

## **MINUTES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

### **SCOIL BHRIDE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION**

**13<sup>th</sup> October2020**

AGM was delayed by one month this year due to the challenges of COVID-19. The meeting was held as a virtual meeting via 'Google Meet'. Parents were notified via a message on Aladdin and a post on the school website.

#### **Chairperson's Welcome Address**

Hello and welcome everyone to our first virtual meeting online. I hope that you are all staying safe during these unprecedented times and that your children are settling back into school. My name is Colette O'Byrne and I'm the current Chairperson of the parents' association.

We will start the meeting with an update from our School Principal, Eimear Hennessy and then we'll get into the AGM business

#### **Principal's Address**

Good evening everyone and welcome to the annual Parents' Association A.G.M. Although very different at least we can meet in some capacity so the good work of the PA can continue.

We are very lucky here in Scoil Bhríde to have a very supportive and committed Parent's Association. The PA has always been and continues to be a great support to the school and has helped in so many ways to enrich the children's experience of school life.

Unfortunately, lots of the PA activities were not possible last year – the graduation party, the communion party and the lovely, sponsored walk in Donadea. We live in hope that we will all return to normal life soon. Now we must learn to exist with this virus in our new 'normal'.

Our focus now is keeping our school open in line with the government roadmap. A huge amount of work went into the 'reopening of our schools' and it was a success. We are delighted to have happy laughing children back in our school again.

While the novelty of being back in school may have worn off a bit with the darker mornings and the colder weather – the children are genuinely happy to be in school.

The children playing together in class bubbles in the yard is working well. There are fewer accidents in the yard and the children are playing with their own class.

Financially this will be a very challenging year for the school. We have no rental income coming in from after school activities and there will be no fundraising activities. We are faced with enhanced cleaning costs -the money received from the Department will not be sufficient to cover these costs.

We have a beautiful library in our school – thanks to the hard work and fundraising efforts of the Parents Association. Yesterday I sent a message to the parent body asking for donations of books for the library. The children are making great use of this facility, but we need lots of books to keep a continuous supply of books available to them. With lots of classes using it and books quarantined for three days there are lots of books off the shelves at any given time – we need to get lots of

books on the shelves to give the children choice. With access to public libraries limited now – it is vital to keep our school library stocked so the children have lots of reading material. Hopefully, this way we can get lots of books without costing us money as we really do not have it at the moment.

The Parents Association also funded over €3500 worth of PE equipment a couple of years ago. This is also proving very beneficial.

Presently we are focusing on the Fundamental Movement Skills in PE. Ms. Young is currently preparing a box for each class with basic equipment that can be used for PE after the Halloween break. The Junior and Senior Infant classes are trialling this before the midterm. It is possible to make up kits for each class as we have lots of equipment available to us thanks to the Parents Association. We only had to purchase some materials to supplement these kits. Our Inspector has advised minimum use of PE equipment. We can only do the best we can during the current times.

We are looking at letting outside coaches back into the school. The Board will review this at their next meeting, but a lot will depend on how things play out with the virus over the course of the next few weeks.

We are very lucky that there is a strong working relationship between the school and the P.A and this helps greatly in endeavours for the good of the girls and the good of the school. I know Colette is always available – at the end of the phone or by email. A little different to our Friday afternoon meetings but we are keeping in regular contact.

The Parents Association have always been very active in their fundraising efforts which have provided much needed supports for the school. Again COVID-19 has put a stop to a lot of our fundraising activities. Our sponsored walk in Donadea did not get to take place. We will have to wait and see how things progress in the weeks and months ahead. It is very difficult to plan during these challenging times.

A special word of thanks to Marina on the PA for all her work keeping the website up to date and especially for posting all the letters and materials as we prepared to return to school. Thank you to those who helped with the teas and coffees at the communion's and confirmations. It was really appreciated.

Thank you to Colette and Caoimhe for organising the first virtual meeting tonight.

On behalf of the pupils, the staff, the Board of Management, and myself I want to thank the members of the Parents Association for all your time, energy, and support. The work you do is very much appreciated.

I hope this new school year, while different will be a positive one for all of us. Our focus is the health and wellbeing of our girls. Happy students learn.

The Chairperson thanked Eimear for attending and for all the hard work the teachers and all of the school staff have undertaken this year to ensure a smooth return to school in challenging times.

The Chairperson then proceeded to the remaining AGM Business and outlined the purpose of the meeting:

The purpose of the AGM is to update you all on activities and events that the PA committee have been involved in during the past year. This past year our activities came to a grinding halt on March 12th when we were forced into a national lockdown so I am very mindful that the picture we are presenting is a paler imitation of what the PA committee usually are involved in.

We also use this meeting to elect new members to the PA. Each year committee members stand down and if they so choose put themselves forward for re-election. We currently have 19 people who will continue in the committee from last year. Under our constitution we can have 22 in our committee, so we have space for 3 new members.

I'd like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all members of the current PA for their commitment and valued contribution last year. A special thanks to our 2 outgoing members, Eileen O'Sullivan and Sylvia Waters for all their work on the PA committee over the years.

I'd also like to thank Sinead Kelly – the teachers rep who has been our rep for the past year. Sinead will be replaced as teachers rep this year by Lorraine Johnston and we very much look forward to working with Lorraine.

I'd also like to thank all the teachers, school principal and Board of Management, all of whom, together with the Parents' Association (PA) work together for the benefit of the school and the children in particular.

Before we go through the agenda, for the benefit of those new to the school or to these meetings, I'd like to read a short section from the Parents Association constitution (a copy of which can be found on the PA website) which explains what the PA is and does .....

PA Association Membership and Aims section was read to the assembled parents. This document is [published on the school website](#)

### **Minutes of last year's AGM (2019/2020 Academic year)**

A copy of the minutes from last year's AGM are available on the school [website](#).

Chairperson asked if there were any matters arising from the minutes last year that anyone wanted to raise now?

- There were no matters raised by the meeting attendees.
- Chairperson indicated that the minutes would therefore be taken as read

**Proposed by** – Mandy Connolly

**Seconded by** – Caoimhe Gaine

## Secretary's Address

Hi members, I am just going to give you a quick outline of some of the activities we organise during the year.

The Parents' Association committee had a busy year up until the break in March due to Covid 19. We held our monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of each month here in Scoil Bhríde and various events were organised throughout this time.

We had great support from everyone on the Committee, including new members who joined this time last year. It was great to see such a big turnout each month at the meetings. The Committee took part in PA training given by the National Parents Council in February.

I would also like to acknowledge all the people on our 'PA Helper's list' who were a great support at our various events - a big thank you to everyone for all their hard work.

- **Fundraising:**
  - Our fundraising events this year were:
  - 2 'no uniform' days December and February.
  - Our main annual fundraiser - the sponsored walk, had to be cancelled this year due to Covid 19.
- **Other events:**
  - As always, the PA committee organise various other events during the year which benefit all the girls in the school:
  - In December we organised Christmas entertainment for all the classes. A special thanks to Santa who paid an individual visit to each classroom in the school. The children got to chat to Santa and sing Christmas songs, all appeared to really enjoy the intimate nature of this visit.
  - This year each class teacher was given funds by the PA to purchase presents for their class, these were then presented to the class by Santa with a tub of sweets for each child, causing great excitement and Christmas cheer.
  - The Confirmation and First Communion planned for March and May were obviously cancelled but got to take place in September/ October. The flowers in the church for both these ceremonies were funded by the Parents Associations of both Scoil Bhríde and Scoil Phádraig. Unfortunately, we were unable to host the usual parties afterwards but the PA did help provide well needed refreshments for the teachers and Fr. Paul on the day.
  - The school uniform exchange and staff appreciation lunch also had to be cancelled.
  - The 6th class graduation ceremony takes place towards the end of June to mark the end of 8 years in primary school. This was able to take place virtually and we produced a yearbook for the occasion, which was presented to each girl and is a lovely keepsake of their time in Scoil Bhríde.

- The school website aims to update parents on various issues such as, dates of school holidays, various pa activities, children’s achievements, school policies, school photographs, school events, National parent council events etc.
- Also, Marina uploads the school newsletter each term. A huge thank you to Marina for all her hard work, on keeping the website up to date, she does an immense amount of work on it, keeping us all well informed on all school info and activities. So please check it out.

### **Treasurers Address**

Noel provided the Treasurer’s address and indicated that the balance in the PA account is much lower than normal due to the impact of COVID-19 and the impact of not being able to run the Annual Sponsored Walk earlier this year. He asked that fundraising be a priority on the agenda for the November meeting of the PA Committee and asked everyone present to think of innovative ways for fundraising under the limitations of COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines. The Income & Expenditure Statement below was provided and will be posted on the [School Website](#).

<b>SCOIL BHRIDE PARENTS ASSOCIATION</b>	
<b><u>Income &amp; Expenditure Statement 1st September 2020</u></b>	
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	
Valentine Day	€ 374.55
Winter Woolies	€ 393.05
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b><u>€767.60</u></b>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>	
Bank Charges & Stamp Duty	€ 145.75
Parents Association Insurance	€ 205.00
NPC Membership/Training	€ 100.00
NPC Talk	€ 50.00
Christmas Expenses	€ 1690.00 (Presents, Entertainment, Refreshments)
Graduation Expenses	€ 400.00 (Booklets,etc)
Staff & Committee Gifts	€ 100.00 (Retirements)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b><u>€2690.75</u></b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME/EXPENDITURE 2019</b>	
<b>Expenditure exceeded income</b>	<b><u>€ 1923.15</u></b>
<b><u>STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT</u></b>	
Opening Balance 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019	€ 3263.00
Total Income 2019/2020	€767.60
Total Expenditure 2019/2020	<b><u>€2690.75</u></b>

Closing Balance 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020

€ 1339.85

30<sup>th</sup> September 2020

### Election of New Committee

The chair then moved to elect the new committee for 2020/2021. 19 people will continue in the committee from last year. Under our constitution we can have 22 in our committee, so we have space for 3 new members. One new parent, Triona Quinlan, expressed interest in joining the committee.

The chair read the list of committee members as outlined below:

1. Mandy Connolly
2. Ciara Early
3. Marina Jordan
4. Rita Mackey
5. Jenny Mousley
6. Siobhan O'Brien
7. Colette O'Byrne
8. Sharon O'Rourke
9. Noel Delaney
10. Caoimhe Gaine
11. Ciara Carroll
12. Dervilla Callan
13. Avril Dixon
14. Cara Ronan
15. Niamh Doolan
16. Ailish Sheehan
17. Mags Lennon
18. Leonie Wilson
19. Evelyn Andrews
20. Triona Quinlan

Chairperson requested that the committee be elected:

**Proposed by** – Colette O'Byrne

**Seconded by** – Mandy Connolly

The Chair then indicated that the election of officer roles will happen at the next Parents' Association Meeting on 03Nov20. That meeting will also be held virtually. Details will be shared with committee members ahead of time.

Those parents who expressed an interest in joining the PA Helper's list will be added to the PA Helper's What's App group in the coming week or so.

A reminder that all Committee Members and PA Helpers must be Garda Vetted in order to participate in PA and school activities. Details on the vetting process can be accessed on the Scoil Bhríde Website.

## **School News**

Louise Johnston (Teacher's Representative) provided the following updates on what the pupils have been doing since the return to school:

### **Rm. 23**

All of the children in Room 23 settled back really well. They are getting used to wearing their masks on the bus and washing their hands. They have been learning about Autumn animals. They wrote reports on bats, hedgehogs and squirrels. Some of the students are non-verbal so they used pictures to show what squirrels eat, where they live and how they hibernate for the winter. Some of the students were able to present their report to the class. They are doing a lot of mindfulness, movement breaks and TACPAC to help them deal with the anxiety that comes with big changes. TACPAC is a music therapy programme. Last month, one of the SNAs left to study teaching. There is a new SNA in Room 23, Sharon, and she is fitting so well into the team.

### **Junior Infants**

The new junior infants have settled well into life in 'Big School'. Having had such a long break since play school there was a lot to remember about life in school such as lining up, hands up and turn taking. But the girls have taken it all in their stride. They have learned 8 new sounds and are beginning to blend sounds to make words. They are very excited to now have homework and are looking forward to dressing up for Halloween.

### **Senior Infants**

Senior Infants are enjoying being back at school. They read Pig in the Pond and sequenced the story. They are also talking about signs of Autumn and went on an Autumn hunt around the school. They have learned all about their senses too. Ms. Heneghan's class are starting to use BeeBots next week in class.

### **1st Class**

The children are all delighted to be back to school in 1st class after an anxious start. They are learning about the season of Autumn. They learned the changes that happen in Autumn (trees, weather, getting ready for hibernation) and they took an Autumn walk around the school grounds to spot signs of Autumn and collect some Autumn leaves/conkers. They also used their leaves to make Autumn leaf prints for art. Ms. Walsh's class will be setting up their own class wormery over the coming days. They are all looking forward to dressing up for Halloween.

## **2nd class**

All of the second class girls are so excited to be back in school with our friends. We are working really hard to have fun together while keeping each other safe and are really excited about our communion later on this year! We have been learning about castles and tourist attractions in Ireland this week and we made mindful glitter jars last week in art

## **3rd class**

The girls in 3rd class have started Accelerated Reading. They are reading books from the school library at their own level and are doing tests on them. Ms. McKenna's class have started Guided Reading and Ms. Nurney's class will be doing this later in the year. They have also started their Halloween Art.

## **4th Class**

Ms. Carberry's 4th class are enjoying settling back to school. They have been busy learning about resilience in SPHE. They are learning about Counties in Ireland and have designed their own brochures for each county. In History, they have been inspired by Amelia Earhart's story.

Ms. Shine's 4th class in room 12 have been making the most of the mild weather and doing PE and Drama activities outside where possible. They have been learning about endangered and protected animals in SESE. The girls designed posters to promote the work of the ISPCA.

Ms. May's 4th class have settled back really well. They have been doing plenty of art and SPHE. They have also been trying out Microsoft Teams at home, just to get used to it. They love the new library system and they welcomed a new student to their class. They are looking forward to some 'Maths Art' this week for maths week.

## **5th class**

The girls in Ms. Sheehan's class have been watching News2Day every day. Last week, they sent in an answer to the question of the week and it was read out on Friday's show.

Ms. Johnson's 5th class are settling in well and working hard, they have also produced some lovely art.

## **6th class**

The girls have settled back well into school. Although they have had to adapt to many changes around the school, they are happy to be with all of their friends and are working well in class. During September, they created projects on a European country and presented these projects in front of the class. Mr. McConnell and I were very impressed with the amount of time and effort that went into these projects. We have also started our Scrapbook of Memories which will include memories from each month in school. This will be a lovely book for the girls to have at the end of the year. We also understand the importance of mindfulness and wellbeing this year, in particular.



The girls in Room 1 are keeping a wellbeing journal and completing different activities for 5-10 minutes every morning.

**Any Other business**

That concluded the formal agenda for the meeting. The Chairperson asked the parents present if there were any other topics. There were no topics raised.

There being no further business to attend to, the Chairperson thanked everyone for their attention and closed the meeting at 20:50