**Minutes of St John of Jerusalem School PTFA meeting**

**Friday 1 November 2019, 9:00am**

**Present**: Lisa-Raine (Chair), Claire (Treasurer), Estelle (Secretary); Denise; Sabrina.

**Apologies were received from:** Lisa C, Sally.

**1. Matters arising from last meeting:** none.

**2.** **Cultural evening**: the school staff have asked for parent/carer volunteers to help with the cultural evening due to take place after school on Friday 8 November (setting up/serving food, etc). It was suggested that food contributions should either be nut free or very clearly labelled.

**Action point: volunteers to come in at 3pm to set up; food known to contain nuts (or other allergens) to be clearly labelled.**

**3. Christmas Fair**: to be held in the hall after school on Thursday 12 December. To explore possibility of having additional stalls (Jade – popcorn/candyfloss?) in the school entrance area to maximise space, as hall always quite crowded.

Private tables requested by: Lisa C, Oscar (if Lisa-Raine not needed on another stall), Sharon (NB: do not put Sharon near door – became too congested here last year as cakes so popular)

School tables: Class tables; Squash/refreshments (Estelle); Books; Toys; Tombola &/or raffle (if sufficient prizes/volunteers); Claire, Denise, Sally have offered help.

**Action Points: Lisa-Raine: To check whether Lisa C is happy to organise fair again (with Lisa-Raine) and possibly seek raffle prizes. To ask if we may use entrance space for stalls. To ask Jade if she wants to run a popcorn/candyfloss stall. To ask teachers to produce class stalls. Volunteers and donations of good quality toys/tombola prizes to be requested via newsletter/WhatsApp group.**

**4. Christmas Grotto:** Claire +/- Sally to organise/decorate. Barclays volunteers to staff.

**5. New Post Holders:** Lisa-Raine, Claire & Estelle once again voiced their collective desire to step down from their respective posts of Chair, Treasurer & Secretary, after many years in these roles. Requests to those attending meetings/advertising on WhatsApp/in newsletter have so far been unsuccessful in attracting a new Treasurer/Secretary, though a few people have expressed an interest in the role of Chair. It was felt that stepping down from these roles at an AGM in January, and handing them on to new post-holders, with each post being held for a year was the best way forward. A description of each role has been written to help inform parents/carers about what is involved.

**Action points: To gauge best day/time for AGM meeting to maximise attendance (Thurs AM?); to advertise this date well in advance by means of a letter to parents/carers, giving brief descriptions of each role and asking for expressions of interest, to be returned by Christmas. If more than one parent/carer applies for each role, then names could be randomly selected (ie pulled from a hat) and any disappointed applicants given priority the following year.**

**6. WhatsApp Group:** The PTFA were reminded that the WhatsApp group was an open group (potentially open to all parents, carers, teachers) linked to the school, and there to share information regarding the school (eg ask for volunteers for school activities/fundraising events, check holiday dates/homework, etc). It should **not** be used to promote unrelated events, private businesses, political or religious viewpoints that could be offensive to others, or for making defamatory remarks, or complaints that should go through a formal complaints process. Other schools are known to have closed similar WhatsApp groups due to misuse. As administrators of the group, Lisa-R/Claire/Estelle/Nisa potentially open to legal action if these rules are breached. Whilst freedom of expression and the right to complain are recognised and encouraged, the WhatsApp group is not the appropriate forum eg there are formal complaints procedures that must be followed. The PTFA are happy to advise anyone needing further information or support with regard to who to approach and how.

**Action point: To periodically post user rules on the WhatsApp group to remind users what is/is not acceptable. Unsuitable posts will cause the chat to be deleted and/or the group closed.**

**7. Any other business:**

**a) Relationships and sex education (RSE)**: It was noted that some parents/carers have expressed concerns over RSE being taught in school, and there is unclarity about what this may include. As reports in the media often fail to distinguish between primary and secondary school curriculums (which are very different in their content), it was suggested either a letter to or a meeting with parents/carers to help inform them would be beneficial to allay fears.

**b) School Dinners:**

It was noted there have been some complaints over the quantity and quality of the school dinners since Vicky, the school chef for many years, left last term. School council, teacher and parent representatives have been reporting back, and taste tests are ongoing. The current chef is skilled, but inevitably has a slightly different style of cooking, which has received both positive and negative comments from children. It was suggested comments from more parent reps with catering experience might be useful.

It was also suggested that the school do not routinely offer a school packed lunch on trip letters now, and there was concern that if it was not made clear that this was available, then families whose children receive free school meals could miss out.

Some parents noted that the school guidelines on healthy packed lunches were not being uniformly enforced, resulting in confusion as to what was/wasn’t allowed. A letter reminding parents/carers of the guidelines was suggested.

**c) ScoPay:** The school are keen to make payments for school dinners, trips etc online, using the ScoPay system. It was suggested a reminder on WhatsApp might be useful, possibly offering help if anyone was struggling to use an online system.

**d) Black History Month (BHM):** Some parents expressed concern that BHM had not been adequately marked in school this year. It was recognised that many classes had incorporated BHM into their literacy/comprehension/family history class/homework. It was suggested that parents/carers/ex-pupils might like to help organise a BHM event/speak to a class or in an assembly.

**e) Special Educational Needs (SEN**): It was noted that due to central and local funding cuts, it is much harder now to obtain an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for children with special educational needs, and the associated funding. Similarly, there are fewer teaching assistants (TAs) available to support teachers and children in the classroom. It was suggested that monthly SENCO meetings would be useful, to help inform and encourage parents/carers as to what support/funding was available.

**Action points: Lisa-Raine to feedback these issues to Asarena (RSE)/Rene (School dinners)/Tricia (BHM)/Carly (SENCO).**

Lisa-Raine thanked everyone for attending. The meeting ended at 10:15am. Next meeting will be AGM in January - date tbc.