



# Bassingbourn Village College

## Parents & Friends Association

### Chairman's report 2017-18

Firstly, as Chairman of the Parents and Friends Association I would like to welcome everyone here this evening and apologise for the delay in holding this event.

However, we are all gathered now as we welcome in a new year and I'd like to take this opportunity to look back over the past 15 months at some of our successes.

Our Quiz Night in February was an undoubted success with Vince the question master/mistress. We used the dining hall rather than the assembly hall and I'm pleased to say it was a sell-out and a big hit with parents and other supporters. This was a big event to organise and my thanks to everyone who was involved ... from bunting and barmaids to cooks and waitresses.

Unfortunately our plans to hold a Wine Tasting evening in June fell foul of the World Cup and had to be cancelled because of poor uptake. Lessons learned from that going forward will be to avoid holding an event straight after a school holiday which impedes the ability to publicise events and sell tickets.

Our Back to School Bash also had to be cancelled due to a weather warning issued by the Met office. Having struggled through poor weather the previous year we were all keen to avoid the same issues. However, feedback from families in school was that they were very disappointed so it would be good to try to carry this forward again in September.

As always we have provided a bar for school concerts which has been appreciated by staff and parents – as have the coffee bars at parent consultation evenings.

We were fortunate enough to be given an anonymous donation of £2,000 by a former BVC family and we used this to launch a Just Giving page. Despite our good intentions and a publicity push at every opportunity, the page failed to attract many donations and we have now closed the account to concentrate on a direct giving scheme which was launched to parents last term. Unfortunately this hasn't had a great uptake either so I would urge you all to spread the word. Information can be found on the school website.

Having such a large donation has allowed us to make some much-appreciated purchases from the staff wishlist. Staff are asked each summer to submit details of items they would like us to donate and this year we have been able to purchase two laptops for general use, a camera for the Art department, a resuscitation dummy for PE, cooking equipment for Technology, storage baskets for the Hive, stage lighting for Drama and general use and science equipment to support Biology and Physics lessons.

We also supported the year 10 and 11 exam students by providing funding towards their exam breakfasts – fruit, pastries and hot drinks were available for exam students who are notoriously bad at remembering to eat before they leave the house. This was very much appreciated by staff and students and helped towards a calm, friendly atmosphere as students gathered in Room 10 – the Breakfast room – each morning.

This year has also seen the introduction of new data protection rules and the challenges that has meant for us as an organisation. Despite many different interpretations of the new law, as a PFA we have been forced to adopt the guidelines laid down by Anglian Learning, our multi academy trust. No matter how much myself and Beth tried to find ways round it, rules is rules is rules and we have



# Bassingbourn Village College

## Parents & Friends Association

### Chairman's report 2017-18

been forced to find other ways of publicising our events to our members as we are no longer able to access parents directly through the school.

However, we have done a great deal of work on this, with the support of the school, and we now have a data base of parents' details that have positively opted in to receive information from us – two thirds of BVC families – and all future families will be given the opportunity to join our mailing list. We have devised a way that allows us to mention PFA events in the Head's weekly mailing with a li ... so much so that this method has now been circulated amongst the other Anglian Learning schools as a way to manage the restrictions.

Access to school in the evenings was problematic during the Autumn term because of a shortage of site staff – hence the inability to hold our AGM until now!

We continue to market events through our page on the school website along with Facebook and Twitter posts. Events are also advertised on the student powerpoint when appropriate. As always, word of mouth is always the best form of publicity so keep on spreading the word about our events.

I would like to pass on my thanks to Beth who has been a completely awesome powerhouse of energy, ideas and organisation. Not just my right hand woman but most definitely my equal in pushing through many of the ideas and events over the past two years.

George, too, deserves my thanks for his role as Treasurer and having to make sense of my bags of loose change and scribbled receipts.

And finally I would like to thank everyone for their support. When I became chairman two years ago I did so on the understanding that it would only be for two years. I believe change is good and essential for an organisation to thrive. I am also no longer a BVC parent. We need new ideas and new enthusiasm. I won't be leaving completely – is that good or bad?! – as I will continue to be the staff rep and point of contact within school.

As myself, George and Beth are all stepping down as office-bearers please do consider stepping into our boots ... there is as much or as little support here as you need!

Ann Lynn

8.1.19

*Postscript: As no office bearers were elected at the meeting it was agreed to move forward on an ad hoc basis with the current group of volunteers, seeking out individuals to organise one-off events. A treasurer is considered essential and so a wider appeal will be made for that.*