

# DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ST OLAVE'S PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON MONDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2014

<b>Present:</b>	Dinta Madlani	Chair
	Debbie Hills	Vice Chair
	Ravi Savur	Secretary
	Amit Singh	Treasurer
	Aydin Önaç	President

Tiffany Barradel  
Jonathan Dean  
Mike Evans  
Jennifer Franks  
Jatinder Gill  
Julian Grainger  
Ana Hughes  
Lin Limbrey  
Francis Rodrigues  
Richard Senior  
Seema Singh  
Wendy Smith  
Hai-ying Song  
Shelly Tse  
Nick White  
Tony Wright-Jones

**Apologies for absence:**; Catherine Fleet; Alistair Mathers, Independent Examiner of Accounts; Sarah McAleer; Ravi Ravindran, Sunita Sahu, Belinda Yearsley

The **Minutes of the General Meeting of the Association** held on 12 November 2013 were circulated and approved.

### **Chair's Report**

Dear members of the PA, parents and teachers,

It gives me great pleasure to present the chairperson's report for St Olave's Parents' Association which covers the PA's activities for the 2013-2014 academic year

I would first like to thank my Vice Chair Debbie Hills for all the support that she has given me throughout my first year as Chair for the Parents' Association at St Olave's. Debbie's continuous willingness to help organise and enthusiasm makes me proud to have such a great companion and friend. Debbie is also Chair of the PA at her son's primary school and she continuously helps with events throughout the year – where she finds the energy and enthusiasm I don't know but I hope it lasts, thank you Debbie.

It has been a steep learning curve for me as this was my first attempt at being Chair let alone even being part of a core PA committee. I hadn't really been a member of a PA prior to my son joining the school so this came as a bit of an eye-opener but, with support from my family as well as the PA team, it has worked very well.

This year we made a staggering £36,081. We've agreed to fund requests totalling approx. £50,000 over the last two academic years. The list is enormous and accommodates most departments at the school including the Sixth Form and information will be uploaded on the PA web page shortly for information.

*PA Projects throughout the year:*

#### Second Hand Uniform sale

Firstly and foremost, Wendy Smith, our second hand uniform coordinator, provides an excellent service to all parents and children alike, from sales at specific times of the year, to helping replenish lost kit for a student, to ad hoc help for parents when required. Wendy spends a lot of her time sorting through lost property, trying to see what can be sold and is useful to parents and also sends any unwanted kit to a special sports charity. She is an asset to the school and has done a splendid job which has raised nearly £1,700 this year. Thank you, Wendy

#### Catering

Jennifer Franks, who is our catering coordinator, provides again and again an excellent service to the school and has been the backbone to the PA providing assistance no matter how complicated it is, as well as her never ending help. You can say she is the wise owl amongst us and is always the one that reassures is in a crisis. Jennifer provides a full range of catering to all events that requires it and also tailors it to suit. Jennifer, the school won't know what to do without you. A big thank you! The catering made approx. £3,700K this year, well done! And thank you so much Jennifer!

Jennifer is also looking for someone to step in to her shoes to take over the catering as she will be stepping down next year

#### Quiz Nights

Having had 2 very successful Quiz Nights run this year by our very own in-house Quiz Master, Mr David Budds, the head of 6th form, we have made about £2.5K. It is an event where parents can have fun socialising and meeting other parents Mr Evans please do thank Mr Budds for all his hard work in preparing the quizzes! And being the life and soul of the quiz nights.

#### Spring Ball

An amazing event held for the first time at the school. Lin Limbrey and Ingrid McPherson made the evening magical with lovely decorations and reception drinks. Everyone was talking for days about how lovely the great hall looked and the food and live band was excellent! We made just over £5K amazing! Lin and Ingrid thank you so much for organising this.

#### Summer fun day

The day was great with the weather on our side. We had a huge number of people turn up and for the first time, the BBQ station ran out of food! We had so many helpers that I cannot name all of them. However a special thank you goes to Ana

Hughes for coordinating the brochure and also to the unsung heroes: Catherine, Ravi, Jennifer, Alan, Debbie, Seema, Sunita, Hita, Gauri, Tony, Wendy, Mick, not forgetting the teachers: Mike, please extend our thanks to all who volunteered, especially Ms Dunlop who went in to the stocks knowing that she had to go out in the evening! Just over £5K was raised, well done all!

#### Magic Night

This is being held for the first time. With the event being sold out with just 2 weeks to go, it proves to be popular already. Added to the mix is Domino's pizza and some in-house brownies and cupcakes for sale on the night. Special thanks goes out to new parents that have taken on the organisation Shelley, Gauri, Sunita, Seema and of course Catherine – 3 went to view the show at a working man's club in the middle of nowhere for research purposes! Thank you girls for your support!

#### Raffles: Xmas and Summer

The raffles have raised over £4.4K. Between Debbie and I, we organise this event and this year great prizes were donated which keeps the interest up. We have a great formula which we are happy to pass on to the next willing helpers. Of course the Head always helps by selling the tickets at events, how parents can say no!

#### Form Representative Coordinator

Last but definitely not least, Catherine Fleet had taken on the task of being the coordinator for form reps at the school last year. She does a fantastic job together with Mr Mike Evans, the deputy Head, in addressing any concerns, coordinating any messages back to the rest of the class and acting as a conduit between the parent's and the school. They have also fed back on the New Year parents hand book and also the new school website which has worked well. This system is very important for parents and is much supported by the school. Thank you Catherine for all the hard work – let's not also forget that Catherine also organises tables and ticket/money collections at quiz event and for the latest magic night! Amazing!

#### *Special Thanks*

Also special thanks goes to Mike Evans, the deputy head, he provides continuous support to the PA and attends all meetings to support us in any way possible.

Also special thanks to Ravi Savur, our secretary who has been with us now for 4 years. Ravi joined the committee as a new parent and does a great job in managing the communications sent out to parents from the PA, maintaining the PA meeting standards. Also, Amit Singh being our treasurer. has done a fantastic job in managing the accounts throughout the year as well as being a new parent to St Olave's. The whole PA works very well as a team and we have developed such a warm atmosphere that we hope new parents, members will also continue to join us as well as take on the core posts. It is also good to know that we have lots of new faces on the committee this year. Welcome to them, and I am sure you can all look forward to another fun and successful year.

Finally since we have no submissions for Chair or Vice Chair, Debbie and are happy to stay but we will be standing down next year due to work commitments so we will be more than happy hear from anyone wanting to take on the roles and will be happy to have them shadow us this year if it helps.

## **President's Report**

Chairman and Parents, 2013-14 was another fine year for the school, in which our students demonstrated unique Olavian ability to combine creativity with strong values, to use their intelligence to delve into areas of personal interest and pursue our aspiration for true scholarship and, in so doing, to build on the heritage of this prestigious Grammar school, embarking on life with optimism for the future in a new and changing world.

Our Y13 leavers produced even more remarkable A level results than last year, confirming St Olave's position as the 2nd best state school with mixed 6th form. 95% of grades were at A\*/B; a record 53 students secured places for Oxbridge or Medicine; GCSE results were no less impressive and, with a record 89% of grades at A\*/A and 53% at A\*. 25 students gained 9 or more A\* grades; they have been joined by 130 new 6th formers from other schools, 50 of whom also have 9 or more A\*s. You will not be surprised to hear that we have *fairly* high aspirations for this new Y12.

Such results have clearly not gone unnoticed by prospective parents as applications for Y7 places rocketed to 1,061 this year. It was not just the quality of achievements but also that of teaching, behaviour and leadership that were, not perhaps surprisingly, endorsed by Ofsted as 'outstanding' across the board when they paid us a visit in March. I must thank parents for their endorsement of the school on ParentView.

And this begs the question 'Post Ofsted, where next?' Rather than talking about the array of cultural, individual and team successes of the past 12 months, I would like to share a few thoughts with you about the wider educational context and my vision for the future.

The landscape ahead is already dominated by two external factors over which we have little control: curriculum/examination changes, and further funding reductions. We shall almost certainly have to add to these following the general election. However, it is important that we have a positive vision for what else the future holds, within the context of the 21st century and a rapidly changing world.

It took me four years to get close enough for this photo (in Summatim) with Mr Gove; that was 2 days before he was demoted! However, the now former Secretary of State for Education, although not universally popular for his style, introduced some long overdue changes to public examinations and associated curricula, in order to bring standards up to those of the most advanced nations. Teachers have already begun the process of restructuring schemes of work and preparing for a completely new grading system. A return to the days of 2-year linear course, with terminal examinations, however, has major implications for Sixth Form programmes, AS levels, university applications, and pressure on students.

It will be important that we build on care systems for their well-being with effective motivation balanced by reassurance and support. With the relentless growth of electronic communications and internet influences, many positive, but some with potential dangers, students will need more guidance on the safe use of social media,

both from school and from you, their parents. We shall need to ensure that our transition arrangements are as supportive as possible, so that our youngest pupils and those new to Y12 settle in quickly and feel secure.

Current pressures on Grammar school funding show no sign of abating; 2014-15 will be the worst year so far with further cuts of £130,000 in our annual budget. Given that the first year post general election is historically a lean year, it will be important that we continue to exercise prudent financial management at the same time as working with parents, grandparents, corporate sponsor, and the Old Olavian community to sustain or develop new income streams. The good news is that, despite the pressures, we have managed to operate successfully over the last three years. Generous support from the Foundation, Old Olavians and especially parents has helped towards the much needed development of new Science accommodation, to be completed around February. It would be good to feel that, at some stage, we could revisit the possibility of the all-weather pitch to broaden the range of winter sports; and also to support the Old Olavian Fives community as they progress their project to build four new Fives courts and encourage other state schools to become involved.

A review of our Entrance Test arrangements will be a key priority as we struggle to cope with the relentless increase in the number of applicants. More importantly, I would like to find a way of enabling St Olave's Grammar School to fulfil that original Grammar School ideal of enabling social mobility for children from areas of social disadvantage. Such children often attend low performing primary schools and lack positive influence and aspirations from their families and communities. How to identify and support them is not just a challenge, but a duty from which we should not shirk.

High quality student journals, EPQs, play scripts and musical composition are testament to the way in which scholarship now leads the agenda at St Olave's. Student societies and the new 3-year Key stage 4 encourage research into areas of personal interest, with inspiration provided by scholarship fortnight, the Olavian Lecture series and teaching colleagues, many of whom have Doctorates or backgrounds in interesting areas of research. The pursuit of intellectual enrichment also contributes to the success of students aiming for top university places. There is still headroom to increase these through more work with younger students, more forums like STEP, Medical and Economics electives, with a more orally discursive culture to hone student interview skills and confidence.

An interesting change is taking place in the ethnic demographic of the school with a steady increase in the proportion of ethnic minorities. How should we respond to this social change, gain from this blossoming cultural diversity? It is increasingly important, as the world shrinks, that our students understand global issues, other communities, their values and aspirations. Life changing experiences can already be gained from the array of overseas trips and exchanges operating each year. Our new British Council link with Kolkata will see students working jointly on global citizenship and sustainability. Our team of ISAs will add to this portfolio countries with different perspectives, perhaps in Africa, Turkey or Italy.

Nearer to home, we are following Ofsted's request that we use the PLASMA-T project to share best practice with other schools through the OTP, by providing

training in computer programming and robotics; and by sharing our expertise in Oxbridge and Medical school preparation. We are also nurturing a more cohesive Old Olavian community to build on the intellectual capital therein to prepare students better for university and life beyond.

So what will this life, this 21st Century, look like? We, as educators, should not duck this *slightly* daunting question, but rather share in the excitement of what lies ahead to prepare and challenge our students as best we can.

If I might dare to hypothesise:

- Biotechnology, or a synthesis of biochemistry and mathematics, will be the Industrial Revolution of the 21st century, with profound implications for human health, food, diversity, and sustainability.
- As populations grow, energy will become ever more important, particularly sustainable sources related to the sun and nuclear fusion.
- An explosion in robotics will permeate all aspects of life.
- We shall need to understand and influence climate change before it is too late.
- Communications systems will proliferate with transmitter-receiver implants that grow connections into our central nervous system.
- We shall discover other habitable planets and unlock more secrets of cosmology, time, dark and anti-matter, intergalactic space travel.
- We must better understand the oceans and protect the planet's diversity as we replace the current bankrupt banking ideology with ecological economics. We should ensure that everyone has nutritious, sustainable food and access to clean water though, sadly, I suspect this will remain a lower priority than ongoing arms races and politics of power.
- The science of stem cells will generate instant ET-like organ re-creation and remedies for debilitation conditions such as dementia and paralysis.
- Extending life-span will become a trillion dollar industry.

*And of course, things we cannot even dream of yet.*

My dream is that, as one of the nation's leading schools, we might take a lead in shaping the future of education by creating a visionary 21st Century Science Centre here at St Olave's to encourage young people to explore ideas, deepen their scholarship and develop original, business-related solutions to some of these challenges.

A 21st Century of unparalleled science needs to be tempered with a concomitant set of values. I hope, Chairman, that we shall help our students balance their enlightenment with wisdom and compassion, so that the glittering prizes awaiting them, and human-kind, will give them pride of place within our Olavian community.

Ambitious dreams may or may not come to fruition; but helping with resources along the way – new lockers, microscopes, trolleys, trophies, tablets, rugby posts, laser cutters, robotics kits and competitions, display cabinets, coaching for chess and sports, iPads, props and pressure hoses, dictionaries and defibrillators, kettle drums and cameras, ambulance cover, sports tours – is equally important. Such contributions indirectly support core budgets for employing top quality teachers, keeping class sizes to good levels, and retaining a vibrant core and co-curricular provision.

Other parents (E-Ex) have undertaken more direct fund raising, realising an uplift of around £85,000 in parental contributions; reclaiming outstanding Gift Aid to help secure an annual figure of £40,000; selling Leavers' "Posterity Bricks"; running the annual auction of promises; securing a successful one-off grant of £75,000 from Garfield Weston for upgrading Computing and music facilities and development of the music suite; securing mobile phones, both for resale and the school's use.

Others have given support in kind, so that volunteer work gangs have now spent 2 days in school, tidying up ahead of Open Day, cleaning and repainting, removing weeds, clearing drains, paths and the cross-country track, acting as marshalls on Open Day, replacing old lockers, restructuring the Sixth Form library, and smartening up the Park Avenue entrance.

Thanks to Tony Wright-Jones and other E-Ex members, including Adrian, Jackie, Jennifer, Sarah, Debbie and Laura, for work they did and continue to do. The fund raising arm of this group will become a new sub-group of the Parents' Association, and will be led by Ravi. We need additional volunteers to help with this effort.

May I, Chairman, on behalf of the school, thank you and the teams who work so hard on the PA committees, as well as all those who contribute so generously financially, for your invaluable support. By enabling my colleagues to teach with appropriate resources, and by enriching the students' experiences in so many ways, you help to sustain the sparkle and vibrancy that continues to see St Olave's Grammar School as one of the nation's most outstanding schools.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Amit distributed copies of the annual accounts for the year ended 31 August 2014, showing that expenditure exceeded income by £2,565.15. This was because the PA had paid for several items for the school during the year and these included Hymn Books, Drama Funding, chess coaching, fitness suite, VEX Kits and display board, cricket screens and defibrillators.

The meeting noted that the accounts had been independently examined by Alistair Mathers and would be signed off by him after approval by the AGM. It was clarified that, with our current level of income, the Charity Commission does not need us to have our accounts 'audited' in the strict sense of the term. However, we do have to file a return.

### **The following were ELECTED as the officers and trustees of the Association for the coming year:**

Chair:	Dinta Madlani
Vice Chair:	Debbie Hills
Treasurer:	Amit Singh
Secretary:	Ravi Savur

As Alistair Mathers had indicated a need to step down as independent examiner to the Association for the following year Hai-ying Song was appointed.

**All attending the meeting, as well as those from who apologies were received, were ELECTED as the members of the Association Committee** except for Alistair Mathers and Hai-ying Song who, respectively as outgoing and incoming independent reviewers of the accounts, cannot be on the committee as per our constitution.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Ravi Savur, Secretary

Confirmed as a true record of the meeting

Dinta Madlani, Chair