

Annual General Meeting of Cheney Friends

Wednesday 27th November 2019

Present: Claire Stevenson (Secretary), Rupert Moreton (Headteacher), Sue Harmer, Emma Meats. Arriving later in the evening: Jane Cockroft, Gabrielle Lees.

Minutes

Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Gill Wilkins (Treasurer), Olivia Goodrich, Lisa Crook, Tamasin Lilwall, Ben Pinches, Uniz Manda-Liu, Naomi Winniffrith, Jenny McIntyre and Helen Smith.

Open Forum

At the end of the meeting in September 2019, a parent raised the subject of Behaviour Management, specifically in relation to disruptive behaviour during lessons. What is the school's policy for dealing with this? Rupert Moreton explained that this is dealt with under the school's "Respect for Learning" policy, and that class teachers are the first people to contact if there are any concerns about disruption to lessons due to the behaviour of one or more students. Should there still be concerns after contacting these teacher(s), the matter can be passed to the Head of Faculty and to the Head of Student Progress. Each Faculty now has a specific contact within the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) as well. Moreover, if there are certain lessons/classes where behaviour problems are more likely to occur (known as "hotspots"), a member of the SLT may attend the lesson to support the class teacher.

Approval of the minutes from the last AGM, and the meeting in September 2019

The minutes from the AGM held in November 2018 were approved.

Matters arising from the meeting in September 2019 were discussed, as follows:-

- The bid for funding from the Co-op's Local Community Fund (made by Olivia) was unsuccessful.
- The Art Auction, being prepared by Uniz in collaboration with Ms Cox, will now take place in December 2020 (rather than December 2019).
- Cheney Friends held secondhand uniform sales at the Year 10 Parents' Evening in October and the Year 9 Parents' Evening in November. Many more uniform donations have been received over the autumn term, and Claire will arrange to sort through these in the coming weeks.

- Environmental update: Jen Henderson has forwarded a detailed update on progress within the school (to be circulated separately by email). Some highlights of this include:

- i) Recycling continues to go well, with the students getting much better at putting the right items in the right boxes.
- ii) Crisp packets are now being received from outside organisations, as well as being recycled within the school.
- iii) Oxford Brookes University has agreed to carry out an Environmental Audit of the whole school site, which is excellent news.
- iv) Saplings donated by the Woodland Trust will be planted by volunteers (parents, staff and students) on Saturday 30th November, which is National Tree Planting Day. The aim is to create a hedge along the Gipsy Lane side of the school site, helping to make a barrier against air and noise pollution from the traffic on that road.

Sue commented on how clean the school site looks, and Rupert Moreton was pleased to announce that Cheney has won awards in the last couple of years for being the cleanest school in the local area.

Finance report

Claire read out the Financial Summary for 2018-19 prepared by Gill (Treasurer). Thanks were extended to Adrian White, who audited this year's accounts and has agreed to continue as Cheney Friends' Auditor for the coming year.

Unfortunately, there were not enough committee members present to formally approve this year's financial report.

Fundraising: recent achievements and future plans

Sue Harmer was thanked for her applications to various grant-giving bodies, which had resulted in a number of donations being made to the school recently via Cheney Friends. These included donations from All Souls College, St John's College and the Bishopsdown Trust. The latter had requested an update on how the money was spent, and asked for some of its members to be invited to one or more school events (such as Music or Drama shows), as the funds had been earmarked specifically for the Performing Arts Departments. Sue has met with Lucy Jackson, and will report back to all the fund-giving organisations with receipts once the required items have been purchased with the donations. The Music Department will have everything it requested – although a Mac Suite for Music Technology lessons could be the object of future fundraising. Sue will also see what purchases are currently necessary for the Drama Department.

Upcoming events

- i) Cheney Friends will be providing refreshments at the Christmas Show on 11th December, and there is a sign-up sheet for helping on the night and/or baking for the event.
- ii) There will be secondhand uniform sales during the Year 11 Parents' Evening on **Thursday 23rd January** and the Year 8 Options Evening on **Thursday 6th February**, as well as the Year 8 Parents' Evening on **24th February**.

iii) Cheney Friends has also been asked to provide refreshments at the Sixth Form Open Evening on **Wednesday 29th January**, and for the production of “Shrek” on **Wednesday 12th and Thursday 13th February**.

“What can Cheney Friends do for the whole school community this year?”

Rupert Moreton passed on thanks from the school for the PTA’s support of the Performing Arts Departments, through fundraising and providing refreshments at all the shows. This was something that should be continued, as was Cheney Friends’ assistance in raising awareness of environmental issues, and helping to put the school’s environmental plans into action.

Other ways in which Cheney Friends could help the school include:-

i) Helping to circulate call-outs for secondhand books for the library, where the turnover of books is high. The school’s librarian, Jill Fenton, is currently preparing a list of the most popular titles and authors.

ii) Fundraising for magazine subscriptions for the library.

It was suggested that a “Leavers’ Fund” could be set up, whereby the families of students leaving the school could make a donation towards the library, or another specific area of the school.

iii) Encouraging parents/carers to help with reading sessions at school, or with activities outside the classroom (such as the recent trip to Youldbury). For the reading sessions, an hour a week per person would suffice.

iv) Similarly, the SEND department would welcome parents to volunteer as Teaching Assistants for an hour or two per week.

Election of Officers and Committee Members, plus appointment of an Auditor

As not enough committee members were present at the AGM, the election of the PTA’s Officers and Committee for the 2019-20 school year was deferred to the meeting in January.

It was suggested that next year’s AGM be held in September, as the first meeting of the school year, in the hope that attendance would be higher.

A.O.B.

Various matters were discussed briefly at the end of the meeting, as follows:-

i) It would be interesting to have short updates from different school staff at some of the PTA meetings, such as the Catering Manager, the Sixth Form Team, a Drama teacher, or someone to talk about Pet Therapy.

ii) There was a short discussion about school reports, which feature a numbered evaluation (rather than a written one). It was felt that it would be helpful to have a written appraisal of students’ work – even a short one – at least once a year (especially if parents don’t manage to speak with all teachers during Parents’ Evenings).

iii) A parent had been told by a prospective student’s family that they had been shown around the school during the Open Evening in September by a Year 7 who kept getting lost, and had taken them all over the school site in an effort to find a particular department! Another parent reported hearing a similar story. It was suggested that new

Year 7s should be partnered with a “buddy” from a higher year on these occasions, to avoid too much wasted time during Open Evenings.

iv) Possible dates for the next Cheney Friends meeting were discussed, with **Tuesday 14th January** the most likely date (to be confirmed before the Christmas break).