

The PTA had another successful year. The following is a summary of the highlights.

Playground project

Phase one was successfully completed on time! The work followed extensive consultation with parents, teachers and pupils, drawing on the expertise of the charity 'Learning through Landscapes'. The PTA committed £24,000, with match funding from the school capital budget. The junior and infant playgrounds were switched over, an enclosed games area was built and improved play features and new planters were installed in the infant playground. Feedback so far has been very positive.

Fundraising to enrich the curriculum

The PTA had a very successful year of fundraising. The Christmas fair moved to a Saturday encouraging more visitors and a wider range of parents and carers. The International Cookbook was launched and sold well, celebrating the diversity of the school community. The three main fund raising events were the Christmas Fair (£4,000), the Richmond May Fair (£2,000) and the school Summer Fair (£5,000) with the theme of 'Digging it for Darell'. Events such as bake sales and evening entertainment were also very popular and raised a significant amount over the year. We are delighted that PTA funds supported a wide range of activities including the successful Book week, Art week, extra curricula trips and around £5,000 of additional resources to enrich children's learning.

Treasurer's report

Over the course of the year, we have raised around £14k, an impressive total. There was a significant amount – around £20k – in the PTA account at the start of the year, but with the major contribution we made to the playground development and all the other school activities we have supported, we now have around £3k left.

Open to all

The PTA has become more open. Agendas are publicised in the school newsletter in advance of meetings, the PTA section of the website has been updated, the PTA constitution has been more widely circulated (available at the AGM), and the PTA now has an email address. We also organised themed meetings – one on the playground and one on the role of the school Governors.

We estimate that over 150 parents/carers and school staff actively helped on a stall or at an event and that over 300 participated at least once in some way during the year. This is really important for sustaining the strong sense of community spirit and cohesion for which Darell is well-known.

An exciting year ahead

We believe our main priority this year should be to complete phase two of the playground project – the Adventure Trail in the junior playground. We also plan to re-organise the PTA executive in order to share the load and further increase participation. And of course we still hope to support exciting events such as Book week and Science week throughout the year.

Dan Drake, Fern Roberts & Ray Ferris on behalf of Darell PTA