

De Lisle PTA Minutes
6th April 2022

Introduction:

Dr Pye welcomed and thanked all the participants and handed over to Mrs Laidler who would be chairing the meeting tonight. He then excused himself and left for another appointment.

Date For your Diary:

Parent Forum 27th April 2022 - led by Mr Lissaman and discussing behaviour.

Committee Request:

Mrs Laidler introduced herself and gave a brief rundown about what she was hoping we would be able to achieve by setting up a PTA. She advised that she would chair this meeting but was hoping that she would be able to get volunteers to be Chair person, Secretary and Treasurer (once we have started to raise funds).

Georgie Budding (parent) has volunteered to take minutes and take on the role of secretary.

If anyone would be interested in taking on the role of either chair or treasurer or can offer services in other ways - maybe if they have marketing or fundraising skills, to please drop her an email. Contact details are at the bottom of the minutes.

PTA Aims:

Mrs Laidler explained that every June or July she walks around the school to work out which lessons on the next timetable could be held in which rooms and, on a previous walk around she explained how she had looked at the original Learning Support facilities and realised that they were nowhere near ideal for the young people Learning Support hoped to help and discovered that there was an art room that was underused and much more suitable.

With support and input from Dr Pye and Mrs Chambers (amongst others) the new learning support area was set up in that former art room and is now used daily by students - mainly with SEND but it is accessible to all. Secluded and quiet it is much more "user-friendly".

She explained how, although the room was now a wonderful light and airy space, it still needed a carpet to reduce noise in the room to help students with autism, sensory processing or other similar concerns. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough funding available when the room was completed, and she suggested the first project for the new PTA to be raising the funds to buy a new carpet which she acknowledges is a "dull project but very much needed" - a sentiment agreed by a few people present at the meeting.

We were given a quick tour to the new Learning Support area and we were given a quick run-down of how the area was used and by who. The need for a carpet in the room was demonstrated and, again, it was agreed that it was a need to make it a completely SEND supporting room or sanctuary for any student who was feeling overwhelmed.

We then returned to the original meeting area and Mrs Laidler started the discussions by asking how we felt about raising funds for a carpet as it was “dull” but necessary.

Ideas and Responses:

- Would it be possible to set up a ‘Go Fund Me’ style account where people could just pay into it?

Mrs Laidler said that she would talk to Dr Pye about the Planned Giving scheme that was already in place. She said that whilst the school are great financially in providing what the students need there was very little funding for the extras.

It was mentioned that the De Lisle had always raised funds for external causes such as Cafod or Ukraine but hadn’t raised for the school itself for a long time. A suggestion was made that maybe we could make families aware of this as a way of encouraging support for future efforts.

Other suggestions for targeted fundraising were outdoor shelters or outdoor sports tables such as table tennis tables to give the students something else to do at lunchtime.

- A suggestion was made, from previous PTA experience elsewhere, to have student representatives - from each year group - who would be involved in open evenings and parents evenings to talk to parents about what the PTA is all about and be on hand to inform about future events.
- We could have a couple of annual events that parents know will be happening - suggestions were a quiz night and a Spring fair (or Summer) becoming regular events that families planned into their annual calendars.
- A school lottery was suggested. This would need to be checked as gambling isn’t allowed.
- “Buy a square” was suggested for the carpet - maybe with a “supporters wall” of some kind such as the adopt a brick that has been used by other establishments and parents paying a set amount for a square meter (for example).
- Could we encourage the young people who use the friendship club to make items to sell - maybe friendship bracelets or Hama bead creations - thus involving the people who are already benefitting?
- It was mentioned that we need to be “subtle” in how we approached parents for funds rather than “we need a carpet please give us money” as this may cause concern for some parents.
- Using a two-sided approach for fundraising - targeted fundraising for specific projects (such as the carpet or refurbishment of the outdoor area) and a social aspect for general fundraising.

- The importance of involving students was mentioned.
- A community fair that would involve everyone - with entertainment provided by the students. Maybe a summer or Christmas fair with an entrance fee. Georgie Budding has asked if she would be able to organise a small event to run at the same time as the Summer concert. Mrs Laidler will find out the date of the concert so plans can be started. If anyone is interested in helping Georgie to organise this or has ideas her email is also at the bottom of the minutes. All help welcome!
- An entrepreneur suggestion - young people start off with £10 from their parents and see what they can turn it into. It was suggested to maybe start with a lower starting figure as some families struggle with the cost-of-living rise - especially with multiple students. Could this be something that the Business Studies pupils would take on as a challenge?
- A request was made to not call the group "the PTA" as Parent Teacher Association can give the feel that it is just parents and teachers that could get involved. Friends of De Lisle was suggested as a more open name and adopted.
- A logo competition to design the new logo for the Friends Of De Lisle - maybe with a £1 entry fee to include the students right from the start.
- There is an alcohol licence in school but alcohol is not allowed near young people so may restrict a bottle tombola (for example) but it is worth bearing in mind for future events.
- A black tie event - possibly with the students as waiters - and an auction. They have been done previously and went down very well.
- Sports tournaments such as 5-aside football, tennis or cricket and cream tea with a BBQ for any summer based events.
- We have been offered a 20% discount off stock carpet from Carpet World (details of the contact to be passed to Mrs Laidler) but it is worth asking if anyone has any other contacts in the carpet world who may be able to help in some way. Mrs Laidler will look into current costs as the original quote was a while ago and without a discount and will try and find a bright carpet to make the room more inviting.
- Once chosen take some photographs and provide the current look and an artist impression of the improvements a carpet could make. This service has been volunteered.
- Odd Socks day during Autism Awareness month and hold an awareness session to help the students understand the need behind the carpet and the struggles that fellow students have.

- Mrs Laidler will see about getting a link for the Friends of De Lisle on the school website and arrange a tweet about our inaugural meeting to start raising awareness.
- Set up a private Facebook group that parents can join to see what we are getting up to and get involved.

Contact Details:

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Georgie Budding: Georgie@thebuddings.co.uk