

## Speech 2017

Good evening Mrs Scott, Governors, Mrs Hutchinson, teachers, parents and of course the girls.

I am here to report what FOG has been up to this year and to say a few thank yous. The danger of thanking people is forgetting someone so I apologise in advance if I do and for mis pronounced surnames!

The school year started as always with the annual Headmistresses drinks. This is always well attended – nothing to do with the free wine I am sure. It is a really lovely evening with the opportunity to chat with other parents and the staff in an informal setting. Thank you very much to the Year 3 reps, Illona Hunt, Clare Craggs and Annabel Byk for organising such a relaxed and enjoyable evening and to the teachers for attending – again – nothing to do with the free wine!

We continued the success of last years Junior Movie Night with the screening of Alvin and The Chipmunks – The Road Chip. Lots of excited girls gathered in their onesies on a Friday afternoon in October to sing along to the chipmunks version of Uptown Funk on repeat! Thank you so much to Lindsay Gorrill and Claire Iqbal and the parents of Year 2 for co-ordinating this hugely popular event (although I am not sure the cleaners were so keen when they saw the carpet of popcorn left behind)

The legendary Secret Santa was a huge success again this year and thank you to all those who donated gifts, wrapped them and helped on the day. Charlotte Kramer and Carleen Kirk headed up the team again with Tanya Cons and her team in the wrapping room. The elves do break for a festive drink and sandwich between sessions so it is not all hard

work. Thank you also to Mr McElroy – it wouldn't be the same without you! The event raised a fantastic £1,400.

Another FOG Christmas tradition is the Christmas Cards designed by each child. Thank you very much to Ymkje Vlutters who took complete control and the school for supporting it and of course you for buying them. They raised an impressive £539.

The Granville Christmas Puddings were another successful fundraiser and made £260. If you haven't tried them there are not just traditional Christmas puddings but sticky toffee, lemon and chocolate (a favourite in our house) complete with a personalised Granville label so they make a great present or just an addition to a Sunday lunch.

The Race Night in March was well attended. For those of you that couldn't make it you missed eating fish and chips off artificial grass and lots of parents shouting at horses on a giant TV screen. Confirming the theory that the bookie always wins we raised a fantastic £794. Thank you to Year 4, especially Anna Jansen for organising the event.

We just had time to finish our Easter eggs before the annual Founders' Day fete was upon us in May. We fully appreciate how much work the reps and helpers put into the preparation and running of the stalls. I think the atmosphere on the day and the look on the childrens' faces (although that might just be the sugar overload) definitely makes it worthwhile. This year we raised £6,400.

Finally this term we had the Senior Disco just last week. I know the year 4's in particular were eagerly waiting for this evening having heard stories and seen photos over the years and now finally being old enough to attend. And it didn't disappoint. Thank you in particular to Vikki Rutter and Julia Lance (who have both been a constant support over the last

couple of years) – your last event ladies! Ronnie Mundair and Monica Bezuidenhout and the other year 5 and 6 helpers. And if Mrs Eastwood is looking for a song for the next school event I suggest Watch me Nae Nae by Silento as I can vouch that the girls already know all the words!

The School second hand shop has run seamlessly this year and the new opening time of Friday afternoon seems popular. Thank you to Giesla Slowinski and Liz Stopford for taking this on and making it your own. It is a huge fundraiser for FOG but also provides an invaluable service to the parents.

So this year we have raised just short of £10,000. We were able to fund a second set of ipads, the gardening club and replace some of the old gazebos and tablecloths and still have a very healthy bank balance in preparation of the demands of the new building.

So a couple of final thank yous. To my fellow committee members, Emma Dowell who for the second year sat in the office for the entirety of the fete counting money and sorting floats without a word of complaint! Next year you can see what happens on the outside! Helen Branch who makes sense of the discussions at the committee meetings and keeps us organised and of course Anna Jansen. Although Anna has only had an official job title as Head of Events this year she has been a huge support to the committee since she joined the school being involved in the organising of no less than 3 fetes and other various events. Thank you Anna for all your support you have been amazing.

To our husbands! I am not sure we give them much choice when we sign them up to run the bar, man the bouncy trampolines, lug empties around, look after the kids while we set up or clear up for an event or listen to our 4am

worries that we have to change the location of the Ball at the last minute. We do appreciate it!

Also to Barbara and Annabelle in the office who politely remind us of what needs to be done and when, sending out e-mails and reorganising the newsletter to accommodate our last minute additions. Thank you ladies you make our job so much easier.

To Mr Whiting. What can I say? There are no words to express our gratitude. You always go over and above with your support for our events and demands and we definitely couldn't do it without you. I am sure you go home after every fete wishing you could never see another gazebo!

So finally good luck to the new committee. JD and Polly O'Brien, a husband and wife team, taking over the roles of Chair and Events. Genevieve Heselden as FOG secretary and Bing Henderson as Treasurer. It is so nice to have parents from lower down the school heading up the committee and I really hope you support them in their roles.

I have been involved with FOG on and off since my eldest daughter joined the school in 2003 and can honestly say I have loved it. Above all I have made some great friends – there is nothing like bonding over an overstuffed dishwasher at midnight or clearing up empties on a Sunday morning to form firm alliances. FOG is vital part of school life not only funding “little extras” to supplement the schools' own budget but providing an opportunity for parents to socialise together so please continue to support it – volunteer to be a class rep, come along to an event, donate something for secret Santa. I know we all lead increasingly busy lives but your support is vital and really appreciated.

So good luck year 6 leavers with the next chapter in your lives. Enjoy yourselves and remember if in the very distant

future you have the opportunity to join a Parents Association say yes – you won't regret it!