

## Chair's Report AGM – 26 September 2022

12 months have come around again so very quickly. It only seems like yesterday that I was writing my last Chair's report and here we are again. As I did last year, I wanted to start off by recognising the hard work, resilience, and determination that this fantastic group of volunteers has shown over these last 12 months. I'm sure people often forget that we have commitments outside of the PTA, work (fulltime/parttime), families and even hobbies and when I look at just how we pull together I am amazed at the successes we have achieved.

Towards the end of the year, we have had a few more volunteers join us and I'd like to welcome them to our team, we are so excited to have you join us!

The end of a school year also means that we say goodbye to some volunteers who have supported us throughout their children's time at St John's and I personally cannot thank them enough. Not only have they put in many hours to plan and support our events, but they have been a font of knowledge helping me navigate through my role as Chair.

Jamie, Sara-Jayne and Jenny you have continued to be full of enthusiasm and appreciation for everything we had planned and delivered this year. You have rallied the staff when we have needed them and championed us throughout the year. I'm very mindful that we ask our teachers to go above and beyond to support our events and we are very grateful for their willing participation, and I hope that this will continue into the coming year.

We started our year with the summer reading bingo challenge, which we topped up to £500 and new books were purchased for the school. We then tried something different, a car boot sale. Unfortunately, it wasn't as successful as we had hoped but what was great, was that we weren't afraid to try something new. This theme continued as we did an Easter Egg pop up event and two "Someone Special Events." Our Euro 2022 foam fingers were a huge success and the children loved using them to support the team.

Fireworks night was again jam packed and a fantastic night was had by all. We are very grateful to the Scouts and Guides for co-hosting.

Christmas cards was not as smooth as in previous years, but Dani did a great job of co-ordinating. Emma pulled together the Christmas parties, which are always a lovely event for the children.

Our Christmas Fayre was held inside and was perhaps a little too busy at times, but what a fantastic turnout we had. We tried different stalls this year, introduce alcohol and took a new approach to the tombola.

Our sponsored event was a little disappointing on fundraising amounts compared to previous years, however the children had a great time participating.

Summer term was quickly upon us with a successful summer fete, grand summer raffle, a stall at the Scout's summer fete, year 6 leavers (thank you Sarah and team) , ice cream sales and refreshments at the sports days really meant we ended the year on a high. Our third doughnut sale was a much better success having learnt from the previous year!

Our social media presence and communications have continued this year to help advertise our events and thanks to Jo, for some great designs and engaging content.

Perhaps the highlight of the year for me has been seeing the demand increase for our pre-loved uniform. We have seen so many children and families benefit from this and I have no doubt, this will grow even more in 2023/24. Thanks to Caz and Sunita for all the effort they put in, I know it is very close to their hearts.

The help of the local community, with the Grand Summer Raffle donations and particularly Essington Farm in supplying so much of our food at the events, shows what wonderful support our school and PTA have.

In my time as Chair, we have bounced back since Covid to the point of raising nearly £18,000 last year. For that I am incredibly proud. The role of Chair has been challenging during that time but so hugely rewarding. I look back with a smile over the years, amazed at what we have pulled off and I thank all of you for trusting in me. By joining the PTA I've been lucky enough to make some great friends that I know will be in my life for many years to come.

It is though, with a heavy heart that I will be formally stepping away from my role as Chair this year. I am still so passionate about what we do, and this decision has been far from easy, however alongside work commitments, I just don't have the time to give that this group deserves. I will wholeheartedly support the next Chair to continue the successes of the PTA.

Over my tenure as Chair, I have had the privilege of working alongside such dedicated parents and teacher to support our school community, however before I finish this evening, there are a handful of people I wanted to specifically mention.

Jamie – thank you for trusting me to lead this incredible group to do great things in our school. Thank you for being at the end of phone, helping me through tough decisions. It's at these times I know that we are not doing this alone.

Raj – the queen of stock! Your confidence and laid-back approach in the run up to events has kept me level-headed in my time as chair.

Jim/Sarah – you have both been cheerleaders for me throughout my time. You have been at the end of the phone, helping me work things through and supporting my ideas. Also, knowing that the finances are in such safe hands, is such a relief, and one less thing for me to worry about.

Now to my Co-Vice Chairs, who are also both stepping down this year.

Caz – your passion and enthusiasm for this group is unrivalled. You care so deeply, give 110% even when you are exhausted, and I only have to say "Caz I need you" and you are there. Without you being there, along with your family, I could not have pulled off some of our big events. Thank you.

Jo – my partner in crime, my event organising mastermind. Having you with me at every big event has helped me share the load. Notebooks out, laptops on and gin in hand we have worked every contact, tried most canva designs and even invented "Bouncy Brussels" and "Santa's Socks" late one night. We've encouraged each other's ideas; we've double checked our calculations but most of all we've had fun. Thank you for being with me every step of the way.

So now we move onto this year...

