

Chairperson's Report 2019/2020

20 April 2021

The new academic year in September 2019 began no different than any other school year for our PTA. We held our AGM in October and began brainstorming and planning events for the year ahead.

In October we held our Halloween Disco, this was well attended and enjoyed by the pupils and helped get our fundraising efforts off to a great start.

We got into the Christmas spirit early and held our Christmas Fair in November. This is always a great night for our school and is well supported by our school families and members of the Anahilt community. There was a great atmosphere and, as always, was our biggest annual fundraising event. To coincide with our Christmas Fair we launched our Anahilt Primary School Recipe Book. A fantastic book filled with recipes sent in by our school families and staff members. We have a number of books remaining, they have been reduced from £5 to £2 and can be purchased at Glebe Farm Produce, Anahilt, or by contacting the school office or a member of the PTA. We would like to thank Glebe Farm Produce for selling these books for us throughout lockdown, it is greatly appreciated. We would also like to thank Leon and Deirdre Toland for heading up this fundraiser and for the many hours of work they put in.

On 30 November our PTA were involved in a brand new event. A model tractor show was held in Dromore High School and we were asked to provide sandwiches, tray bakes, coffee and tea. We had a fantastic day, everyone was very supportive and we raised a substantial amount of money.

Christmas cards were produced and these proved very popular and were a great way to raise funds. Our thanks to Elaine and David Douglas from Cool for School Photography for this.

The PTA also helped the Anahilt and Magheraconluce Community Association at the switching-on of the village Christmas tree lights. Our school choir took part and refreshments were served in our school assembly hall and each child received a gift from Santa.

One of our PTA members, Gillian Patterson, who works in Marks and Spencer, Sprucefield, managed to get a bag packing slot for 23rd December (the busiest shopping day of the year!) We teamed up with Anahilt Playgroup and many of our parents and staff gave up their precious time to help us raise an outstanding amount of money.

We began 2020 with our Movie and Munch night in February, an evening that our children love. It always proves to be a great fundraiser for the PTA.

We had big plans for April 2020 with a Gala Ball to be held in the beautiful Larchfield Estate. Everything was going to plan until "LOCKDOWN"!

All further PTA events had, therefore, to be cancelled although we were able to have a very 'low key' socially distanced P7 Leavers event in the school playground.

During 2019-20 we benefitted greatly from two grants, one from the National Lottery allowing us to purchase 16 new laptops for our ICT suite, and another from DAERA with which we purchased an outdoor classroom. We are very thankful to Andrew Gowan for his help with this and the many hours of work he put in. Both purchases will be so beneficial to our school, making life easier for our teachers and a fantastic asset for our pupils.

In 2019 we set out to upgrade our ICT suite, with the obvious set back of Covid 19, fast forward to today and we have almost achieved this, and in a few weeks our pupils will have a new upgraded ICT suite, something which will benefit them greatly.

I would like to conclude by thanking our secretary, Amanda Brisbane. Amanda has now moved on from Anahilt Primary School and is greatly missed as a committee member and fantastic secretary, always there working behind the scenes and doing a sterling job.

Our thanks also to our treasurer, Alison Wilson. Alison is very much my 'right-hand woman', an amazing treasurer who has a real heart for our school.

My sincere thanks also to our committee: Eleanor Baird, Vonla Gregg, Andrew Gowan, Rachel Vaughan, Gillian Patterson, Leon Toland and Andrea Walker, for the huge amount of time and effort given to the PTA, to raise funds to enhance the lives of not only their own children but for every child in the school.

I have been so blessed to have been part of such a strong and supportive team and it has been an absolute pleasure to work with them.

The PTA isn't just about 12 members. It involves the support of family members too, and at this stage I would like to pay tribute to the late Andrew Vaughan, husband of our committee member Rachel Vaughan and dad to Tilly, Benji and Micah. Andrew was always so supportive to our PTA, willing and ready to help, whether it was helping practically as DJ at our discos, using his photography skills, getting his hands dirty painting railings, or helping financially, he was always first to put his hand in his pocket to donate a raffle prize or sponsor an event. He was always happy to support us in any way he could. Andrew will be remembered with great fondness by the PTA and he will be sorely missed.

Thank you to our Principal, Mr Reid, for his ongoing support and encouragement and to our teacher representative, Mrs Purdy, for all she and her husband, Ian, do for our PTA and our school.

In June 2020 a lot of our PTA members moved on from Anahilt Primary School: Eleanor Baird, Amanda Brisbane, Gillian Patterson and Leon Toland. I would like to personally, and on behalf of our PTA thank them sincerely for all they have done for our school. They are greatly missed.

Finally, but most importantly, thank you to our pupils, parents, families, friends, staff of Anahilt PS and members of the local community who have all played a huge part in raising funds for our school.

Looking forward, we have many plans and many things we would love to improve. Please continue to support us whether practically at events or financially by sponsorship or donations. We look forward to working together to raise funds for our pupils and our amazing school.

Thank you.

Janet Patterson
Chairperson