

# Our Lady's PTA

*A community of parents and teachers dedicated to helping the children of Our Lady's flourish through the provision of equipment and resources designed to advance education and well-being.*



## Newsletter

November 2021

### Welcome to a new term!

A big hello from the PTA in our first newsletter of the new term. We are delighted to be back and raring to go in what we hope will be a fairly normal school year! We have some exciting plans for projects, events and fundraising for the next year and we would love for as many of you as possible to get involved. No matter the contribution, every little bit of support helps us enrich the lives of the children at Our Lady's.

### PTA COMMITTEE ELECTED

#### An intro to the new committee

As is customary each year, our PTA committee was voted in during our AGM. We want to extend a huge thank you to Chris Bartup who stepped down as Chair and Parm Tatla who was joint secretary for their contribution and dedication during their time on the committee. Here are the details of this year's team...



#### Chair – Kirsty Maclean

I'm Kirsty, mum to Arthur in Year 4. I've been involved in the PTA since November 2019, and have managed 'The Great Garden Project' since Easter. I'm passionate about providing opportunities to enhance learning and create lasting memories for our children from their time at our wonderful school. I look forward to engaging you all in the events we have planned this year.



#### Co-Treasurer - Caroline Holt

Hi, I'm Caroline, Mum to Toby year 4 and Max in reception. I've been part of the PTA since 2018 and love helping out to get extra money for our fabulous little school. These funds are vital in providing children with things they might not otherwise have.



#### Co-Treasurer – Emma Bramwell

Hi, I'm Emma, mum to Olivia in year 4 and Jenson in year 2. I've helped out with PTA events since 2017, I'm looking forward to supporting the PTA to organise events that everyone can enjoy whilst also raising funds that all of the children benefit from.



#### Secretary – Nicky Rzeznik

I'm Nicky, mum to Zach in year 5. I've been involved in the PTA since my daughter started at Our Lady's in 2012. I've seen first hand how the money we raise really makes a huge difference to our children. From play equipment and sports kits to iPads and planetarium experiences we really punch above our weight thanks to our wonderful school community.

### 2021 MAJOR PROJECT - THE GREAT GARDEN PROJECT CONTINUES.....

Since April of 2021 the PTA has been digging deep to transform the prayer garden from an overgrown wilderness to an inspiring space where the children can learn and play. This work will continue throughout the next school year as there is still so much to be done. Amongst the many jobs will be the planting of 420 hedging saplings donated by the Woodland Trust. A mix of hazel, crab apple, hawthorn and dog rose, they will create a wonderful haven for wildlife when fully established. As always we are reliant on volunteers to come and dig, rake, sew and grow so please consider giving up a little time to support.

#### The transformation so far!



**We will be at the garden this Saturday (6 November) from 11am. Please join us to get some jobs done and enjoy a bonfire, bbq and refreshments.**  
**We hope to see you there.**



## 2020/2021 School Year in Review

**The last school year saw us all have to endure a second lock down with many restrictions impacting our ability to support the full range of activities we normally would.** We had no fete's, fayres, discos and bonnet parades which was heart breaking as we know how much the children and their families enjoy these events.

Covid, combined with funding cuts meant that our wonderful school faced some incredibly difficult challenges and we were determined to help weather the storm, and we will continue to do so.

Here are just a few of the things we did to support the school community, keep spirits up and try to provide some normality throughout the year...

### EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT



Lockdown demonstrated the reliance we all have on technology and exposed a shortfall in the school's provision. To help, we purchased 15 new iPads with tech support to enhance learning across all areas of the curriculum.

It's not just about tech! With the school's focus on reading, we funded a library subscription providing children in KS1 &2 with access to a full and rich selection of books all year.

### KEEPING UP THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

While many much loved PTA and school festivities were cancelled, we were determined to keep up the festive spirit!

We arranged for all year groups to watch the Belgrade Panto from the comfort of their class rooms. We moved our Christmas Fayre stalls online with opening of the first Our Lady's shop and we helped Santa deliver letters to school in a magical postbox!



### OUTDOOR ADVENTURE



As spending time outside became more important, we refurbished the climbing wall purchased in 2018 and began the overhaul of the prayer garden in to an inspiring and usable outdoor space. Thanks to the incredible volunteers we were able to open gardening club in the summer.

### FOND FAREWELLS!

We provided each year six leaver with a hoodie to mark their time at Our Lady's – its one of our favourite things to support, but we hate goodbyes.



### GRANT APPLICATIONS AND DONATIONS

Throughout the year, the PTA worked tirelessly on grant applications and donation bids to support the work being undertaken in the garden. We were lucky enough to secure donations from a range of businesses including Morrisons, The Woodland Trust and Thompson and Morgan. This work will continue throughout 2021/22

### FINANCIAL ROUND UP

If ever there was a year to use PTA funds to support the school, it was 2020/21. We have invested a significant amount of money at a time when our ability to fundraise has been severely impacted by COVID. As such we will be working hard to regain a healthy balance to continue providing this support to your children.

Our financial summary for the year is as follows:

Opening Balance in Sept 2020: £9725.45

Money generated in 2020/21 school year: £1524.55

Money invested in 2020/21 school year : £8721.71

**Closing Balance in August 2021: £2528**



## SOME DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



Photos for this year's school calendars will be taken on **November 16<sup>th</sup>**.  
If you normally do PE that day, please come to school in uniform and bring PE kits with you.

### Our Lady's PTA non-uniform days In aid of Christmas fund raising

#### Wed 24th November

Please consider donating:  
Infants: Chocolates for our tombola  
Juniors: A bottle for our Water & Wine stall  
(please note we do not require water donations)

#### Fri 3rd December

Please bring a festive food or drink item for our raffle hampers



### Forthcoming PTA Meeting Dates

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November** – from 3pm in the School Staff Room, please come along when you can (children can watch a supervised film in an adjacent room)

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November** – 8pm at the Red Lion, Hunningham

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November** – 8pm at the Duck on the Pond, Long Itchington



### COME JOIN US!

Our Lady's PTA are a really friendly bunch and we would love to welcome some new faces to our meetings and increase representation across the school. If you'd like to know more please speak to the current PTA committee or check in with your year group to get the lowdown from anyone who's already involved.