**Minutes PA Meeting 22/01/2025**

**Attendees:** Rachel Murphy (J), Laura.m (S), Fiona.K (1st, 4th, 6th), Deirdre .J (2nd), Philippe.P (3rd), Kathleen.C (5th), Jade O’R, Lisa O’L, Lisa.F, Rebecca J.

**Regrets:** Carol Ann Hardy, Maire Kinsella, Finola Byrne, Sarah O’Connor, Edel Forde, Eilis Kavanagh.

**Review of last meetings minutes.**

**Treasurer Report:** Jade reported a healthy balance in the account and enough to see us through the remaining expenses for the school year. A portion of the remaining funds to be allocated as the group see fit pending discussion.

**Calendars:** Calendars landed us a profit of over €300. High print costs and not successfully securing a sponsor meant the profit was lower than hoped.

Remaining calendars to be sold for €5 each. If anyone didn’t manage to pick one up before Christmas please contact Jade 0851497588 or Lisa 0877948788. The PA would like to give huge thanks to Rebecca Jennings for her design and time of these gorgeous keepsakes.

Next year’s plan is to revert to the Festive Friday donation in late Nov/early December from families.

**6th Class Hoodies Gift:** Surveys were a unanimous YES for hoodies/jumpers again this year. Order priced with 3 suppliers and was placed with schoolwarehouse. Feedback from class rep that pupils are very happy with them. Enjoyed having the choice of designs and their own initials etc. Turnaround from the company was excellent so will be happy to use them again in the future for same.

Plan to survey current 5th class before the summer break and if hoodies are selected, aim to measure and order before the break. Parent contribution of €20 to continue to help PA manage costs with class number increases in the coming years.

**Elf Experience**: Following on from discussion in last meeting. Elf experience has been run for many years now and some opinion that it had run its course and was money that could be better spent? School feedback is that they are very keen to keep the elf booking for future years as it brings great excitement and fun to the school in the run up to Christmas. School mentioned if not the elf then an alternative would be much appreciated. Thanks were passed on for the PA’s contribution this year.

There were no external company suggestions made following on from our last meeting. Suggestion that parents could run a ‘Christmas Breakfast’ Experience but with December already being an extremely busy month for parents it was decided this could prove more effort than it was worth and cost in or around the same as what we already contribute.

Elf funding contribution approved going forward.

**Paired Reading/Maths4Fun:**

Both groups are now fully vetted, vetting is for 3 years and admin’s of group will continue to monitor members to ensure all parents attending are up to date with their vetting. Thanks to Siobhan in the office for her assistance with all of those forms over the last few months.

Anyone looking to join the WhatsApp group can email [castletownnspa@gmail.com](mailto:castletownnspa@gmail.com) and pick up a vetting form from the school office.

Groups are run once a month on a Thurs/Friday morning for 1 hour. We would like to increase the frequency of these but we would need more helpers. Many thanks to the parents who completed the vetting form and have been participating in these very well received resources.

**Pancake Tuesday:** We need few parents to help out on Tues March 4th to make pancakes in school for all classes. Fiona Kelly will oversee and prepare ingredients. Edel Forde also available. Order form adjusted from last year to simplify the filling requests. We haven’t burnt the school down yet so don’t be shy! A fun morning if anyone can help contact Laura 0876343390 or [castletownnspa@gmail.com](mailto:castletownnspa@gmail.com)

**Workshop Experience:** At the last meeting it was discussed that school were planning a STEAM based learning workshop.” The Nutty Scientist” experience has been booked for the week of 10th March. This is funded by the BOM.

**Next Year 25/26 Workshop Idea:** Proposal to have the Planetarium experience again as it’s been a few years since last done and they run different programmes for Junior and Senior classes. Will tie in with school before end of school year and see about making a booking for this in advance to secure preferred dates.

**PA Kit missing items:** Mugs, jugs, sugar bowls had been noted missing were located. Additional items had been purchased but will be used and needed in time anyway.

**Uniform:** Following the chaffing issue with the new t-shirts, schoolwarehouse were to come back with a suggestion of a simplified design on the embroidered crest. Check with school if this has been done for orders going forward.

**Lego Kits:** This request was put to us from school back in May 2023, following Ms. Penston completing some training on this global STEAM project.

Kits cost €3000 and it was agreed at the time that the PA would chip away at it, donating when it could to school who would hold the total.

As per query at meeting, checked and no set amount from the PA was agreed on at the time, school have accumulated apx €1400 to this fun, this is not all PA money.

The PA agreed at the last meeting to try get a final lump sum donation for this. A Spring Summer disco in the pipeline we should be in a good position to make a lump sum donation (aim €1000) to school in order to have the funding in place and hopefully have the order made in good time with Ms.Penstons return.

Will check with school if this timing will work.

All teachers can avail of the kits, 1st/2nd class upwards but Ms.Penston has done the training so would have the best knowledge of the setup and Lego League etc.

Lots of info is available on Learnit.ie or Fll.ie for any interested parents.

**Spring Disco:** Following on from last year’s success it was agreed that another Spring disco would put us in a good position to fund a large project (Lego Kit). Pending date check and availability of the Golden Anchor.

**Music Festival:** Query about bus/mini bus transport for children to the Arklow Bay for this as parking is sparse during the competition for parents. Noted that different classes compete on different days and different times so may not be feasible but Laura to check if school have any thoughts on same. Would be parent funded. Messages will be sent out if feasible to facilitate.

**Re-Turn Recycling Bins:** Our re-turn orange bins have been totting up nicely and so far have raised over €350 since end of September (pending lodgement of last collection). We thank the pupils, parents and community members who have given their donations. Bins are located in the school yard and also at the gate of the Parish hall across the road…orange bin, you can’t miss it! Thanks to the parents who monitor bins and do the returns; Philippe, Edel, Lisa F, Lisa O’, Jade, Laura .

Suggestion for a school wide survey of pupils, or maybe the student council, to select items for purchase from the ‘bin money’ and work towards this as a short-mid term fundraising goal, with the hope of increasing interest in the initiative.

**Ball Free Friday-** Queried school on the reason for this. Feedback was that it is to try include the children that don’t play ball. One day a week, where all children can play together, work on friendships and other skills with their peers.

Comparison made to some schools who have blanket ban on all ball games at break times.

Agreed one day a week is acceptable and inclusive.

Many thanks to all attendees for their input. If we need to hold another meeting it will be after the Easter break before the summer but will only be called if needed. We will be asking for helpers and donations of baked goods for Grandparents Day, Friday 11th (tbc) and also for sports day...any dad’s handy on the BBQ? Call out’s will be done nearer the time.

Thanks to parents for their support, funding this year has helped contribute to the following;

**YOGA workshop**

**6th class Hoodies**

**Music Generation Lessons(3rd-6th)**

**Halloween Prizes**

**Christmas Elf Experience and cupcake decorating for 5th and 6th.**

**Additional items to finish the Rain forest room**

**Sports Day BBQ and medals (medals for incoming and junior classes)**

**Cake for 6th class graduation**

**Pancake Tuesday Treats**

**Additional items for the PA event kit.**

**NOTE: Remaining calendars are for sale for €5 contact anyone from the PA committee or your class rep.**