

St Christopher School

JUNIOR AND MONTE PARENTS' CIRCLE

MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2009

1. ATTENDANCE

Heidi Earle(Chair), Sean McGovern(Chair), Jane Leach(Secretary), Karina Britton-Simmen, Karen Anthony, Judy Wardle, Judith Candy, Judith Robertson, Carly Oughman, Lesley Edwards, Marie Benthelien, Chris Andrews, Suzy Holding, Simone Payne, Marisol Wood, Chris Percival, Sue Rix, Karina Hirani, Julie Cole, Lucy Orsman.

2. JMPC OVERVIEW

Following the standing down of Lucy Orsman and Julie Cole from Chairing the JMPC for the past two years, Heidi Earle (children in K & H) and Sean McGovern, (children in H & F) introduced themselves as taking over the role. Jane Leach (children in D & F group) has taken over the role of secretary. Heidi reported that there is a full complement of class reps.

Heidi then discussed the role of the JMPC and the reasons why it is important to have the support and commitment from parents in attending the meetings, supporting events and volunteering to become class reps.

3. JUNIOR SCHOOL UPDATE

Sue reported on the following points:

The Junior School has 136 pupils with two classes in Years 4, 5 & 6 (D, E & F). There are two changes to report regarding teaching staff. David Jackson and Sally Wall are teaching Year 4 (F Group) and Bryan Anderson is teaching Year 3 (G Group).

This term there are 30 After School Activities run by 10 teaching staff. There is a wide range of activities on offer, some of which have been very popular. However, spaces have had to be limited mainly due to limited resources. Sue would welcome any feedback regarding the clubs, both positive and negative.

There have been no major works or refurbishments in the Junior School this summer; however, major works to replace the boiler and heating system in the Senior School Science Block was completed before the start of term. Solar panels have also been installed to assist with the heating in the Science Block.

There is a wide variety of trips planned for all year groups this term. These include the Year 6 (D Group) residential visit to York, a Hindu temple in Neasden, The British Museum, Letchworth Museum, Pizza Express (K Group making Pizza!), the Celtic Harmony camp and a trip to Jane Glynn's Historic Wood.

Individual photos will be taken on 28 September. Family group shots are welcome, if brothers and sisters wish to have their photo taken together. If they are coming from Senior School, it is their responsibility to come down to the Junior School.

The Parents' Information Evening was well attended. If parents have any comments on the event, either positive or negative, please email Sue.

Sue reported that the School is due to be visited by the Independent Schools' Inspectorate next term. The last inspection took place in 2004. In the first instance, 5 days notice will be given to the School and 3 inspectors will attend to

look at the School's policies and legal documentation. Staff will be interviewed and parents and pupils will receive questionnaire to complete. Four weeks after this has taken place, the inspectors return and will produce a report that all parents will receive.

The School Orchestra continues to be successful and teachers are keen to encourage as many children who play an instrument to take part when they have reached a level of competence. Rehearsals take place on a Wednesday from 1pm-1.45pm and members take part in local events and concerts.

This concluded Sue's report.

4. MONTE UPDATE:

Lesley Edwards reported that there are 6 new children in the Monte, 5 are half Montes. The Top Montes have been looking after the new recruits and as a result they have settled in very quickly.

Regarding staff changes and training, Natalie has left due to coming to the end of a fixed term contract. Staff will be attending a Positive Behaviour Management course and Sarah will be going on a SENCO course.

Themes for the term include celebrating different religious festivals, transport, a ride on a bus is planned, as well as the topic "people who help us", which will include a possible visit from a fire engine and the police. A sponsored pedal push in aid of the NSPCC will also take place this term.

Lesley reported the Monte was open on Letchworth Heritage Day and was very popular. Although the purpose of opening the building was to celebrate the architecture of the building, Lesley spoke continually throughout the day to approx 30-40 families about the facilities available at the Monte, so hoped for a busy Open Day in October.

5. WELCOMING NEW PARENTS

Jane Leach reported that Maire McAlister had arranged for a new procedure to let new parents know as soon as possible the contact details of Class Reps and the role they play in communications of class events. Julie Candy suggested that parents be given details even before children start as some events had taken place over the Summer Term that new pupils could have attended.

Julie Cole suggested that, instead of a new parents' evening that was poorly attended by Junior School parents, maybe because of the timing and young children, an event such as a picnic be held at School on the first Sunday of term in September. Jane Leach was to report feedback to Maire.

To encourage communication between all parents and the JMPC, Jane reported that a Parents' Circle notice board would be set up in the foyer to promote the Parents' Circle and events organised by class reps. For example, it would contain class reps' details, photographs of the reps, term notices, coffee morning details, requests for parent helpers at events and notice of social gatherings for parents. It will be managed by Jane Leach and is not for private parent notices, such as "For Sale" or "Wanted" notices.

6. FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Bonfire Night: Attendance will be limited to 600 this year to comply with fire regulations. Tickets will only be available in advance from the Senior School reception and will include a hot dog & soup.

The Junior School Parents' Circle will be responsible for providing refreshments, glow sticks and glow bracelets. Jane Leach will purchase the glow sticks from the Glow Company based in Doncaster. These are CE approved and details of the products have been passed to Richard Palmer. The Committee will be looking for 4-6 parent volunteers to assist with the stalls. Karina Hirani and Chris Andrews have already kindly offered to help

Quiz Night: The date for this years' quiz night has been set for Friday 13 November. This event was very popular last year and sold out. There will be 10 tables of 8 and will be MC'd by Bryan Anderson. The price of the ticket will include cheese and biscuits and wine will be available to purchase. Further details will appear on JMPC notice board.

Cake Day: This is a tradition at St Chris and is well supported by parents and enjoyed by pupils. Heidi Earle reported that cake days raised a total of £850 last year and that £150 was spent on a storyteller to visit the School and £700 was spent on books for the library. Heidi felt that it was important to provide this feedback to parents to ensure it was an event that continued to be supported.

Coffee Morning: Last year this event raised £2600 which was divided between local charities. The School Council will decide which charities will benefit each year. It is a large-scale event that requires support from parents and pupils, through donations and organising each class stall. More details will follow.

Alternative ideas for fundraising:

The following ideas were discussed as a means to raise funds for the School and the charities the School supports:

FunMats: Jane Leach reported about a company that produces various products from art work that pupils complete. There is a wide range of products available that are priced from £2.25-£12.00 with a small amount of profit going to the JMPC. There is no financial outlay for the School or a minimum order, therefore it was decided to see if the Company had a slot to produce items before Christmas. Jane Leach would contact FunMats and if available information will be circulated to all pupils via book bags.

It was noted that, despite a busy Autumn Term, there was little for pupils in the Spring Term. A couple of ideas were suggested. These included an end of term disco for children in Key Stage 1 and 2 and also a screening of a film provided by a company called Film Bank. This company provide film titles that can be shown before DVD release.

Several DJ's who cover an age range of 4-12 years were suggested but it was noted that if a disco were to take place, a high number of parental volunteers would be required.

7. **AOB**

Calendar: Although people who bought last year's calendar were really pleased with the product, sales did make a loss due to the requirement to produce minimum quantities. Lucy Orsman reported that even for a simpler lay-out, costs would still be costly, especially if people did not buy the item. It was therefore reluctantly decided to leave the production of the calendar for this year.

Nearly New Shop: Heidi reported that the idea of having a Nearly New shop for recycling unwanted PE kit and outdoor wear had been slow to take off. One parent reported having had great difficulty in getting the person responsible for the shop to take the items or provide details of what would happen to them. Sue Rix suggested that if there were parents who wished to recycle items, they could be stored on rails and boxes in a shed on the playground which could then be opened at a set time. Heidi will report back to the lady who organises the shop.

With no other business the meeting closed at 9pm.

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday 20 January 7.30pm Junior School Hall

If you would like to send agenda items for this meeting, please email to jmpc@stchris.co.uk