

Alban City School PTA

Chair's Report: January 2020 – January 2021

So, it's been a year since I took on the role of Chair from the wonderful Nadeene and Claire. And, what a year it's been. I was thinking I would ease myself into the role and mainly follow the well-established schedule of events, but...

Lo and behold, just two months into my "reign", having diligently started planning the year's events, COVID-19 hit and schools shut.

Luckily only the Friday before we'd been able to hold our much-loved Comedy Night, giving us one last chance to bundle into the pub for post-Comedy drinks. We'd also been able to squeeze in a Valentine's Bake Sale and a rather strange Nearly New Sale, with no one knowing whether it was worth investing in school summer dresses that year...

I am really proud of what we as a PTA achieved during lockdown. It would have been very easy to sit back and wait for normality to resume. But, thanks to the support, enthusiasm and imagination of some PTA'ers (and my discovery of a national PTA network) we managed to pull off two discos, two challenge parties and a Comedy Quiz night, all on Zoom. A lot of hard work went into achieving this, as we needed to introduce a new online ticket sales system (Ticket Tailor), an online payment system (PayPal - Julia may have been permanently scarred by this) and have many a practice disco with the lovely DJ Mole.

When children went back to school in September, life became a little easier in some respects, although we were still very limited in what we as a PTA could do. So we decided to make a big push on the 100 Club and were very happy to exceed our target and sell 138 numbers. We were also delighted with the response to our new style raffle, selling a record number of raffle tickets, no doubt thanks to the enthusiasm of all of our class reps and their creation of such beautiful hampers.

We were keen to ensure the children had some fun festive events to make up for the other things that they'd missed out on. So we decided to treat them to an online pantomime and a disco, worrying more about them having fun than making money (although big thanks are due to Bradford & Howley who stuck with us and sponsored various events). A kind parent offered to record messages from Santa, and we even managed to give to the local community by collecting no end of toys for those in need.

It's hard to know what this year will look like for us as a PTA, but I'd like to thank all of you for attending our Zoom PTA meetings, supporting the events and helping to make them happen. A special shout out to Julie, our IT/creative whizz kid. I really don't think we could have navigated this new virtual world without her. Another special shout out to Julia, who has been so much more than a Treasurer over this past year, and helped ease Julie and I into our new roles. She will be missed, but we're hoping she'll stick around in the background!

And to Mrs Stray, I can't even begin to imagine how stressful this past year has been for her. Yet she's still attended our meetings with a smile and helped us to make our events happen – we couldn't ask for a better Head.

Thank you, and here's to a good year ahead.

Lizzi Hodgkinson, Chair of the PTA
21 January 2021