Friends of Croft Community School (FOCCS)

**In-school meeting,** 11th October 2024

**Present:** Sharon McD (Chairperson), Lee D (Secretary), Rachael K (Treasurer) , Clare T, Joan P,

Amy, Beverley, Julia, Carol, Debbi, Rachael, Charlene H, Christina, Ginette, Kim, Emma, Carly.

**Apologies:** Lisa C

**Minutes Part A**

Sharon (chairperson) welcomed everyone to the meeting and outlined the aims and work of the PTFA.

Introductions around the room.

It was agreed to set up a new WhatsApp group for everyone present who would like to remain involved after the meeting. Anyone supplying an email address would also be contacted to begin the DBS checking process (essential for those wishing to help with in-school events). DBS checks from other schools are not transferable to Croft.

Discussions revolved about parents/carers previous experiences, discussions of Croft school, methods of contact such as Class Dojo and issues that others have had in previous schools.

LD asked if parents/carers thought that having a virtual coffee morning would be a good idea to discuss on a monthly basis any issues that parents had and that information with parents could be shared this way.

Christmas arrangements were discussed and the plan for this year on the 5th/6th December.

Arrangements for school photographs this year was explained to parents and carers with the processes involved and how this was going to work in school.

ASDA cashpot was also discussed and how this message could be shared. There was also a discussion about the possibilities of cash matching and the charity status of the PTA. Other future events were also discussed, and how these could be facilitated in school.

**Treasurers report**

As of 7th October 2024, we had £5,648.85 in the current account, including £4,000 in reserve. Rachael explained that the one of the key mission statements of the PTA is that pupils should never be asked to pay for any events that take place in school.

We continue to raise funds via a variety of revenue streams including:

* Your School Lottery (£2,050 in 2023)
* Yearly Raffle (£2,079 in 2023)
* School market stalls (£585 in 2024)
* Christmas Cards (approx. £200)
* Asda Cashpot for Schools (approx. £250 so far)

We are usually successful with grants/adhoc support from Tesco, Morrisons, Asda, One-Stop.

We have had grants and match-funding from Centrica (as a parent works for British Gas), and Rachael encouraged anyone with similar links for match-funding or employee charity funds to look at available assistance.

This year we have helped school with a successful application to The Wolfson Foundation for £38,000 to build an all-weather sheltered area for vehicle maintenance and construction vocational/enrichment sessions.

The last Tesco grant for Breakfast club has been spent on a commercial grade toaster (£450) plus sets of safety knives to allow students to help with breakfast prep.

Rachael asked Lee to ensure staff submit any funding requests asap, so they can be processed before the end of the financial year (31st December).

Lee mentioned that the ‘Hobbit House Book Nook’ is under construction, and school may request funding for bookshelves and fittings.

An application was made immediately after the meeting for large bingo balls, cards and markers for the lunchtime Bingo Club, which is set to extend into enrichment time.

**Minutes Part B**

The student Christmas Card design project is under way, and Lee will look into why one class was unable to take part.

Our annual Christmas Raffle is ready to go. Clare has collected a huge number of prizes, and the printed tickets will go out at the beginning of November (closing date 2nd December). £25 of tickets will go home with each student, and dojo/facebook posts should make it clear that there is NO expectation to sell any/all of these – the number of tickets is to try to reduce the number of requests to office staff for more.

Sharon outlined the Christmas event arrangements in terms of providing gifts and supporting students with the ‘Christmas Market experience’ It was agreed that staff would use the weekly staff meeting to help set up the hall on the 4th ready for the Christmas Fayre on the 5th and 6th December. Lee to email all staff to this effect.

Sharon explained our main event of the year, the Christmas market for students to choose and wrap gifts for their parents/carers at home, along with a range of other activities. We have already purchased most of the gifts required for this year, and we have a large selection of decorations for the Sports Hall.

We still need to buy the large foil balloons.

We only supply gifts for the adults at home, as it would be impossible to estimate the number and type of gifts required for siblings (who would be assumed to receive gifts from family anyway)

This year the event will be 5th and 6th December (all day) with set up from 2-4.30pm on 4th December. School staff assist with set-up, and the plan from last year will be reused. Staff will also draw the Christmas Raffle and notify the winners during set-up.

The event requires a lot of hands-on work, and Sharon welcomed help from everyone. This could be volunteering for all or part of a day, helping with set-up, or making gift-wrap pouches at home.

Clare suggested a number of additions for this year, including:

* Gifts for pets – small packets of dog/cat treats. Agreed – plus small packets of bird seed for those without pets.
* Social stories to help staff prepare students for the event
* Quiet time for those who would struggle in the general sessions. Agreed to set up a gazebo at the far end of the hall, facing away from the other activities. This will be a self-contained market, for one or two students at a time. If we have enough helpers, this could be available throughout the two days.

**Actions**

* Lee to look into school Christmas card participation to see if he can change the approach next year to ensure all classes take part.
* Lee to ensure staff meeting is on 4th December to help with set-up. Staff will be responsible for drawing the Christmas raffle at that time, and notifying winners.
* Lee to discuss with the premises manager the possibility of PAT testing equipment pre Christmas market.
* Sharon/Lee to chase up order for gazebo sides
* Clare/Rachael to look at social stories for Christmas market
* Sharon to set up WhatsApp group
* Sharon to ask school to email volunteers for DBS clearance

Yours Sincerely

Lee Davis

FOCCS Secretary

**Additional discussion already resolved online in the lead up to the meeting, and included here for info:**

Clare has secured two sets of family tickets for the Wensleydale Polar Express. As the event takes place before the Raffle draw, they cannot be used as Raffle prizes. We do not want to detract from the Raffle, and we are wary of asking for money from families on multiple occasions.

The tickets will be used for a ‘Raffle launch’, thanking families for their support throughout the year. As the event is about an hour away and not all families would be able to take advantage of the tickets, we will publicise the offer on dojo and the fb pages, or via a leaflet, asking families to respond if they would like to be entered into the free draw.