



### **Chair's Report 2019-2020 *(delayed due to Covid)***

In contrast to the previous year, sadly The Friends of School have had a very quiet year due to the pandemic and national lockdown and so have been unable to undertake much fundraising activity.

We started off well. The first half-term of the 2019 school year we held a Parent Social evening to welcome new Year 7 parents. This was held in the STEM centre for the first time and was a very well-attended and enjoyable evening, giving new parents the opportunity to meet others in their forms and start to forge new friendships for their sons' school life ahead.

As well as another of the popular Baking Masterclasses, kindly run by Mrs Zachariah in the school Food Tech department where participants made a Meringue Roulade, we held another new event. The Christmas Pudding Stir-Up was held on the Thursday after Stir-Up Sunday, the day when families traditionally come together to make and stir-up their Christmas Pudding ready for steaming.

This was organised in line with our dual objective of bringing the school community together in addition to our fundraising activities, A number of families took up the opportunity to come along to the STEM centre where they were provided with a recipe and all the ingredients to make either a traditional or vegan / alcohol-free pudding. Having spent an enjoyable hour mixing the puddings these were then taken home to be steamed ready for Christmas. It was a really enjoyable evening in a relaxed, festive atmosphere and we were really pleased to see so many dads and children joining in.

We also held our second Comedy Night in November, jointly with WGGs. Both ticket sales and spend on the bar were disappointing compared with the first event in 2018, resulting in 50% less profit. I would certainly like to hold another joint event in 2021-2022, but both schools' Committees need to discuss what type of event might be most suitable.

After providing a bar and other refreshments at the Autumn Music Concerts and the School Play before Christmas, January saw the second re-gifting appeal when parents were asked to donate unwanted Christmas presents to be used as raffle prizes at various events throughout the year. We didn't get as large a response as we had done the previous year, however we did receive some very nice donations. One of the Executive Committee spent some time transforming all the donations into a variety of hampers to be used as raffle prizes at events throughout the year. Due to a lack of events in 2020 these are still safely stored for use once school concerts and other events can run once again.

Unbeknown to us, the annual Quiz Night at the beginning of March was to be our last event of 2020. This was once again held on the top floor of the STEM Centre with food provided by Punjabi Gourmet and Mr Cooksey doing an excellent job as Quizmaster. A fun evening was had which resulted in a profit of £1800. We plan to run the Quiz Night slightly earlier than usual in 2021, in November (instead of March) to kick-start the fundraising with a popular and successful event after a difficult year.

The uniform shop has continued to be a reliable source of income as well as a valuable service to parents. We now have a regular team of volunteers who open the shop each Wednesday after school and the first Saturday of each half-term. However, a couple more volunteers to help out on a rota basis would be really welcomed. We moved into our new shop in the Cloisters (opposite the entrance to the James Theatre) at the beginning of January and the volunteers worked really hard sorting all donations and making the shop presentable and workable. It has been

harder for parents to donate uniform this past year and this, coupled with a need for boys to come to school in their games kits, means we are running low on some items such as tracksuits and games kits, especially in smaller sizes. A call-out for donations will be made to Year 11 parents before the end of this half-term and hopefully as restrictions ease parents will be able to take donations into reception more flexibly.

Another source of fundraising is the Family Draw, which is our lottery-style draw taking place each term. This had been somewhat overlooked for several years and was very under-subscribed as a result. So, at the beginning of the last 2018 academic year, one of the Exec. Committee members, Jean Ryba, took on the role of administrating and managing the Family Draw. This, coupled with a re-designed flyer and more promotion, has seen the number of families who participate increase. As well as increasing the money it contributes to school funds, it means the termly prize draw pot has increased giving larger cash prizes! We would love more families to take part in the Draw. It only costs £25 a year and you stand a chance of winning a cash prize each term. If you'd like to sign up, please email [familydraw@friendsofwbgs.org](mailto:familydraw@friendsofwbgs.org)

When more normal times return, we will hopefully be able to resume our regular support of school activities including serving drinks at Parent Welcome & Information evenings; providing a bar and raffle at the Music Concerts and Drama Productions; and giving much-needed refreshments to staff at Parent-Teacher evenings.

All of these, as well as our bigger events, are dependent on volunteers. We have a small, but very important group of parents who enable the Friends of School to continue to exist and provide all of the activities we do, and I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to each and every one of you – I could not do this role without your hard work, help and support.

We have had a change-over within key roles in the Committee, with a new Secretary starting recently and a new Treasurer to be appointed at this AGM. I look forward to continuing to work with you both. I myself still really enjoy the Chair role and I am keen to stay in post for now, hoping to have the opportunity to run some more events this term and next. However, I intend, reluctantly, to stand down at the next AGM in November 2021. My work situation has changed, and I will no longer have the time or flexibility to continue in the role. For that reason, we are looking to recruit a Vice-Chair, or someone who would like to consider standing as Chair from November 2021.

As well as filling this position, we are as always looking to find more people who would like to get involved with the Friends. Whatever your skill or interest, and however much time you can give, even if just half an hour – it will always be welcomed and very much appreciated. Please do get in touch via [info@friendsofwbgs.org](mailto:info@friendsofwbgs.org) and we'd love to welcome you on board to help achieve our shared goal of raising funds to provide resources that enrich the school life and education of our sons.

Thank you for your continued support.

Amanda Rafferty – Chair, Friends of WBGS  
April 2021 (delayed from November 2020)  
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