

Chairs report

Thanks for attendance

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jamie Hunt and I have been the Chairperson of Ballysally Primary School Parent Teacher and Friends Association for 2024/2025 academic year. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you all for coming along to our Annual General Meeting this evening, your support is very much appreciated. A running order for tonight's meeting has been provided for you and we will endeavour to keep to time and have you home early.

Apologies have been received from Donna McClean – our outgoing treasurer, and Kylie McVicker our outgoing school liaison officer who unfortunately could not make it tonight.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge all outgoing committee members who have worked so diligently and enthusiastically through out the year in running fundraisers, creating memories for the kids and raising money for the school.

Ruth Stirling – outgoing secretary who also took on the role of treasurer due to illness.

Shawnee McClean – outgoing communications officer

Hannah Thompson – outgoing Health and Safety officer

Judith Gregg – Grants officer

Your enthusiasm is infectious, you demonstrated a passion for the school and the community in everything you have done. It hasn't always been easy – however you continued to show up with humour, compassion and kindness and kept your focus on the task at hand. It has been a pleasure to spend the year with you and I want to thank you personally for the friendship that you have afforded me.

Look back on the aims and objectives

As you are all aware – Ballysally Primary School PTFA began only 2 years ago. The vision from the beginning of the PTFA was to engage families in the life of the school, provide volunteering opportunities, organise fun events for the children and of course to raise some much-needed funds for resources for the school. In the first year our focus was very much on getting registered with the charity commission and setting up a bank account. Attaining a bank account proved to be extremely difficult

and took longer than we had anticipated however we managed to secure an account with Santander after a lot of work put in by Donna and William Carson, business banking manager in Santander.

Our objectives for the last academic were

1. To get the banking up and running CHECK
2. to continue to organise fund raising event that were enjoyable for families
3. to get more parents and carers involved with the PTFA.

In terms of organising fundraising events – we were mindful of the poverty proofing strategies that have been implemented and we always held in mind the economic hardships that families face. We were able to run a number of low cost events that were enjoyed by all, these included.

- Cooper mile
- Cash for Cans
- Fall Ball
- Advent calendar raffle
- Elfridges sale
- Wear what you love day
- Golden ticket chocolate bar sale
- Easter hamper raffle
- Frozen Friday
- Asda Cash pot for schools
- Colour Run

Being involved in the PTFA has been more than running fundraising events. We have had the opportunity to be involved in the life of the school in several ways. We have had the opportunity to help with the open days – welcoming P1 parents, showing them around the school and taking the time to share our experiences as parents to Ballysally Primary School pupils. We have had the opportunity to serve teas and coffees at other events, take tickets at the school shows and help out at sports day tomorrow. When we as a committee sat down to reflect on the last year it was overwhelmingly apparent that it was these opportunities that meant the most to us personally and I would like to thank Geoff and the teaching staff for allowing us to be part of these events.

We have made a real effort to engage parents and carers in all our activities. All parents in the school have been provided with the PTFA email address and encouraged to contact us should they be willing to volunteer in whatever capacity they can. We have a cohort of very dedicated parent volunteers who have showed

up and have provided phenomenal support at each event and we honestly couldn't have run the events without them.

I would like to thank the staff of the school who have welcomed and encouraged us as we continue to find our stride as a new PTFA. The committee as a group would like to say a special thank you to Cheryl who has helped us a huge amount this year. Cheryl is always at the other end of the phone providing us advice and guidance in such a kind a gracious manner. She has sent hundreds of emails on our behalf, has printed and organised resources at a drop of a hat and has been our unpaid therapist when we are becoming stressed or overwhelmed. Cheryl is the right arm of the PTFA and without her support we would not be able to function as effectively.

We would also like to thank Sam and Geoff who continue to guide us through as a very new PTFA. You both also are always at the other end of the phone providing support and encouragement and going out of your way to facilitate meetings and events. Thanks for taking the time to help, your passion for the school and the community has certainly rubbed off on us and we appreciate all of the encouragement throughout the year.

And finally, the biggest thank you of them all. A massive thank you to the children and the families of Ballysally Primary School. Thank you for trusting us to be on the committee, thank you for all the encouraging words you have spoken to us as we do the pickup and drop offs at the school gate and thank you for engaging fully in all the events that we have put on this year. You have raised the money, not us! Without you this just would not be possible.

I will end on our hopes for the coming year – We hope to run more fun events and raise some money for the school. But our biggest hope again for the year is to get more parents and carers involved with the PTFA and to link with other community groups in the estate to establish strong working relationships. It has been such an enriching experience for us this year, we have gained new skills and experiences and we have made lasting friendships and we would love to share that experience with as many parents and carers as we can.