



MINUTES

Thursday 26th February | 6:30pm

Board members

Michele - Chair | Mary - Treasurer | Joanne – Secretary

Attendees:

Amy Wyatt - Teacher | Nicola Holdsworth-Lofts - TA | Carly Dixon - TA

Parents: Laura Parkinson | Ailis Brown | Michele Taylor | Sarah Cash

Welcome

1. Welcome & Opening Remarks

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed a strong turnout. She reflected on the committee's first year, noting that the team had "hit the ground running" after being voted in quickly in May 2024. The previous committee chair, Louise, was unable to attend but continues to support the group.

The Chair emphasised the need for **additional volunteers** who are willing to take on specific tasks or events.

2. Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves, including staff representatives, long-standing TAs, new parents, and committee members.

Key points included:

- A new school representatives, **Amy, Nicola & Carly** has joined the committee.
- Staff members shared their long experience at the school and their connection to the community.
- Several parents highlighted their ongoing support at events and their desire to help more.

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

The minutes from the May 2024 AGM were reviewed and **approved unanimously**.

These minutes will now be uploaded to the school website as part of improving transparency.

4. Overview of 2024 Activities

4.1 Key Stage 1 Playground Revamp

- Friends contributed **over £5,000** towards the new KS1 playground equipment.

4.2 Summer Fair

- Raised **just under £2,300**.
- The biggest annual fundraiser, Weather was extremely hot; lessons learned for future planning (e.g, ice cream van).

4.3 School Photos

- Introduced individual photos and raised **£355**.
- Mixed feedback on class photos due to venue and photographer experience.

4.4 Christmas Cards/Raffle

- Raised **just over £200** profit.
- Children enjoy the activity; grandparents love the cards.
- Committee keen to keep it but would like volunteers to help organise.
- Christmas Raffle raised **£475 profit**.

4.5 Asda Cash Pot

- School received **just under £1,500**.

4.6 Uniform Exchange

- Concept strongly supported in principle but **poorly attended**.
- Significant work involved in sorting, washing, and storing items.
- Large volumes of donations but low uptake.
- Committee now donating excess to The Project and keeping only branded items.
- Suggestions to make up bundles of age groups and speak to the Pastoral Team.

5. 2025–26 Events Review

5.1 Social Events

- Early socials were well attended; later ones saw a drop-off.
- Discussion around barriers: lack of awareness, timing, and perception of commitment.
- Suggestions included themed events (quiz night, wreath-making, race night).

5.2 Easter Events

- Easter Egg Hunt and Easter Raffle were very successful.
- Need volunteers to assemble Easter baskets and help on the day.

5.3 School Discos

- Very popular; feedback extremely positive.
- Reception will now be included following parent feedback.
- Need more volunteers to manage numbers safely.

5.4 Teddy Bears' Picnic

- One of the **most successful and enjoyable events** of the year.
- Great turnout; families appreciated the timing during holidays.

6. Communication & Visibility

This was the **largest discussion of the evening**, with strong agreement that parents often do not know:

- What Friends actually do
- What events are happening
- Where money is spent
- How to volunteer
- That WhatsApp groups and Facebook pages exist

Agreed Actions

- Create a **half-termly Friends newsletter** with:
 - Key dates
 - What funds have been spent on
 - Volunteer opportunities
 - "Did you know?" section (e.g, house team prizes, Christmas party food, easyfundraising)
- Add Friends content to the **school newsletter**, higher up the page.
- Install **two large outdoor banners** with:
 - Committee photos
 - 12-month event calendar
 - QR codes for volunteering, donations, and WhatsApp groups
- Recruit **year-group advocates** to share information in class WhatsApp groups.
- Improve visibility of the uniform email and lost property process.

7. Fundraising & Finance

Treasurer presented the financial overview.

Income Highlights

- Summer Fair: **~£2,300**
- Christmas Raffle: **£843**
- EasyFundraising: **£171** (recent quarter)
- Christmas Cards: **£200**
- School Photos: **£355**

Budget commitments/ Expenses / Spending

- Parentkind Public Liability Insurance £171.00
- Small lottery licence £20.00
- House team winners £300.00 across the school year / £200 2024/2025
- Junior Warrior coaches £550.00
- Year 6 Leavers Disco £195.00 - minus pizza
- School PTA Banners - £250
- Donation £100 for The Nest Improvement - Jenny Dale

- Donation £50 for Reading Shed Improvements - Louise Adams
- £1636.00 will be reviewed annually

We have reached out to school to discuss future spending requirements - discussions currently ongoing in regards to and outdoor classroom space - provisional commitment £5k

Current Balance

- **Just under £10,000** in the bank.

2026 Funding Priorities

- The committee proposes donating **£5,000** towards the new **Outdoor Learning Space**.
- Reception outdoor area also identified as **in urgent need** of investment.
- Teachers encouraged to submit small funding requests (e.g., sensory items for The Nest).
- Discussion about whether to register as a charity, but at the moment we are under the £5,000 threshold.

8. Committee Roles & Re-Election

All current committee members agreed to continue until **July 2027**.

Vice Chair - Kirsty Calvert - Resigned 19th September 2025.

Roles needed:

- Social Media Lead
- Year-group advocates (one per year group)
- Event-specific volunteers
- Uniform support
- Raffle prize coordinator

9. Volunteer Recruitment

Key barriers identified:

- Parents fear being “roped in” to everything.
- Many don’t know small, one-off jobs exist.
- WhatsApp community group is under-used.
- Need clearer lists of tasks people can sign up for.

Agreed Actions

- Create a **task list** showing small, manageable jobs (e.g., assembling raffle hampers, sorting uniform, helping at one disco).
- Promote the WhatsApp volunteer group via QR codes and newsletters.
- Encourage teachers to share Friends updates with parents.

10. Future Events & Ideas

- **Quiz Night** (likely adults only; explore off-site venues due to alcohol licence rules).
- **Wreath-making workshop** (seek florist parent or external provider).

- **Parent social nights** to build community.
- **Business stalls** at the Summer Fair.
- **Activity or performance demonstrations** for children.
- **Sponsorship** for inflatables or big-ticket items.

11. Any Other Business

- Teachers emphasised the importance of Friends' contributions and the positive impact on pupils.
- Parents expressed gratitude for the committee's hard work, noting that much of it "goes unnoticed".
- Strong agreement that communication is the key to growing the volunteer base.

12. Meeting Close

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and for their support.

Next meeting date to be confirmed (to avoid clashes with governors' meetings).