

Friends of Ash Lea School AGM

Chairpersons Report 2019-2020

Date: 9th November 2020

It's been a tough year for us all, FOALS, parents, teachers and children too with the arrival of COVID-19 in March 2020. In terms of FOALS, we were unable to hold our committee meetings as usual and our fundraising activities have been limited. Namely the cancellation of our annual quiz night and fundraising stalls at the Summer BBQ. Unfortunately, our children have also missed out as we were unable to run one of our very popular swim parties and we were unable to fund any tickets to amusements parks over the summer break.

However, up until March things were business as usual. We held a very successful Christmas Fair in December, followed by a Santa Cruise and then in March we held a private cinema screening. All of these events were well attended and feedback was that everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

The committee for 2018-19 has comprised of Janine Birch-Horn (Chair), Lisa Parker (Treasurer), Sarah Fletcher-Whitmarsh (Secretary), Neil Phipp (School rep), Rachel Hallam, Julia Marshall, Cheryl Potter, Nicola Lindsay and Rebecca Walker. We have also received additional help from Lauren Doakes and Rebecca Smith.

During the year we raised £2495.52. This will be detailed further in the treasurer's report. The vast majority of this was raised at the Christmas fair with extras received from Keyworth Cricket Club, our Give As You Live donations, workplace employee payroll giving and a donation from the Hallam family.

Our Christmas fair was well attended by parents, children and staff. We tried to spread the stalls out a bit more this year to avoid being so crowded in the hall and I think this did help although it's difficult to prevent stalls along the corridor from feeling a little isolated at times. This is something we can discuss prior to the next fair. As always, the fair takes a great deal of effort to organise and prepare for, so thank you to everyone who helped out and also to those that helped set up, manned stalls and stayed to clear up at the end.

The money we raise from our events is always ploughed back into the children. We used some of these funds to run the following free and subsidised events for our students and their families:

- FOALS Swim – This free event was held in November at Cotgrave leisure centre with inflatables and a free buffet afterwards. Unfortunately, the spring/summer term swim was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Santa Cruise – In December, we hired the Nottingham Princess cruise liner as a private charter for the sole use of Ash Lea families. FOALS funded a place for each student and one accompanying parent/carer. We all enjoyed tucking into our chip cobs, mince pies and of course receiving a visit from the Santa with a gift for each child.
- Cinema – In March we hired a screen at the Broadway Cinema in Nottingham and screened the film Toy Story 4 with popcorn and chocolate on offer for all children. This was a free event for all that attended.

This year FOALS contributed towards school costs by funding the coach hire for the school's trip to the Pantomime in January.

Over the year we also organised 2 nights out for parents to attend in November and February where everyone enjoyed a meal and a few drinks. Unfortunately, these meals do not seem as popular as they once did which is a shame as it is a good opportunity to meet other parents. However, as they are of minimal cost to FOALS we will continue to run whilst there are a few parents interested and committee members willing to attend.

FOALS will continue to use the schools email facility and the FOALS Facebook page as the main method of relaying information to parents. We will continue to maintain a website presence until it comes up for renewal next year in 2021 when we will discuss the feasibility of continuing with this.

I'd like to thank all the committee members who have given up their precious time to help organise and manage our events and attend regular committee meetings. I am pleased we have maintained good engagement with school staff and this couldn't be done without members of staff being present at our meetings so thank you to Neil and also Rebecca who joined us at the beginning of the year. I also want to thank the Ash Lea office staff for sending out our emails promptly and gathering together the replies and monies from parents.

This year I would like to send a special thank you to Dawn Wigley, our headteacher who has always supported us and attended/helped out at our fundraising events. Dawn was due to retire at the end of the 2019/2020 school year but due to COVID 19 she agreed to extend her reign to the end of December 2020. We all wish you well in your retirement and fingers crossed you will be able to get on with all those travel plans at some point soon!!

Janine Birch-Horn

Chair of FOALS