

Alban City School PTA
Chair's Report: Jan 2018 – Jan 2019

We write this report at the end of our first year at the helm. We headed up an amazing team of people and sit in awe of the fabulous engagement of the whole school community. 2018 has been another successful year of fundraising for Alban City School, during which we have been busy getting up to speed, overseeing a packed event schedule and coordinating a GDPR audit.

Organisation and Communication

PTA meetings were held near-monthly in 2018 and provided an opportunity to share ideas, take suggestions for the upcoming events and to gather feedback from past events. PTA team members supported events via sub-committees. Subcommittees then fed-back to the wider group once the minutiae had been thrashed out. We have found this a particularly productive way of working and it also allows those who are not able to attend the PTA meetings to contribute to the running of events. Anyone is welcome to join an event's subcommittee and/or chip in ideas at any time.

We continued with the highly successful Class Rep model, whereby nominated parents or carers in each class relay important PTA information, help with selling of tickets, gathering feedback and answering (or passing on) questions; they provide the easiest route of contact for the PTA.

To communicate with the school community, we produced termly newsletters, set up the Alban City School PTA Facebook page and have had great support from the Class Reps in transmitting information, including a monthly PTA meeting digest, via class Whatsapp or email groups. This year we revamped the PTA notice board (on the left as pupils enter the gates in the morning) and continue to advertise upcoming events on this. We made an active decision this year to cut down on paper and as far as possible try to communicate electronically. We continue to use the Yellow PTA boxes for ticketing but have also increased our use of Eventbrite for parents who prefer the convenience of online payment.

2018 saw the introduction of new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). We undertook an audit and discussed how we could ensure compliance. While we have always been careful with personal details that are given to us for events, we have now produced a set of guidelines on how data gathered by the PTA should be dealt with. For example, all reply slips must be shredded and all personal data deleted from PTA members' computers once an event has run.

Objectives

Our focus, as a PTA, is to support our wonderful school and we aim to do this by promoting engagement and the coming together of the school community, raising funds to help enrich the school's running and also by forging external links with the wider St Albans community. This year we were pleased to be involved in a St Albans-wide PTA network in which we shared ideas and support for our common goal of fundraising for our individual schools. We

hope to feedback ideas from and use this network in the coming year to enhance the work we do.

At the end of 2017, parents and carers of Alban City School took part in a survey to decide what our next big fundraising focus should be. They decided on the redevelopment of the Basement Theatre which, currently hidden down some dark and dingy stairs, has the potential to be a valuable teaching resource and also another space for hire that can generate its own revenue stream for the school. 2018 saw the PTA commission a feasibility study into this basement renovation project. The study was positive and a local company drew up 4 different layout options. At the beginning of 2019 we are excitedly waiting for school to decide on the best design, after which a tender document will be produced to go out to selected contractors. The PTA plan to promote this project and set fundraising goals as soon as possible.

2018 Events

We have seen a full and varied schedule of events this year:

Two Quiz nights
Valentines' Bake Sale
Yr 2-5 Film night
Mums' Night
R and Yr1 Spring Disco
School Concert
Two Odyssey Cinema takeovers
Summer Event
Autumn Bake Sale
Halloween Disco
Christmas Fair
R and Yr1 Film Night
Nearly New Sales
Ice lolly sales
Coffee mornings

Our amazing Quiz Whizz, Angela, tickled our brains TWICE this year with the ever-popular event. We enjoyed fantastic turn outs and great competitive fun was had by all.

We saw the first ever performance by the School Orchestra in the Summer Term and were given the opportunity to listen to several professional musicians affiliated to the school. A wonderful concert was held at St Peters Church and raised money for the Alban City School Music Fund, which supports the purchase of music equipment.

The Odyssey Cinema was host to exclusive film screenings in 2018, with two Alban City School takeovers. These mornings were scheduled for inset days and we are looking forward to our first 2019 screening after May half term!

This year we took a different approach to the Summer Event. As you may know, due to a restrictive covenant within the planning permission granted for the new playground in 2016, we were unable to use the space outside on a Saturday beyond 1pm. We therefore had to think a little more creatively and came up with the 'Summer Food Fest'. It retained some of the elements of the fair we know and love but with a fantastic foodie twist and proved a hit despite being limited in use of space. This, along with the Christmas Fair (which helped drum-up some early festive cheer), are real focuses of the PTA year. With much hard work and planning, the Summer Event and Christmas Fair are by far our biggest fundraising events.

Finally, with Alban City School now host to 7 years of children we're getting ready for the end of year celebration for the current year 6. The PTA is pleased to be supporting year 6 parents and was able to pledge a monetary contribution towards an end of year treat as the school sets it's own precedent of marking this rite of passage!

We have been busy planning another full year of events and are looking forward to the return of the Comedy Night and introduction of other exciting events, such as Gin Tasting, in 2019. The school was successful in its application for extended use of the playground on 3 Saturdays each year and so we are happy to be able to, once again, use the outside space; great news for the 2019 Summer Fair and perhaps allowing for the return of the September Funday.

Farewell 2018

At the beginning of 2018, we saw the departure of Karen and hoped we could continue with the great work she had done. We headed into the year wide-eyed and a little green. Now, nearing the end of our first year at the helm, we are pleased to have (in the most part) survived and would like to thank the whole PTA team, the amazing staff and wider school community for helping to make 2018 such a successful year.

We are extremely grateful to have had bountiful support, feedback and encouragement throughout. We would like to make special mention to Katharine, who has been instrumental in the running of the PTA and who, we are very sad to say, is stepping down as Treasurer after more than 2 years in the post. Thanks Katharine!

Katharine has provided a breakdown of funds raised and distributed in the 2017/2018 year. As a brief summary we are extremely pleased to relay that the PTA team managed to raise a total of £14,500 between Sept 2017 – Aug 2018 and have raised £8,300 so far this school year. Along with kickstarting the Basement Renovation Project, we have donated funds to buy library books, to subsidise the panto trip and to buy more high-vis vest for school outings and bought cooling towers for classrooms for use in the summer months.

2018 was hard work but thoroughly satisfying and we never failed to be surprised and humbled at people's generosity, for their time and giving.

Onwards and upwards into 2019!
Nadeene and Claire