

Lismullen AGM

21st September 2022

8pm

Attendees:

Orla Maguire (outgoing Chairperson), Sandra Anderson (outgoing vice Chairperson), Jennie Farrell (outgoing Treasurer), Ruth Kerrigan (outgoing Secretary), Emma Jane Campbell O'Brien (outgoing PRO), Melissa Kelly, Sinead Allen, Fiona Dempsey, Gillian Clarke, Naomi Mooney, Margaret Donnellan, Catherine McAteer, Eimear Ui Raghellaigh, Ruth Chambers, Eimear McGrane, Joanne Hyland, Niamh Regan, Joan Martin, Niamh Croke, Niamh Doyle, Michelle Riblet, Edel Freeman, Martin Biro, David Kieran, Fergal O'Flynn, Alan Kerrigan

1. Chairperson Opening Address

Opening address by Orla Maguire, welcoming the parents and announcing that she is stepping down this year as Chairperson of the Parents Association.

Orla introduced and welcomed our new Principal Ms. Violet Molloy to the school on behalf of the PA and the parents of the school.

Orla also introduced the other committee members, Sandra Anderson (vice chairperson), Jennie Farrell (Treasurer), Ruth Kerrigan (Secretary), Emma Jane Campbell O'Brien (PRO). Apart from Jennie, all officers are stepping down from their positions this year; Jennie will stay on the PA for one more year to handover to a new Treasurer.

Orla thanked all the parents for showing up this evening and mentioned it has been the first year in 3 years that we have been able to hold an AGM, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Chairperson Review on 21/11 and achievements throughout COVID

Our last fundraiser before COVID took place with the Ladies Night in February 2020; however we still managed to fundraise for the school during the COVID period, which included raising money for the outdoor classroom as well as the buddy benches. The outdoor classroom was particularly relevant for teaching during COVID and the buddy benches are a fantastic initiative for inclusiveness in the school.

As a result of the pandemic it was difficult to organize fund raising events, however Orla mentioned some notable fundraisers that managed to go ahead regardless including:

- Annual school marathon
- Christmas Cards
- Colour Run
- Intel funding support

The PA fundraises for the school and then a number of initiatives are supported by the school. In the last 3 years, monies raised from the PA have been able to support many initiatives including the following:

- Activities such as tennis and swimming
- Buddy benches and outdoor classroom

- New books for the library
- Communion party
- Santa and his grotto
- Selection boxes
- Online panto for JI and SI classes
- 6th Class Tour, Graduation Hoodies and End of Year Party
- Ice cream van for sports day

In addition to the above, thanks to Eimear McGrane, we were also able to secure funding for a sensory garden from Tara Mines. Other initiatives such as a raffle to support St Vincent De Paul instead of the usual bake sale, also went ahead.

3. Treasurers Report

Our treasurer Jennie Farrell gave her report.

This is the first full report since 2019 due to the pandemic. We started 2019 on a high collecting €6k for the marathon. We had also attempted to run our annual fun run, which then was cancelled due to COVID. We offered refunds to those who had entered and/or sponsored the event, however many did not want their refund and were happy to support the school. As a result, we raised €2k for an event that didn't end up happening.

In total, over the last 3 years, we've raised €35k from all of the various fundraising events. This has come from all of the families in the school, contributing to the various initiatives that are put forward by the PA and the PA is very grateful for the parents support in this regard.

Some notable spend of funds by the School include, €8k on library books, swimming and tennis lessons, the buddy benches and the outdoor classroom.

The Communion was a bit more expensive over the last two years as we organised a live stream for all the parents and grandparents who weren't able to attend due to Covid restrictions. We also still continued the tradition of the communion boxes, however instead of dropping into the school for a party directly after the Communion, the pupils had a party in their classroom on Monday after the Communion instead. We hope in time, the Communion and the party will go back to normal.

4. Election of new Parents Association Positions

In addition of officers and members of the PA, we also have the Happy to Help List, the Book Rental Scheme and the Post Office Savings scheme where we need volunteers to help. A list was passed around the room asking for any parents who wish to volunteer for any of the groups to sign-up.

The Book Rental Scheme was introduced by the parents of the school a number of years back. One of the key people who have run this scheme, Joan Martin, is also finishing up with the school and as such we are looking for someone to support Edel Bowman who will take over from Joan and has also worked on these scheme for many years.

Joan mentioned a few words on the book rental scheme:

- It has been running for many years and now runs very smoothly and there is a good system in place

- In January they meet the teachers to go through what has changed and if any new books need to be bought
- It is done in their own time, so not a big commitment and can be done in hours that suit you
- Helpers are needed in June to take the old books back and clean them before they are reissued to new pupils for the next school year

Post Office Savings Scheme is also looking for a few volunteers and Fiona Dempsey offered a few words on how it ran:

- The scheme encourages the children to save
- Stations are set up to collect the money and the children come over to the staff room in groups to give in their savings
- The PA keep the books and come in on a Friday to collect money from the children
- The PA then bring the money to the post office on behalf of the children
- In total, it takes about 2 hours to run on a Friday morning
- We need 4 people on the Friday morning and are looking for a few more volunteers

Elections were then taken for new positions, with the following nominations, proposers and seconders. There was only one volunteer for each position and as such, there was no need for an election.

Chairperson:

- Nominee Eimear Ui Raghellaigh
- Proposed by Fiona Dempsey
- Seconded Joanne Hyland

Vice Chairperson

- Nominee Sinead Allen
- Proposed by Melissa Kelly
- Seconded by Emma Jane Campbell O'Brien

Treasurer:

- Nominee Naomi Mooney
- Proposed by Margaret Donnellan
- Seconded by Jennie Farrell

Secretary:

- Nominee Margaret Donnellan
- Proposed by Ruth Kerrigan
- Seconded by Ruth Chambers

PRO Officer:

- Nominee Melissa Kelly
- Proposed by Sandra Anderson
- Seconded by Naomi Mooney

As the elections were closed, Orla Maguire finished her address by thanking her co members of the PA and the parents of the school who have helped quietly in the background to make sure the events were safe and a success for the children.

She also thanked Mr. O Donoghue and Bernie and the teachers for their complete and unwavering support for everything the PA tried to do over her time as Chairperson and the initiatives that they also put forward.

She finished by wishing Ms. Molloy the best of luck with her new position.

5. Principals Address

Ms. Molloy addressed the room and thanked Orla for the warm address.

She mentioned that when she was researching into the school, the one thing that stood out was the PA and all the work that the PA have done in the past and she's very happy to be part of the school and leading it going forward.

She would like to focus on some of the following areas:

- Promoting positive behavior in schools and rewarding good behavior
- Promoting an inclusive school where all needs are being met
- Promoting neuro diversity
- Digital learning – she mentioned a need to upgrade ICT equipment for teachers and students including interactive whiteboards and laptops for the teachers as well as digital supports for the students
- Increased lines of communication from the school to the parents
- She is also looking to set up a students council, to enable the students to have a voice within their own school

She mentioned that she is very lucky with the team that she has and will be appointing another Assistant Principal in the school, which will be an additional role to add to Ms Dempsey (Deputy Principal) and Ms Galligan and Ms Flanagan (Assistant Principals).

After every Board Meeting, Ms Molloy will send out an update to the parents regarding any points of interest and especially with respect to the construction of the new school.

She also mentioned that she sent a wish list from the teachers to the parents and is looking forward to seeing what comes back.

In terms of the busses for school events, she mentioned it is very challenging to organize, and is hoping that this is something that the PA will continue to contribute towards to take the pressure off the parents having to fund this themselves.

With respect to the new build, she currently doesn't have much information and they haven't met the Board of Management yet. The status is that the school is currently at stage 3, it has gone to tender and unfortunately when the design team opened and reviewed the tenders, the tenders weren't compliant and none were accepted by the design team. As such, it has gone back out to tender again, which will be opened again mid-October. The hope will be that we get enough tenders through the second time and that this time they are compliant. Overall it is a very disappointing situation.

She finished by saying thank you for the warm welcome and opened up the floor for Q&A.

Q: Will the new school have a sports hall

A: When we get to stage 4, she is hoping to put up plans in the car park to show what each stage of the build will be; unfortunately they can't be shared with the parents via email

Q: Will there be sensory rooms in the new school

A: No - as it is a generic build design, there will be 16 classrooms and no dedicated sensory room however they are hoping to be able to create one but it will be space dependent

Q: Should we not start making some noise to TDs now?

A: We will have to wait and see what the outcome of the tenders is. If there isn't enough interest or if the tenders aren't compliant, that is not the Department of Education's fault, they have no control over that.

Q: Lismullen has always been known for not asking for parents for a voluntary contribution, will you continue that tradition?

A: She hadn't been aware of how much the parents fundraise before joining the school and as such yes she would hope to continue with this tradition

Q: Given the school is in a position for a new build does that block us from asking for improvement grants?

A: She is looking some emergency funding to do some minor works to improve the school on health and safety grounds

Q: The bus drop offs and car park are very bad in the morning. Have you heard of anything about this?

A: She had heard about bus drivers giving out to parents and agreed this isn't acceptable

Q: Suggestion to do a staggered start and supervision in the yard in the morning to alleviate pressure on the car park

A: She mentioned that a staggered start could be an option but supervision doesn't start until 9.10; she will discuss it with the teachers

Q: Can we put out the message again to reminding parents and children to walk on the red footpath in the car park

A: She will look into this