



RUSSELL LOWER SCHOOL

PTA Head teacher's Report – September 2021

Firstly, I must start by saying a huge thank you to you all for moving the meeting to this week. Originally, the meeting was planned for last week which was exceptionally busy for me both personally and at school. Thank you for all being so flexible – especially as it is Nina and Amy's birthdays today. Happy Birthday to you both, and thank you.

The last month in school last academic year was very busy indeed and we are extremely grateful to the PTA for their enormous contribution to the very end of term.

Thank you for arranging such a wonderful 'litter pick' in June. The skies were blue and the whole community came together to tidy up Ampthill. I was so sorry to have missed it and will definitely be joining everyone in October. I know it had a huge impact around the town, and we are keen to make it a regular feature.

This built on and developed further from the Sustainability Day and Sunflower Competition. All the children benefitted from growing tomato plants outside their classrooms in the summer term – and these have also been planted up in the school vegetable patches now – so we continue to see them grow. Thank you to all the PTA for their hard work in making this possible.

The Sunflower Competition really grabbed the imagination of both children and staff! It was amazing to be able to send sunflower planting 'kits' home with every child, regardless of whether they would be entering. We had regular updates in assemblies through the summer term, and then the grand reveal of the winners in assemblies this week, KS2 and winners on Monday, KS1 still to come on Friday. The excitement as the children watched the incredible video was palpable – with big 'ohhs and ahhs' as the sunflowers were revealed. It was as if the children were watching fireworks explode! They loved it and danced along to the music! The winners loved their framed certificates, their trophies and 'growing kit'. You created some wonderful memories for the children and their families who all got very much involved (and very competitive)! We cannot wait until next year to do it all again!



It was lovely for the PTA to share their wonderful work via a newsletter in June – and also great to see everyone's friendly faces. I am sure this helped encourage new members to come along and inspired parents to 'keep on giving' as they saw numerous things the PTA had enable and funded.

Equally, the end of term events were fantastic – the PTA supported our enormous new intake meetings x3! Provided much welcomed ice pops following our Sports Day and made the Year 4 leavers' assemblies and parties spectacular with the leavers' hoodie (now famous for its super-soft inside!) and well-run 'bubble' carousel of party activities. These events truly ensured that the year ended on a high. Thank you so much!

An extra thanks must also go to Lucienne for managing to 'dispose' of the damaged noticeboard too – not without significant difficulty I might add – thank you for not giving up Lucienne!

You would have thought that after such a crazy summer term the PTA would like to lie back on a lounge and put their feet up over the summer holidays, but not a bit of it!

It was full steam ahead with organising two new format and highly successful pre-loved uniform sales out in the community over the summer. Many parents commented on how fantastic this was, both from a money saving and a recycling point of view. Thank you for all the time and huge effort that went into this. It was certainly much appreciated by all and VERY successful.

As we move into September, there are already lots of events planned to get our community involved with and excited about, including:

- The Krispy Kreme sale on Friday – thank you for not only organising such a fantastic Friday treat, but also for being so inclusive and making provision for our Aviary Club children and parents
- The Pub Quiz on 30th September – I know it is already popular, with only a couple of tables to go and Paul Birley will be a brilliant Quiz Master!
- October litter pick – I will definitely be there this time to help clean up Ampthill
- Wreath making sessions – what a fantastic social and creative opportunity out in the community

As a result of all the PTA's hard work, both in the last academic year and over the summer, we have been able to:

- Buy a new pirate's ship and new FS playground equipment (on order and due to be delivered very soon)
- Install more outdoor gym equipment and astro turf in KS2 (all done in July)
- Buy 10 Chromebooks to complete an entire class set within a portable trolley (all done)
- Buy much needed phonics books to 'refresh' and match Letter and Sounds (part completed – more to go)
- Buy more Accelerated Reader books so that we can have ample supplies in the classrooms and corridors (part completed – more to go)
- Hold the leavers' party, have leavers' hoodies, grow tomato plants, have sunflower growing kits for each child, have ice pops to celebrate sports day and supply new parents with a 'welcome pack'

Yet again, the hard work of ALL the collective members of the PTA, along with Grace and Sarah coming up with phenomenal and hugely popular new ideas, has meant that the school community has had the funds to ensure the children have great resources both to learn and play with, and the parents enjoy some wonderful times together too.

Thank you all for your tireless hard work. You really do make a difference.

Nicki Walker

Headteacher