**Friends of Halstow meeting**

**Date:** Tuesday, 12 December 2023

**Time:** 8pm until 9pm

**Location:** Halstow Primary School

**Attendees:** Jennie Marsh, Sasha Harker (via zoom), Katharine Kennedy, Mary Anne Moffatt, Bryony Jones (via zoom), Vanessa Hodgins (minutes), Hinan Medouni, Sophie Kelly, Alex Swann (via zoom), Chris Starkiewicz (via zoom)

**Absences:** Natasha Tilley

**Head Teacher’s update via Jennie Marsh**

**Science and maths resources**: Science and maths resources totalling £1000 have now been ordered. A very big thanks from staff for providing this as it will be fabulous not having to share resources between classes.

**Outstanding invoices:** Invoices for all outstanding payments to be submitted to Friends of Halstow for payment.

Action: Natasha to help chase these up for us.

**Teachers outstanding payments**: Each teacher was given funds from FoH to decorate their classrooms at the beginning of the school year. We would like to close this action in week ending Friday, 12 January, 2024.

Action: Natasha to chase teachers who haven’t yet submitted claims and provide details of outstanding monies owed so the teachers can be reimbursed.

**Bell House Garden and Pavilion area:**. Action: Grants to be explored in more detail to see if this is something that we could use to cover costs. Natasha to provide an update on where this is up to in the next meeting.

**Christmas events update:**

**Christmas cards:** The Christmas cards/tote bags/cushions etc with the children’s own design on the front have been handed out to all families that ordered. Claire Tugwell was the event lead on this and we thank her for all her hard work in making this such a success. In the past this has raised over £1000 and this money was used to fund the Christmas baubles that were given to each child to decorate at school in the recent Christmas event at school.

**Christmas event at school:** The Christmas event was held on Thursday, 7 December with each child able to decorate a bauble to take home to hang on their Christmas trees. Father Christmas visited each classroom and delivered gifts for the children to use in wet weather play. They were so well received by the children, and they will get a lot of use out of them. Last outstanding gifts were delivered to school tonight to go into classrooms tomorrow.

**Christmas disco:** A free evening event for families was held on the same evening. We had 210 people come to the disco and £480 profit was raised on the night from bar sales. There was feedback from parents that there could potentially be two sittings for the disco like the Halloween Disco with the Halstow Choir as the change over for the two groups. Those with siblings in both year groups can get a ticket for both. There was also another suggestion that volunteers get requested before tickets get sold as then we know how many tickets we can release. It was thought that if we were going to open the event to a greater capacity next year, we would need to either split it or have it over two floors, all of which need extra volunteers. It was also noted that a Code of Conduct needs to be issued stating the behaviour that is required from all attendees on the night. It was agreed that it should be highlighted that refunds will not be given and all money raised will be going directly to the school. Another suggestion was that tickets always must be with a child and adult together so there is no confusion about tickets. Also, the event may have caused confusion as it was free and not everyone realised they needed to procure tickets and some thought they could just show up. In future a drink at the bar could be offered for a small charge on tickets to counteract this problem.

**Christmas pantomime:** There will be two sittings (Reception to Year 3 then Years 4 to 6) of the Christmas pantomime of ‘Beauty and the Beast’ funded by FoH on the last day of term (21st of December). This will be paid for out of money raised from Hannah Martin’s makeup sale. Thank you very much to Hannah.

**Christmas lunch:** The school Christmas lunch will be on the 14th of December. FoH have agreed to provide Christmas crackers for each child. The crackers have been delivered and are in the basement ready for the big day.

**Christmas wreaths:** A local company in Charlton Village has agreed to a fundraiser where purchases of Christmas wreaths can earn money for school. Action: Sophie Kelly to chase owner for an update on this.

**Past events discussed:**

**Wine tasting:** The wine tasting event at school with Theatre of Wine was held on 24th of November, 2023. The event was led by Matt and Rachel Dodds, and we thank them for their hard work with this. Final figures aren’t in yet, but it is estimated that we will have raised around £300 profit.

**Future events discussed:**

**Silent disco:** This popular whole school event has been booked in for the 8th of February, 2024 to coincide with Children’s Mental Health Week. Volunteers will be needed to help run this event and we will put out a request in the first week back at school requesting these. Alex Swann has agreed to shadow the event with Jennie Marsh. We will again be asking for financial donations for the event as we did in previous years. Ideally, we would like to raise at least £400 to cover the hire of the silent disco kit. More details to follow closer to the event.

**School Quiz night:** Chris Starkiewicz provided an update on the quiz as it is his team that is going to be leading the event. It will be held on Friday, 23rd of February, 2024 after the half term break. More details to follow closer to the time.

**Oktoberfest/Beer tasting night:** Discussions have been held with the owners of the Star of Greenwich about hosting a school fundraising beer tasting night to potentially coincide with Oktoberfest next year.

**Lotte Jeffs book release:** Alex Swann is in discussion with Year One parent Lotte Jeffs about a potential upcoming event to coincide with her book release ‘How To Be A Gentlewoman: The Art of Soft Power In Hard Times’. Once she has had discussions with her we can then think about feasibility and requirements for the event. More details to follow.

**Other items discussed**

**Amazon Wishlist:** An Amazon Wishlist is in the process of being set up so that teachers can make requests for items needed by the school and for their classrooms. It was decided that there would be one central list but as teachers are adding the items, they add in the comments section that it is for their year group so parents can buy things for their children’s classes if they would like to. Parents/carers will then be able to make purchases if they are able with items being delivered directly to school. Action: Lucie Murphy to set up lists so teachers can populate with items they would like for their classrooms.

**Upcoming events assistance:** It was discussed that we could use a Save The Dates email with a sign up sheet calling for volunteers earlier especially for large events like the Summer Fair and the Halloween Disco. We would dearly love to get volunteers to sign up for future events or even to host their own event to raise much needed funds for the school. If you have any ideas for future events or fundraising, please do get in touch with us.

**Halstow Kit:** A big thank you to Year One parent Abdallah Hamdad who has volunteered to take over the FoH kit management.

**StreetChild:** We received communication from Street Child thanking us for hosting Hannah Martin’s sensational makeup night that raised over £10,500 for school and various charities including StreetChild. The founder of StreetChild used to have strong ties to Halstow when the charity began. It was discussed that we would like to strengthen those ties again and find out ways that we could be more involved as a school.

Action: Hannah Martin agreed to take on initial conversations with StreetChild.

**Teacher communication:** It was queried if we could liaise directly with teacher volunteers about projects to free up Natasha Tilley’s time. If teacher reps are happy then they could be invited to meetings and be a single point of contact for things like the Bell House Garden or the Rabbit Hutch revamp which are two projects we are keen to get going with. We want to alleviate pressure wherever we can and really help the staff to help us make Halstow the best place it can be for our children.

**Newsletter:** A newsletter will be going out before the end of term highlighting all that FoH have achieved and hope to do with future events.

**Upcoming meetings:** Regular monthly meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month. 7.45pm arrival for an 8pm to 9pm meeting in the school staff room. Next meeting will be held on the 16th of January, 2024. All are welcome to attend either in person or via Zoom.

**Dates of upcoming meetings:** 16 January, 6 February, 12 March, 16 April, 14 May, 11 June, 18 June, 25 June, 9 July.