

Report from Paula Hughes, Chair of Millfields PSA 2013/14

My year as Chair for Millfields PSA has been as busy as it has been enjoyable. And that enjoyment has come from the enthusiastic members of the PSA, especially Elanor Jackson, Rose Marie St Mart, Natascha Lloyd, Vickie Wilkes, Linda Culverwell and many more, as well as parents, staff, and the wider community who never ceased to amaze with their hard work and efforts.

Over the past year we have had many fundraising events such as discos, movie nights, tuck shops, pizza lunches, word quizzes, clothes swaps, book fairs, Waitrose tokens, Christmas cards, Christmas single and, of course, our wonderful Christmas Fair and, most recently, Summer Fair. Through all the events with their varying level of support, we managed to raise significant funds to help improve the educational experiences of all the children in the school.

Our Christmas and Summer Fairs were a resounding success. Particular note should go to the Go-Karts that worked wonderfully at the summer fair. It was great to try other new attractions and stalls, like our very own photo-booth, and I am sure that momentum for these will increase and their success will be built on over the years.

The Word in a Word Game had its first outing and was a roaring success raising £378. This was an easy game to implement, took very little time and coincided with World Book Day and should be explored, in varying forms, every year.

We also had our first ever Pizza Lunch. The simple idea took a surprising amount of time & effort behind the scenes, but the children loved it! Again we hope that if this gets repeated and with more people involved and a tighter ordering scheme, it could become a regular event and one that could raise decent funds. There was much discussion about using a local, independent pizzeria, but, at the time, the vast quantities needed meant that local companies couldn't provide such high amounts. We hope that could change for future Pizza Lunches.

The PSA also hosted its first Clothes Swap and the event was a lot of fun and involved a lot of new parents who worked hard to ensure the event was one to remember, and raised money for the PSA funds. The networking and connecting at the swap was really valuable and, I think, a lot was learned from that experience and those lessons should certainly be put to good use to ensure the next Clothes Swap raises much more significant amounts of money.

The old favourites like the discos, movie nights and books fairs fruit & ice lolly sales and tuck shops continued to be successful. It was noted, however, that movie nights don't raise as much money as discos which explains, in part, the reluctance in organising another movie night.

Lastly, this year saw Millfields PSA take on the enormous task of recording, producing and releasing a Christmas single which was, in our eyes The Single of the year. Many people gave their time and energy to create a truly momentous song and special thanks needs go to Claire Wooldridge for being the driving force and putting the school on the map. Massive thanks to Pinny Grylls, Emily Young and everyone who worked on the single. The results speak for themselves.

Finally the role of Chairperson can be demanding and time consuming but it is a role that truly offers much in rewards, not least being a very active member of a brilliant community and working with a huge range of fellow parents. I feel, though, it is the right time to stand down and let someone else take the reins. I hope, in stepping down after a year, more people will feel inclined to take on the role and see it as a short term role with masses of long term gain. And while I am formally stepping down, I will continue to be part of the PSA and all that it encompasses and look forward to seeing it expand with a new team and a new set of willing volunteers.