmillis community who will continue to provide the tremendous support and encouragement to make all our events a success and raise much needed funds for the school.

The first event of 2023 was our Quiz Night on 24th March and over 80 parents battled it out in the Belfast Boat Club to be crowned SPS quiz champions. Congratulations to the winners and runners up who all received medals to celebrate their success and kindly donated their prize money back to the school.

Easter saw our first ever Rainbow Raffle with all the children providing colour themed goodies for inclusion in the raffle. Due to the amazing generosity of the parents and I suspect, the persuasive skills of some of the pupils, we received so many items that we were able to offer 2 prizes per class. The raffle baskets looked amazing and added a splash of colour to the school. Congratulations to all the winners and thanks to everyone who bought a ticket.

Next up was one of the highlights of the PTA year, Culture Day, and was held on Saturday 10th June. Culture Day is a vibrant celebration of the unique diversity of our school and what makes Stranmillis Primary special.

Our final event of the year was our “informal formal” on Saturday 17th June and was held in a magnificent new venue, Riddell Hall on the Stranmillis Road. It was wonderful to see so many parents enjoy a fabulous evening that included drinks reception, 4 course dinner, auction, amazing raffle and DJ

Thanks to the magnificent support and generosity of everyone in Stranmillis we were able to close out project *Elevate* in January 23, 18 months ahead of schedule. Raising over £25,000 we were able to purchase 86 additional iPads for the school providing an invaluable resource and assisting greatly with the children’s learning and development. Our new project is well underway, and all funds raised will go towards the creation of a new Outdoor Classroom. This will be a fabulous addition to the school and provide a space for children to interact with the natural world through play-based learning and multi-sensory activities.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone (both parents and staff) who have been involved with the PTA this year. Whether you have attended meetings, helped to plan events, donated a prize, bought a ticket, worked a shift or turned up to support an event, your support is truly appreciated. I am extremely grateful to the other trustees (Katrina, Marianne, Paul, Saima and Clifton) for their dedication and invaluable support; to our teacher representatives, Mrs McLaughlin and Mrs Cruickshank for their help and assistance; and to Mrs Wilson & Mr Arneill for their drive, enthusiasm and dedication to Stranmillis Primary School and the PTA.