

St Paul's National School

Parents' Association Newsletter

Hello Parents we hope that you are all keeping well and safe in these uncertain times.

Our **Annual General Meeting** (AGM) is normally held at the start of the school year, however due to Covid 19 restrictions this was not possible. Normally at the meeting we would explain the purpose and function of the Parents' Association (PA) and remind all Parents that while you have children attending the school you are all automatically members of the Parents' Association.



We would invite you to visit the School Website to find out more about the Parents' Association's purpose and our constitution <http://stpaulsratoath.ie/parents-association/>



Typically, at the AGM the year end accounts are presented, which consist of the Income raised through the Family Contribution and Fundraising, less expenditure and finally what we transfer to the School at year end. The year end accounts are now available from the school office should you wish to view them. Please contact office@stpaulsratoath.ie

At the AGM elections are held to appoint committee members and officers to the association on behalf of Parents. This was not possible this year and we wish to advise Parents that most of the committee from last year are still in situ and are happy to stay on the committee for the coming year. We are looking for **new members** to join the committee and should you be interested please register your interest by emailing stpaulsratoathpa@gmail.com and we will contact you. Should you wish to be on our **Volunteer list** to help out at our various events please email your full name and phone number to the stpaulsratoathpa@gmail.com We will explain more about Volunteering activities below.



Unfortunately, there will be none of the usual fundraising or events for the time being, and we are very sad that we cannot host the **Annual Christmas Fair**. However, we would like in this newsletter to; inform all Parents what fundraising and events we are involved in, what other activities we do as your committee, and to welcome any suggestions that you may have for the future.

If anyone is in a position to offer any prizes which we could use in a Christmas Raffle, we may go ahead with a scaled back raffle this year. Please contact office@stpaulsratoath.ie

What events are taking place in 2020?

Christmas Cards

As detailed in the recent school newsletter, the PA came up with the idea to partner with Christmas Cards for School's. Each child will have the opportunity to design their very own Christmas Card! The children have completed their masterpieces this week, we can't wait to see them.



Next Steps:

- * Each child will get a sample card home to keep
- * As Parents you will get an Aladdin notification and option to purchase packs of 10 cards @ €8 per pack, (you can purchase multiple packs per child)
- * Once the payments are made, the printing takes place and the children will receive their cards

We believe that a personalised card from a niece, nephew, grandchild will be very much appreciated especially this year.

Also, the children could send some cards to local Nursing Homes, convalescent homes etc as **An Post** are offering **FREE POST** to these residents <https://www.anpost.com/Community/Free-postage-to-Care-Homes>

Children's Raffle in December

Every year there is much excitement for the children's raffle in the school. Normally we charge a nominal amount for tickets to enter, but this year we intend using some of the money collected from the Christmas Cards to host a **FREE** raffle that all the children will be entered into! Best of luck to all!



Family Santa Fun Run / Walk

- * **When:** Saturday 5th and/or Sunday 6th December
- * **Time:** we suggest between 12pm - 3pm either day, but really whatever time suits your family
- * **To do:** We suggest families go for a 5km walk/run around the village (socially distanced of course)
- * **Photos:** Please take some photos of your family dressed up and we can share them in our next newsletter. Send then to stpaulsratoathpa@gmail.com
- * **What to wear?** Put on those Santa Hats, Christmas Jumpers, Reindeer ears or get mum or dad in a full Santa Costume! Don't forget to shout a big **Ho, Ho, Ho** to any friends you meet along the way
- * **Objective:**
 - * **Fun:** the purpose of this Run / Walk is to spread some Christmas cheer and get the children into the festive spirit, as a lot of the normal Christmas Events are cancelled for this year
 - * **Donate:** to your **chosen charity**; better still ask the children to donate their pocket money that week. Some suggestions are:
 - * **St. Vincent de Paul:** <https://www.svp.ie/get-involved/donate.aspx>
 - * **Aware:** <https://www.aware.ie/donate/>
 - * **Inner City Helping Homeless:** <https://ichh.ie/fundraising/>



MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Normally at this time of the year we the Committee are knee deep in preparations for our now famous Annual Christmas Fair, but unfortunately this year Covid 19 had different plans for us. This is typically the School's biggest fundraiser of the year and this could not be achieved without all of the Parents and local businesses who sponsor our fair year in year out, by donating prizes for our Bumper Raffle and we would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you all our Sponsors.

All Sponsors and their logos will remain on our school website throughout the year as a thank you and we would like to ask Parents to take a minute to view this page and to shop local this Christmas to support the small businesses in Ratoath and surrounding areas that have been so generous to our school each year.

Take care and stay safe.

Martina

Who are the committee?

Martina Cahill - Chairperson

I have been part of the PA Committee since 2010, and 2020 marks my last year on the committee as the youngest of my 3 sons, all whom attended St. Paul's, is now in 6th Class. As I write this I feel emotional as its been my pleasure to have served on the Committee for the past Decade.

Helena Cooley – Vice Chairperson

I joined the PA Committee in 2014, I have 4 children and currently have 3 children in the School; 3rd Class and twins in 5th Class, and one past pupil who has now gone to Ratoath College. I find being on the committee both enjoyable and rewarding and I am more than happy to give my time to the School as a thank you to them

Marie Coleman - Secretary

This is my 5th year on the PA Committee. I have 2 children in St. Paul's; in 1st and 3rd class. I really enjoy being part of the PA, and get great satisfaction when I hear the children talking excitedly about e.g. the visits from Santa and the Easter Bunny which are all sponsored by the PA. I work full time but am happy to contribute to the school as part of the PA and do what I can, and it's a great way to meet other Parents.

Anne-Marie Cawley - Treasurer

This will be my third year on the PA Committee. I have two boys in St. Paul's; Junior Infants and 1st Class. I enjoy being on the committee and being

involved in all the events in the school. It's great to be able to give something back to such a fantastic school.

Jacinta Forde – Vice Treasurer

PA member since 2017. I have a son in 5th class and my 2 other children attended St Paul's prior to secondary school. I was a volunteer initially which gave me an insight as to how the PA worked so I joined to help out. I appreciated that an extra body can be a real help during the school events

Lisa Fitzgerald - Committee Member

I have been on the PA Committee since 2014. I have 2 children in the school; one son in Junior Infants, the second in 5th class and my daughter will attend in the future. I have found that my time on the Committee over the years has been both enjoyable and rewarding. It really is a wonderful school and to say thank you I try and help as much as I can even though I'm working full time, every bit of help matters.

Sandra Murray - Committee Member

I have been on the PA since 2018. I have 2 children; one in 4th and one in 5th class. Both of my children love St Paul's and all the fun events that the school hold each year. I am honoured to represent the Parents as a committee member and I am happy to help out where I can.

Events that the PA Normally Host

The PA Committee run several events during the school year from hosting a welcome morning for the junior infant families to helping out Santa on his travels around the school. A great effort is put in by all committee members and parent volunteers we will go above and beyond to ensure all children have an unforgettable experience. Below are the events that we run in conjunction with the School. Most of these are on hold due to current restrictions, but we will facilitate as many as we can within guidelines.

JUNIOR INFANT WELCOME MORNING

The committee are on hand to host a welcome morning for Parents of junior infants to meet each other in a relaxing environment with a nice cup of tea to calm the nerves all the while knowing that your child is a few metres away in their class room being welcomed by their new teacher and starting big school. By bringing the Parents into the School Hall and providing refreshments the chat can flow instead of tears, as more Parents cry than children believe it or not.



CONFIRMATION & COMMUNION PARTIES



After our students have been confirmed or have received their first holy communion they look forward to meeting each other back at the school and the committee together with many of our Parents who volunteer to help on the day

are ready and waiting to welcome them and their Parents for a party, with plenty of refreshments we take pride in decorating the room with a photo area, balloons, cake, we even take out the good linen tablecloths for these very special occasions. A great day is had by all the feedback and the thanks from Parents is very much appreciated by the Committee, and the volunteers who help us.

EASTER VISIT



Just before the Easter break our very own Easter Bunny and helper, visits each classroom but not before he helps the teachers to hide chocolate eggs all over the school yard for each class to find. The Junior and senior infants love this and get very excited to meet the Easter Bunny. The older classes love the chocolate! The PA are proud to sponsor this event.

GRANDParents DAY

Two years ago the School decided to host a GrandParents day for all the pupils in our school. Fr Gerry held mass at the Holy Trinity Church of Ratoath for all attending, with beautiful Hymns performed by the 2nd class students throughout the ceremony. We prayed and remembered all our grandParents no longer with us or those unable to attend on the day. The PA Committee together with some parent volunteers helped us provide refreshments when the grandParents and Parents returned to the school hall with the added treat of a musical performance by our School Choir. Each Grandparent then went on to visit their Grandchildren in their classrooms. The children sang, played games and showed them around their classrooms.



GRADUATION



As each school year ends, it is time to say goodbye to our 6th class students. It is a special time for everyone and what better way to say goodbye than a trip down memory lane, as the students and Parents view a slide show of their children throughout the years from Junior infants to 6th class. This is followed with a presentation of achievements and then graduation. The Committee are always there to provide refreshments to the students and their families with a nice cup of tea or coffee, hot chocolate for the graduates and lots of sweet treats.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

We are so sad to tell you that due to Covid 19 Restriction's our beloved school Christmas Fair won't be taking place this year. Therefore we won't be making any requests this year for your secondhand books and unwanted unopened gifts for our ever popular white elephant stall, nor will we be asking you to bake for our favourite Cake stall, but we would like to take this opportunity to say **Thank You** for your generous donations in the past. Please keep all those books and unwanted gifts for next year when we will need your help once more to make the Christmas Fair a success.



Other School events that the PA provide refreshments for are the **Spelling Bee** and **Art Exhibition** evening.

Christmas Treat

As you might have heard Santa is cocooning until Christmas Eve to keep himself, Mrs Claus and the elves safe. However, he has promised to leave a little surprise under the school Christmas tree for each child in St Paul's so you will be told more about that nearer the time.



Thank you all for taking the time to read our very first Parents' Association Newsletter. We do hope you find it useful. We sincerely welcome any feedback that you have for us, or any suggestions and ideas you have for the future.

You can contact us at stpaulsratoathpa@gmail.com