**St. Fiacc’s Parents’ Association Meeting**

**Tuesday October 06th 2015**

**St. Fiacc’s NS Staffroom**

**In Attendance:**

K. McDonnell (Secretary), M. Redmond (Treasurer), A.O’ Suilleabhain, A. Matthews, S. Lidierth, D. Byrne, L. Fleming, J. Morrissey (Acting Chair), M. Cowan, E. Klimkowska, M.Klimkowska, R. Morawski, John Brennan (School Principal)

**Apologies:** none

Joanne opened the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and introduced the agenda as follows:

* Chairperson’s report
* Financial report
* Principal’s address
* Graduation Mass
* Election of the new committee
* Any other business
* Refreshments

Joanne welcomed the new attendees and described the activities of the PA over the past year highlighting the expenditure of €7000 on the new school library. She also explained the ongoing activities of the PA over the past few years:

* Grandparent’s Day - refreshments
* Easter Draw fundraiser
* Communion and confirmation parties
* Graduation gifts for the children
* Active Schools Week - refreshments
* Book Fair
* Paying for the 6th class school tour bus
* Paying for the bus for school choir
* Sponsoring jerseys for the school football teams
* Donations towards school music/sport and science equipment
* Albs hire

**Book Fair:** Suggestion by the Principal Mr Brennan that the book fair is held every second year to get best response. PA has contributed significantly to books and reading for the school to date.

**Albs Hire:** None rented in 2015, suggested that some smaller schools only have confirmation every second year. Confirmation date is May 28th, possibility of hiring albs out in 2016. No commitment from any attendee to manage this.

Autograph Book for 2015 graduates: little feedback on the children’s reaction to this gift as a memento of their time in St. Fiacc’s. This will be revisited for the graduating class of 2016.

**Financial Report:**

Maria passed around the financial report for the year. €3745.95 is the balance in bank after expenditure of just over €10,000 last year. This expenditure was particularly large in comparison to previous years as it was felt that with so many of the committee leaving after putting in so many years of fundraising and assisting with events that they should have a choice in how the money was spent in their tenure.

**Fundraising Activities**:

Joanne invited suggestions for events for fundraising activities. Shirley suggested a school sports day, this was seconded by Mary suggesting the PA could sponsor the refreshments or medals. The Principal agreed that this was a good idea but can be frustrating for the children as the same sporty children tend to win the races. There was a suggestion that an alternative family event should be organised to create stronger links between the parents and the school; such as a Family Fun Day with a carnival atmosphere, with sports stations, bouncy castles, and an ice cream van.

##### The Principal suggested a Hallowe’en day where the pupils design their own costumes and pay €1/€2 as an October Fundraiser. Karolyn enquired whether the PA would offer a prize to junior and senior side for this.

Rafal put forward an idea about Family Bingo or a table quiz, this idea was developed as ideas around where it would be held (school hall or St. Fiacc’s Hall) and the emphasis on building a school community rather than a big fundraiser.

Donna asked whether the school calendar, if it was to be done again this year, could be better quality. All agreed that the Principal has made great improvements to the school website with the school blog and photographs of the school activities. The school has acquired a colour photocopier. Shirley suggested that perhaps the school would do the school calendar as they have access to a colour printer. This idea will be revisited at the next meeting.

**Information Technology**

Aonghus asked the Principal whether fundraising could be targeted towards a particular project. the Principal responded by explaining the value of upgrading Information and Computer Technology equipment and that having a few IPads for each classroom would be a viable project to work towards.

Shirley asked whether Samsung tablets would suffice in lieu of IPads as they are less expensive.

It was agreed that if the school was to work towards technology improvements it would be best to do it right and the software for IPads was simply better.

**Principal’s Address**

* Principal thanked new attendees and emphasised the importance of the flow of communication between the school and parents in the community
* He emphasised his belief that the school website is an important tool to keep the community up to date with school activities
* He advised of a new monthly newsletter (paper copy) for academic year 2015-2016, and the text-a-parent service to link in with parents
* Feedback and communication between the Board of Management and Parents Association is crucial to foster better relationships
* The new library and the ‘checking out’ system should be operational in the school next week.
* Explained that ICT is being updated all the time in educational techniques and would like St. Fiaccs to work towards having visualisers in each class which will result in less dependence on textbooks. This idea was welcomed by all attendees.
* Would like the PA to look towards providing new PE equipment as the existing stock is tired.
* Advised that the PA will be kept up to date about school policies that are discussed at board level - subject to relevance and confidentiality.

**Election of the PA Committee 2015-2016**

Treasurer: Maria was nominated by Donna to continue her tenure as Treasurer, unopposed. Seconded by Joanne.

Secretary: Karolyn was nominated by Maria as secretary, unopposed. Seconded by Donna.

Chairperson: Mary put forward Joanne as Chairperson. Joanne advised that she was Chairperson for 4 years in the past, however in the absence of any other nominations she would run for the post. Seconded by Karolyn.

Aonghus was nominated by Joanne for vice-chairperson with a view to running for chairperson in the future. Seconded by Karolyn.

The next meeting was set for Tuesday November 17th, and included on the agenda will be the possibility of booking St Fiacc’s Hall for a School Family Christmas Party event.

Meeting Closed 8.35pm