



St Joseph and St James PS – Friends of Committee

Chairperson Report 2021/22

AGM Wednesday 19th October 2022

Your all very welcome to our AGM this evening . It is hard to believe it has been a year since I was here sitting were you are, and now find myself having to do this !!

We had huge shoes we had to fill, particularly Therese Farthing our past Chair , Helen Hamill Treasurer and Mary Magowan Secretary . I would like to acknowledge not only their work in the past but also their willingness in helping us ‘newbies ‘ or newbs as I’m reliably told it is , if you want to be down with the kids...

We also unfortunately lost two other member who were with us as reps from the teaching staff , but gave of their time and expertise to assist us . We would like to thank Mrs Magowan and Mrs Doran and wish them well in their retirement and new job respectively.

I would also like to welcome new members who have joined us this evening .

Friends of St Joseph and St James Primary School is run by a group of volunteer parents to organise social events that develop and strengthen home school relationships as well as raising funds to purchase educational resources for the children at the school . Friends of also supports the school by providing hospitality at school events and volunteering for other roles within the school such as gardening and small maintenance tasks. We continue to be a member of the Charity Commission N.I.

When we came to office we were still working within the confines of Covid 19 and most of the meetings this year have been Via Zoom , but we are very grateful to have had a few face to face meetings, and delighted to be able to have our first AGM in 2 years back in person. I want to thank everyone who continued to give of their time despite the challenges they were facing in both their work life and family life owing to the pandemic.

Despite the challenges it was great to see the children back in school and enjoying school life once again.

The 13th October 2021 we welcomed a group of corporate volunteers from BT regional team to helped to tidy up the conservation area for all our budding young botanists and environmentalists . Sincere thanks to Paul & Dervla Covery for organising this and to the BT staff for all their hard work.

We had our Halloween disco on October 22nd , with class groups enjoying DJ Anto and party bags!

In November 2021 we officially launched our 'Together we can' appeal which aimed to raise money to buy equipment that will benefit the children and the school as a whole. Our target was £10,000 and this would enable us to purchase 4 interactive white boards and 2 outdoor climbing frames.

On December 4th we held our Christmas Draw

February 2nd we had the Smartie Challenge

April was a busy month for us we had our Easter draw which really was a great success, our pub quiz in Rices and a bucket collection in Tesco – thanks to Mary Norton for organising this.

We were delighted to provide some sweet treats for those children who received the Sacraments this year, Confirmation on the 28th of April and First Holy Communion on the 7th of May.

On the 11th of June we took on our most ambitious project of the year, providing a BBQ and breakfast for the intrepid explorers of the school leavers in P.7 who were having a big sleep out that evolved into the big sleep in. The children had a wonderful experience and one that will stay long in their memories and one I think the teachers are still getting over. Here's to this year .. God knows what the plans will be in.

Being on the Friends of team sees you being involved in many things some of which are so far out of your comfort zone you begin to doubt yourself. Our next activity pushed me to the limit let me tell you , and involved me buying and hampering up orange and white flags and finding myself in O Neil's buying an Armagh County water bottle ... the things you do for friends of ! but a great fundraiser all the same.

A busy year by all accounts and one which we hope to continue into this academic year. Whilst we may have overcome the challenges that Covid threw at us we are cognisant of the financial instability families are experiencing at the moment as well as all the other things that are going on in the world , which are impacting on all aspects of our physical and mental health and that of our families. While this may have an impact on our activities for this year, Friends of will remain committed to supporting school to support children and their families in any way we can to ensure that their time at St Josephs & St James is enriching to their lives and education.

On a personal note I would like to thank Sharon and Dervla and all the girls on the team for all their help this year in keeping me right and to Mrs Wadsworth for all her help and encouragement. It is greatly appreciated .

Thank you

Fiona Maguire

Chairwomen

Friends Of St Joseph & St James

