

Chairperson's Report – FOSPA AGM 20th May 2025

Good evening everyone,

Thank you for coming to our Annual General Meeting.

This meeting is so important as it gives us the opportunity to reflect on what has been another fantastic year for FOSPA and our school community. We don't always get the time to reflect and really focus in on what we achieve – probably because we are too busy with the next task/duty list or WhatsApp Availability Poll.

I'm proud to share that, thanks to the incredible support, effort and enthusiasm from our volunteers, families, staff, and wider community, FOSPA raised a total of **£7,000** for the school this year. We raised this without a BIG event – that makes it even more amazing. Exhausting – absolutely but it is great to know that our efforts do pay off. Every penny goes towards enriching the school experience for the children, and I couldn't be more grateful for everyone's generosity and hard work.

Some standout fundraising moments this year include:

- Our **DerrymaCASH Call** in September, which brought in **£1,200**. We can't say it went off without a 'hitch' but we can say we provided people with a laugh on a Saturday afternoon.
- Our **first ever Halloween event**, raising an impressive **£1,000**. We went toe-to-toe with Storm Ashley and WON. We didn't cancel when other events did and we literally battled as the wind tried to throw all our efforts up into the air – it's just a pity we did not capture some of the antics on video.
- The festive spirit was alive and well at our **Santa Sunday and raffle**, which raised **£2,000**. These events have really become the start, and heart, of the festive season in 'the Cash'. It really is unreal how much of a community event this has turned into. We have already next years locked in with many of our bookings already made.
- And, our first ever **Scratch Card Fundraiser** saw us finish the year strong with **£2,800** raised. A great idea and one we have never used before. Once I got my head round how it worked (sorry Lindsey – it did take me a while) it proved really successful and one which we would definitely use again.
- Our fundraising has, yet again, enabled us to support the school in providing a counsellor, purchasing new books, providing Autism training, funding interactive whiteboards, helping with minor works and digital licences and funding new outdoor play equipment. Not bad for a years work!

Beyond fundraising, we've continued our commitment to supporting school life in meaningful and memorable ways. This year, we provided:

- Ice cream treats to kick off the school year
- Christmas selection boxes

- Easter goodies
- World Book Day packs
- Confirmation party refreshments

And we still have plans to support:

- First Communion celebrations
- The P7 trip
- Sports Day ice cream
- And the P7 Leavers Assembly

It really is never ending but, lets be honest, we wouldn't do it if we didn't LOVE IT. We LOVE IT.....we do!

We have also been active in the wider community. A real highlight for me was hosting our **second Silver Sunday event** in September, bringing joy to the slightly older members of our community – and we were thrilled to be recognised with an award for **Community Initiative of the Year!** I love this event. It isn't typically FOSPA and it does not bring in any funds. But it does see us support our community. Huge thanks to the Lough Shore Care Partnership as their support means we can fund it. Thanks also to Mrs Brown and the School as their willingness to embrace it means we have a familiar venue in which to host the event.

Other memorable moments include our **first ever outdoor Summer Disco in April**, which was a roaring success. The sun was shining and the kids loved it. It also made the clean up after so easy and quick. And I can't go any further without mentioning one more high point of the year: **Armagh winning the All-Ireland!** Now, I know FOSPA can't take credit for that one... but sure it would be rude not to give it a mention! It was kind of a big deal for a few FOSPA members.

We've also had success with grants to support both the Halloween and Christmas events. These grants take time to apply for but are worth it (aren't they Orlagh?) as every bit of support makes a difference and helps us deliver bigger and better experiences for the children, their families and the wider community.

Finally, I would like to personally acknowledge the hardship and loss experienced by Eibhlin, Julie and many others within the group. Losing someone special is never easy and life will always be different after the loss. There really aren't any words of comfort or consolation. But – I think it's important that everyone knows that there is always a helping hand and a listening ear for any member in this team.

I want to end by offering my heartfelt thanks:

- To **every member of FOSPA** – all of you are volunteers, and your dedication, ideas, time, and energy are what make this possible.
- To the **school staff**, for their continued support and for working in partnership with us.
- And to our **wider community**, who show up time and again to support our events and fundraisers.

Together, we've achieved so much this year, and I can't wait to see what the next one brings.

Thank you all.