**School report to Friends AGM**

**Thursday 14th November**

As always the AGM is an opportunity to reflect on the wonderful work of a successful committee. As a small school, we are so fortunate to have such a proactive team of Friends. Not only it is Friends an invaluable source of additional funding but a fun, friendly, sociable group.

I say this every year but the hard work and dedication of the committee never fails to amaze me. To everyone who has given time for meetings, grilling burgers, counting stock, making balloon animals, counting money, bagging sweets, building bonfires, applying for licence, chasing the bank, the list goes on - a huge thank you!

A particularly big thank you to everyone involved in the preparation and planning for our recent bonfire night! Each year the ambition to organise an enjoyable, well organised and safe display is realised with efficiency. This year this was is in no small part down to Derek, Catherine, Ryan and Chris, Jonathan and Dane. I know how much work goes on behind the scenes to make it happen so it is great to know it was also highly profitable!

The summer BBQ finally happened and was a thoroughly enjoyable event. Not only did we raise significant amounts of money but it was a great community event that was enjoyed by parents, children and the wider village community.

As a fairly new committee there has been much change to get our heads round from how much mulled wine to buy and where to buy it from to who to get to run the disco. The time and care taken in each of these thoughtful decisions is very much appreciated. The last few years are challenging times for fundraising, we have kept a steady income coming in and raised significant amounts to fund future school projects. Our community links mean we are able to draw on other organisations to join forces in our fundraising efforts working with rather than against competing events.

Contributions to school this year have been more limited with our intention to raise large amounts of money for a large project. The smaller purchases also make huge difference! Friends continue to support classes with their class budgets (£300 per year) which makes a big difference to teachers wanting to plan fun, practical activities to support the curriculum from purchasing topic books, cooking ingredients to reducing the cost of trips, all these contributions are extremely valuable. It has also been great to have friends support with some school activities (e.g. the Readathon) allowing us to maximise our profits by claiming gift aid.

The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL <https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/> ) initiative is taking off in school with our audit completed last week and action planning starting next week. It is a hugely exciting project and one that the funds Friends have in the bank will be drawn upon to facilitate wonderfully happy and engaging play and lunchtimes for all.

An exciting year ahead of us!

Jenny Mitchell-Hilton

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Income - £11.519.49 including profit BBQ - £3,377.93, Bonfire event 2023 £3,377.93, Victorian evening £495.47, popcorn club £614.41,

Expenditure - 4519.90

Profit £6,824