



Chair Report
FODS AGM 15th September 2024

Welcome and Overview

Welcome everyone and thank you for attending this AGM.

Reflecting on the last school year, FODS has continued to operate thanks to the unwavering dedication of its core team of volunteers who are unquestionably the beating heart of FODS, and whose time and dedication make it the success it is. Thank you to each and every one of you. I extend this same deep gratitude to all parents, carers and sponsors for your continued support. Collectively, your support takes many forms; and as in previous years, I reiterate in this year's address to you; every time you pop a pound into an envelope, buy a book of raffle tickets, bake cakes, generously donate prizes, offer your child's school uniform items for resale, set up trestle tables for an event, do the cash and carry shopping run, volunteer your time to run the bar or man a stall at one of our events, you enable FODS to succeed, and we appreciate each and every contribution you make. Equally, our much-loved signature school based events simply could not take place without the effort and goodwill of the staff who pull out all the stops in a busy teaching week to make these happen, so thank you all.

Notwithstanding its impressive record of delivering a varied and exciting programme of events to date, sadly FODS now finds itself operating very much to survive rather than to thrive. Over the past year or so, it has seen significant natural attrition of its longstanding core volunteer base as parents move on as their children leave school, and like so many school PTAs, it has struggled to secure a sufficiently high number of new volunteers to help plan and run the range of events it would like to commit to. This constraint manifested itself in a markedly curtailed programme of events last year, and regrettably, unless more volunteers step forward, the same constraint will apply this coming year.

I am therefore issuing the perennial call to action of all PTAs, but this time with a real sense of urgency; FODS needs your help in order to thrive and it needs it now. It has no shortage of ideas, enthusiasm or drive, but its ambition can only be realised with a sufficiently sizeable team to deliver on it. There are many different ways to get involved which only require a small time commitment, and by volunteering, you will benefit greatly by making new friends, becoming more deeply involved in the broader life of the school and having lots of fun in the process. Please take the opportunity to join our FODS group on Facebook and please do reach out to any of our committee members for details of how to join our WhatsApp message groups. We'd absolutely love to hear from you!



We launched a survey earlier in the year asking for your ideas as to the type and format of events you'd like us to organise – thank you to all who responded. Based on your feedback, the committee will soon commence its work planning a programme of fundraising events for the year ahead, but this is wholly predicated on securing enough volunteers and we will issue a status update on this in due course. As in recent years, we remain very mindful of the prevailing cost of living pressures at play and we'll strive to ensure that the pricing and phasing of our fundraising initiatives reflect this.

Fundraising Events Highlights 2023/2024

The accompanying Treasurer's Report provides a full financial breakdown of our fundraising activity, the funds from which were gratefully received by the school to spend on initiatives such as the library refurbishment, outdoor planters and the hen run – as always, initiatives that directly benefit our children and enrich their learning experience and wellbeing.

We thank Alice Atherton for running her annual sell-out Wreath Making event, Laura Oakes for managing the greatly appreciated school uniform sales, Beth Newby for the festive Christmas mug and novelty item sale, Sharon Baker for the tea towel initiative, our super star Sophia (Y4), Tina and Jo Williams for the cookery book collaboration, and all our other star volunteers who supported them.

Here are a few more highlights ...

- *Christmas Funfest*- which was widely supported and provided much needed fabulous festive celebrations for the children. A big thank you to all parents and carers for supporting this, and particular thanks to the teachers and staff, Sadie Hopley, Alice Atherton, Beth Newby, and their organising sub-committee who made it all happen.
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- *Summer Extravaganza* – fast becoming a signature FODS event, this year it was a FODS and Ethos Group collaboration and incorporated falconry, singing, stalls, glitter tattoos, ice-cream and much more! Special thanks go to Mrs Manfredi and her star Ethos Group children, our stalwart Jo Williams and our dedicated refreshments and stall teams for making it the success it was – despite the rainy weather!
- School Discos – thanks to Jo Williams, Mrs Hyslop and her school staff for organising and running these ever popular events for our KS1 and KS2 children.

**Grateful thanks always to our generous sponsors, teaching and support staff, parents and carers for supporting this event*



Goodbyes and Hellos

We say goodbye and a heartfelt thank you to Sharon Baker who is standing down from her committee role as Secretary. We will miss her personally, as well as her unstinting excellence keeping us organised and legally compliant over the past few years.

We warmly welcomed Karla Driscoll to our committee this year as Treasurer to support Louise Comley – a true power duo!

Closing Remarks

The energy and passion of the FODS Committee and small volunteering team is truly inspiring, and my biggest hope for the coming year is that that my call to action encouraging more of you to join us will be heard. So many school PTAs fail to realise their full fundraising potential to deliver much valued projects due to a simple shortage of helping hands. Let's collectively ensure that FODS is the thriving, invigorated and resourced team it needs and deserves to be. To this end, I look forward to meeting lots of you at our regular meetings and events very soon.

Wishing everyone a healthy, successful and happy year.

Anne-Marie Marshall
FODS Chair