



Charity Commission Submission: September 2023

Background:

The friends of St Mary's are a registered charity. We are set up as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) run by a committee of volunteer trustees, governed by a constitution and membership is made up of parents, staff and anyone who want to support us.

Clause 5 of the Constitution states that our aim is to Advance the education of pupils in St Mary's School in particular by: developing effective relationships between staff parents and others associated with the school and engaging in activities or providing facilities or equipment which support the school.

We'd say...

- We're a group who want to enable activities that strengthen the community feeling within the school and across the community, whilst raising funds.
- We're trying to make things better for children, staff, parents & guardians as well as the local pariah and residents, through an increased feeling of belonging - whilst raising important funds.
- We do this by organising events, social activities and volunteering projects. Including: sustaining our woodland area classroom, children's fun events and community social events.

The last 3 years of the pandemic, have been about

- 1) Being a new committee– making that as smooth as possible and working out what this phase means
- 2) Getting clear on the focus for fundraising where best to support school as they've been in transition
- 3) Planning, pausing, re-planning and Sometime cancelling... as we've navigated the world of lockdown, covid safety and constant change.

In 2023 we focussed on::

- 4) Getting things back on track and recruiting a new committee.

What's felt really important to our very small team, has been not letting the candle go out on FOSM... keeping the things that have mattered to children going (cake raffles, easter egg hunts, pantomime day, book fairs... whilst holding our focus on "time for fun". This has meant supporting school trips, developing classroom space in the woodland area, investing in playground equipment.... The picnic and play. But it has helped us become clear that it's the regularity and feeling of community that events have created that been important... keeping things simple whilst investing in a community feel, and being mindful of the wider landscape and the fear of a cost of living crisis... and the reality of increased costs on households.

So that's the flavour of this year... things might have been smaller and fundraise targets lower than a pre-pandemic era, but this year we hoped to keep smaller but more regular ways of connecting school, family and community.... to make a positive difference whilst having fun.

In my closing remarks at the last AGM in July, I shared that our focus for the year was to develop greater level of engagement with families across the school through development our communication and social media approaches, ensuring that our events enable the community feel



we've missed in lock down... whilst continuing to invest in the little extra's we know make such a difference to life at school for the children and bring the ones we've missed back (the cake raffle!).

It's been slow and steady. Looking to build volunteers to help with different types of activity such as the woodland clear up. Developing how we communicate across school, looking at using social media to communicate and building a network of supporters is likely to also be the focus of a new committee.

Events that raised funds this year:

- Cake Raffles
- Refreshments at events
- Pantomime
- Christmas Fair
- Disco
- Summer Fun Day (picnic and plays)
- Quiz nights
- Social media communication

Other areas to keep developing:

- Strengthen feedback and ideas development with families
- Supporting the "community" feel and support for FOSM
- Looking for ways to generate steady income through partnership with others
- Succession for the future committee
- **Treasurer's Report:**
- We seem to be getting back on track after the "Covid-years" and ended the last financial year (2022/23) at just over £1000 up. This is great news, especially as we paid for the usual FOSM items, such as Christmas presents, crackers for Christmas dinner, leavers' crosses, Easter eggs and so on. It's also worth mentioning that we continued to use the Co-op grant to pay for things for the woodland area and these figures take that spending into account, i.e. we spent without raising more. For completeness, we still have £447 of the Co-op funding left.
- In terms of receipts, the cake raffles did very well and the money for those goes straight back to school so they can use it to subsidise trips. The books fairs also did well but these don't affect our accounts as we pay Scholastic the amount we take at the fairs and the school then gets book vouchers to spend.
- In terms of events, the first picnic and play of 2022 did exceptionally well with profits of almost £640. This was the first proper event after Covid so everyone was keen to get involved I think and the outlay was low as we relied on donations for the stalls and cakes. The second picnic and play raised just under £300 so still a good result. We paid for the inflatable assault course for this event and had already agreed as a committee that we wouldn't run the event as a big fundraiser but more as a get-together before the end of the school year. The quiz night last year raised £230 which although not great compared to



previous years, was still a reasonable figure for a fairly easy event to run. The Christmas fair was obviously the biggest event, raising £1477. This isn't even close to previous years but the committee had made the decision not to try and compete with previous fairs as we didn't have the time or inclination to hold a huge event. There was also a lot of illness around the time of the fair.

- Sales of the Jubilee tea towels (with self-portraits of the children and staff) were a bit disappointing and we were in the red by about £41 for those but it's difficult to know what people want to support with things like this. The Christmas tree sales were also very low but the committee has discussed this and whether it's worthwhile giving this another go but sending order forms out much earlier, say in September or October. It was very easy to arrange. Christmas card sales weren't quite as good this year but we had the fair as well and the economy was very up in the air around Christmas. Sales during Covid were exceptionally high, presumably because people weren't seeing families and friends so wanted to send cards and they also weren't spending any money on school fundraising. The school disco did well this year but this was helped by the deposit having been paid before Covid and then being rolled over.
- In terms of payments out, the biggest was the pantomime at £715 which is expensive but the committee discussed whether to go ahead with it and decided to do so as the children enjoy it and we had the money. Expenditure on the woodland area was also quite high but this was covered by the Co-op grant so was essentially "free money".
- Christmas presents are also sizeable at £420 and we have insurance to pay for which was £140 this year. This is a direct debit payment and it may be worth the new committee looking into other insurance options and comparing premiums as this cover was put in place by the previous committee.
- Otherwise, expenditure is general running costs, such as refreshments, the lottery licence so we can hold raffles, extra prizes and cakes (where donations aren't enough) and the items that we usually cover which I mentioned earlier, such as leavers' crosses and Easter eggs.
- So, generally, I think it was a fairly good year. There was nothing that we usually contribute towards which was missed and the end result was a surplus despite not hosting any particularly large events.

Elections:

There are eight trustee positions available. One is automatically offered to the Principal Administrative Lead of the School currently Mrs Moore. That leaves seven places. We must have a minimum of three trustees.

There are four Officers, Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and three ordinary Trustee positions. All seven positions are now vacant. We have a number of people who have put themselves forward for these roles based on advertising over the past year, as well as a number of other position that are open.

We must have the minimum of three trustees.

Tonight, we'd like to welcome those that would like to be part of the next committee. Please raise your hand if you'd like to be considered for each role and we will ask for a vote of support.

- Abbe – voted chair
- Jess – voted treasurer
- Lizzie – voted trustee
- Nat – voted trustee



All present voted in support of these elections.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vanessa Duckenfield'.

Vanessa, Lianne and Kelly have now stood down.

Written on behalf of the Trustees by the Chair of the Committee, Vanessa Duckenfield.

See Annual Accounts overleaf.



FOSM Charity

	April 2022	to April 2023
	This Year	Last Year
Receipts [In]		
Movie Nights	£0.00	£0.00
Easy Fundraising	£41.96	£39.01
Book Fair	£1,663.20	£572.19
Camps / Outings / Events	£5,161.02	£1,089.30
Quiz Night	£303.00	£0.00
Refreshments	£70.85	£0.00
Donations	£0.00	£256.46
Cake Raffle	£0.00	£425.70
Other	£844.70	£36.00
Christmas Cards	£215.00	£1,276.00
2nd Bank account (Manual)	£295.03	£0.00
Totals	£8,594.76	£3,694.66
Payments [Out]		
Movie Nights	£0.00	£0.00
Book Fair	£1,663.20	£572.19
Quiz Night	£73.00	£0.00
Camps / Outings / Events	£2,316.71	£309.00
Refreshments	£97.00	£0.00
Gifts	£721.39	£768.75
Pantomime	£615.00	£570.00
Curriculum Enhancement	£0.00	£25.00
Cake Raffle (to school funds)	£844.70	£425.70
Other	£1,068.54	£137.15
Christmas Cards	£0.00	£689.69
FOSM running costs	£140.00	£116.00
2nd Bank account (Manual)	£0.00	£0.00
Totals	£7,539.54	£3,613.48
Surplus or (deficit) for the year	£1,055.22	£81.18
Balances brought forward		
Bank - 1	£7,406.33	£0.00
Bank - 2	£0.00	£0.00
Cash	£171.16	£0.00
	£7,577.49	£0.00
Balances in hand at year-end		
Bank - 1	£8,487.62	£7,406.33
Bank - 2	£0.00	£0.00
Cash	£145.09	£171.16
	£8,632.71	£7,577.49

Assets and Liabilities: In addition to the above cash balances the unit has equipment to the value of £0.00 and there are no other assets or liabilities.

Prepared by: LIANNE BAKER

Signature & Date: L.D. Baker

15 May 2023

Reviewer's Certificate: The above statements agree with the records and vouchers of FOSM Charity for the financial year ended April 2023

Reviewed by: [Signature]

Signature & Date: VANESSA RUCKENFELD

Notes:

15 May 2023