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**RUSSELL LOWER SCHOOL**

**PTA Head teacher’s Report – January 2020 - AGM**

It was a very busy autumn term, particularly with the hugely successful Halloween Discos, the Once Upon a Time Ball and Christmas Fayre.

Again, over the period 2019 – 2020 the PTA have raised and pledged a phenomenal amount of money for the school and changed the resources it has available beyond all recognition. We are a very lucky school! In addition, the PTA have ‘hosted’ some brilliant community events: for example, no one will forget the inflatable fun summer fayre on the field or the incredible ball. As I have said before, I know how much these, and other equally fantastic events, have added to the ‘community’ feel, popularity of the school and family friendly approach that Russell enjoys.

An incredible total pledge of over £20 000 has been received during this period. This has been spent on 5 sun shelters, seating around the school, friendship benches, new Ipads, theatre visit AR books and are making our KS2 Trim Trail outdoor gym a reality. This is without all the PTA funded items and ‘extra fundraisers’ such as Easter gifts, leavers’ presents and parties, Christmas selection packs, School Calendars, Second-hand uniform sales etc!

With school budgets continuing to be slashed each year (there is a small glimmer of hope that this might improve next financial year a little), it is clear that without the phenomenal support of the PTA school simply would not have been able to afford these resource. The children have benefited in so many ways, in their outdoor play, in their reading, through fun experiences and in Maths in particular.

All the members of the PTA give of their time so freely. Not only at the events, but also in all the many meetings (and sub-meetings) you have to have to be so thoughtful and extremely well organised!

I would particularly like to thank those of you who took on specific roles last January:

* Chair – Leanne Scott
* Vice Chair – Tracey Muller
* Treasurer – Nina Page
* Secretary – Jackie Floyd
* Facebook/Marketing – Amy Galt
* Everything and anything – especially publishing – Emily Banting

I am only too aware, that without you stepping forward, the children would not have the benefits we have discussed.

I also need to make a special mention to the Ball Committee. My most sincere thanks go to: Leanne, Emily, Liz, Nina, Catherine, Tracey and Amy, and of course with special thanks to Sandra, Paul and Paige for their huge contributions. As I said in the November meeting, we are always humbled by the lengths that you all go to, to support the children and the school - our most sincere and heart-felt thanks go to you all!

The ball was a fantastic event to be part of. To think you managed to raise well over a staggering £16 000 is simply unimaginable!

Well done to all concerned and our most sincere thanks again! I am sure that Governors will also be writing to you all to thank you personally, not only for the money raised but for the way you represented Russell and for hosting such a fantastic community event.

I know that several of you are now understandably looking to ‘step down’ after a lot of hard work this year.

I must mention Emily and just say what an absolute pleasure it has been to work with you on the PTA over the last few years and to thank you for your own, and Fidelity’s, contribution to growing the Russell Lower School brand. Thank you so much Emily!

I must also mention Leanne who has also been an impressive Chair. Leanne always comes across as being ‘cool as a cucumber’ and loves to progress her ideas ‘bigger and further’ than before each time! Look at that amazing Christmas Market she pulled together in December – magical! Organising big events such as the inflatable fun day simply didn’t faze her at all! I have felt really privileged having such an organised and effective Chair and Deputy Chair and would like to thank you both so much for all your hard work on behalf of the children, staff and governors of Russell Lower School. You really have left your mark on Russell and its children and facilities.

It has been another hugely successful phase for the PTA and the children and staff have benefitted enormously from all your hard work.

As I said at the ball, no small gift or words of thanks will every truly repay you anywhere near as much as we should. We hope you know (and feel) how much we appreciate all your hard work.

With sincere thanks and gratitude.

**Nicki Walker, Louise Bunney, Russell Lower School Governors, staff and children**

**AGM - January 2020**