Friends of Belton Lane – PTA Minutes

Date: 09-10-26
Time: 2.30pm
Venue: Belton Lane School Library

Attendees:

- Becky (Rebecca) Jones (RJ)
- Katie Done (KD)
- Mr Mason (JM)
- School Council

Notes from Meeting:

School Council Meeting – PTA Fundraising Priorities

RJ and KD met with the school council, supervised by JM, to hear the children's ideas about how the PTA could support them. At the end of the discussion, each child was asked to identify their top priority.

The ideas below are listed in order of the number of votes received.

Children's priorities

1. Trim trail upgrade or climbing equipment – 4 votes

The children would love to see the existing trim trail extended, alongside the addition of new playground markings.

JM explained that the current trim trail is fully usable, but the hedges behind it are due to be removed and replaced with a tall metal fence. It would therefore be worth waiting until the work is complete and the available space is clear before discussing plans.

Next steps: Keep this at the top of the PTA's priority list and revisit potential improvements once the outdoor works are complete.

2. Classroom and library books – 3 votes

The children felt that many of the existing books are outdated and that popular titles are often borrowed for long periods, meaning other children have to wait to read them.

The PTA will explore ways to acquire new books free of charge or at a reduced cost through charities, funding opportunities and donations.

RJ has a contact at Osborne Books who has provided a quote for a monthly book subscription. JM felt this could be beneficial, as many of the topical books currently available are dated, and new titles would also support the curriculum.

Osborne Books subscription quote:

- £1,200 per year.
- 11 boxes delivered over 12 months, with no delivery in August.
- The quote states a minimum of £105 worth of books.

Next steps: Explore funding opportunities, book donations and potential publisher support before deciding whether to proceed with the subscription.

3. Outdoor classroom or shelter – 3 votes

The children described a summer-house-style space that could be used during playtimes, with a cosy atmosphere, beanbags and books.

Next steps: Once the outdoor works are complete and the available space is clear, approach local businesses, including Downtown, to explore sponsorship, donations or a discounted price for a suitable structure.

4. Whole-school outdoor art project – 2 votes

JM explained that the school previously had a woven willow greyhound, which gave every child the opportunity to contribute by weaving a section. Unfortunately, the sculpture deteriorated over time.

The children would like to explore a similar project that the whole school could contribute to.

Next steps: Research durable, collaborative outdoor art projects and investigate potential costs, local artists and sponsorship opportunities.

5. Playground loose-play equipment – 1 vote

The children identified balls and extra-long skipping ropes as priorities.

JM explained that the school goes through a lot of playground equipment. Table tennis and tennis have been trialled previously, but the equipment was not looked after sufficiently well, and the process of setting it out and putting it away created additional work.

RJ has spoken to Mrs Fear, who will provide a list of priorities for playground equipment.

Next steps: Review the school's list and explore affordable, durable equipment that is suitable for the children and easy to manage.

Additional suggestions and potential quick wins

Wet-play boxes

The children explained that each of the 14 classrooms previously had a box of games and colouring activities for wet playtimes, but these have become worn out over time and need refreshing.

Next steps: Ask the school community for donations of suitable board games and investigate affordable supplies of pens, colouring pencils, paper and other creative materials.

Pantomime

The PTA was pleased to confirm that the pantomime is already booked.

Whole-school trip

The children suggested a whole-school trip. Previous trips have included farms, the cinema and Belton House. Some suggestions were more ambitious, including Alton Towers and Disneyland.

Next steps: Explore more achievable options, such as a whole-school cinema trip, and investigate group discounts or sponsorship.

Key Stage 2 fruit

Some children miss receiving free fruit at break time as they move into Key Stage 2.

Next steps: RJ and KD will investigate costs and potential funding. Since the meeting, a Tesco fruit and vegetable grant scheme has been identified, and the PTA will begin by exploring an application. RJ has also contacted St Johns community fridge.

Larger clock for the hall

The children suggested having a larger clock in the school hall, potentially something fun that could also act as a statement piece.

Next steps: Investigate suitable options and costs.

iPads for the whole class

Following further discussion, it was agreed that this was not currently a priority, as there are sufficient iPads available to meet the children's needs.

Visiting science shows and planetariums

The children expressed an interest in visiting science shows and planetariums.

Next steps: Research suitable providers, costs and potential funding opportunities.

Author visits and storytelling workshops

The children would enjoy visits from authors and storytelling workshops.

Next steps: Explore local and visiting authors, workshop providers and opportunities for subsidised or sponsored sessions.

Music, drama, dance and special curriculum days

The children suggested workshops covering music, drama and dance, as well as special curriculum days focusing on history, STEM and cultural celebrations.

The school already organises a range of these activities. Popular previous events have included poetry talks and skipping workshops.

Next steps: Discuss with the school which activities the children would most like to see repeated or introduced in future.

Residential trip contributions

The children suggested support with the cost of residential trips.

Next steps: Discuss whether the PTA could establish an application process to help families who need financial assistance. Further discussion is required regarding eligibility, available funding and how applications would be managed fairly.

Gardening beds and planting

JM explained that repairs to the school garden area have already been booked.

Next steps: Once repairs are complete, ask for volunteers from the school community to help with planting and maintaining the area. Explore donations of plants, seeds, compost and gardening supplies.

Outdoor musical instruments

The children suggested adding outdoor musical instruments to the school grounds.

Next steps: Investigate suitable instruments, installation requirements, costs and potential funding alongside the wider outdoor play improvements.

Overall next steps

The PTA will prioritise investigating the children's top five choices while also looking for affordable, achievable quick wins. Funding applications, local business sponsorship, donations and school-community involvement will be explored wherever appropriate.

The priorities will be reviewed as further information becomes available, particularly following completion of the planned outdoor works.