



Friends of Worplesdon School Chair's Report, September 2025

Who are the Friends of Worplesdon School (FoWS) & what are our goals

The Friends of Worplesdon School is our official charity name. We are a group of like-minded parents & teachers who raise funds through events and initiatives enhancing the learning experience for our children at school and ultimately creating amazing memories!

Volunteers include parents, other family members, carers and teachers. Every parent (or carer) automatically becomes a member of the FoWS whilst their child is a pupil at Worplesdon Primary School; you don't need to officially sign up! Your level of involvement is entirely up to you, from helping with one small event right through to being a regular attendee of meetings or taking the lead on one of our key events or initiatives.

We currently have an elected core committee of four trustees who manage all aspects of the FoWS. These positions are key and are held by volunteers. The current committee members are:

- Natasha Baxter – Chair
- Karen Pointer – Vice Chair
- Claire Mitchell – Treasurer
- Jen Stanhope - Secretary

Other committee roles that were held during the 2024/25 period were:

- Marta Ward – Design Expert & lead
- Sarah Gosden – Social Comms lead
- Karen Pointer – Traditional comms lead (noticeboard / Seymours boards)
- Karen Pointer & Lauren Shelton – 2nd hand Uniform co-Ordinators

We also have a team of around 20-25 parents who are our class reps/volunteers, some of whom simply help us by cascading information to their classes and drumming up support and about 10 of whom are actively involved throughout the year with most events and initiatives. This year we are in desperate need of more volunteers; many of them now have other priorities which means their time to volunteer is more limited and many of them are leaving at the end of this academic year so we need to be in a strong position for the medium-long term. Each and every one of you is so very welcome to join the team – whether you can spare a few minutes each week to share communications through your WhatsApp group, lead one of our smaller events (with our full support and direction) or spare a few hours to prep for one of our events. There really are so many jobs that need doing throughout

the year, large or small, many of which can be done in your own time at home around personal / work commitments, so do please get in touch by email or grab us at the school gate if you want to become more involved!

Summary of the Year

This year the FoWS have organised and delivered a range of events and activities to raise funds for the benefit of the school and its pupils. They have included:

- Happy Bags donation mornings
- Fashion Show in partnership with the FLGCA
- Christmas Fair & Raffle
- Christmas Cards/merchandise
- Uniform & Fancy Dress sales
- Break the Rules (BTR) Days
- Wonka Bars
- Easter 2025 Challenge
- Junior Disco
- Infant Magic show
- Summer Fair & Circus
- Frozen Fridays

Plus:

- Selling refreshments at sports days
- Income from Guildford Lottery, EasyFundraising & MyNameTags
- A one off donation from DBD Pitmans Charity via a parent nomination

We started the year with £7,604 & our total income for the year (including any ad-hoc donations) was £25,563. Our expenses for the events above were £6,916. We spent £12,103 on support for the school and £580 on other costs, giving a total expenditure of £19,519. Full details can be found in the Treasurers Report.

During 2024/25, the funding raised has been used for a number of invaluable items for the school (please see Treasurer's report for the detail) but we are delighted to report that we've funded another six interactive white boards, leaving just a final six to fund in the new Autumn term. This will mean every single classroom will have this hugely beneficial screen to aid both learning for the children and ease of lesson delivery for the staff.

Key Successes & Lessons Learnt

This was our second year as a team of four Trustees and following a hugely successful and rewarding first year we wanted to hit the ground running and set our sights on an equally ambitious year 2. We were keen to build on our successes, face into the events that didn't work so well (or took manpower we just didn't have) and introduce / try some new events and initiatives, all whilst keeping affordability and requests of parents / carers to a minimum.

We kept the ever-successful Happy Bags, BTR Days & Frozen Fridays in the diary – these are easy wins for us, raising a lot of money for very little effort on our part. And along with 'easy' income from Guildford Lottery, EasyFundraising & MyNameTags, we held a fancy-dress sale ahead of WBD which we will look to replicate once again.

We held our first partnership with the FLGCA (Fairlands, Liddington & Gravetts Community Association) in the form of a Fashion Show, raising £550. And are keen to work together again to forge closer relationships with the local community.

Our Christmas Fair and Grand Raffle was another roaring success raising £5,394 versus £4,406 in 2023. This is a great example of a wider team stepping up and pulling together to deliver a fantastic event for the school and the local community.

After much deliberation we decided not to hold Wonderful Women Day; whilst it is a truly special and fun experience for the children, it's a huge ask for families to buy gifts to donate and then send their children in with £2 each to purchase a gift. As we didn't have a plan for our Marvellous Men event we decided we would channel our efforts into 2 other events that we knew our children would love – a disco for the Juniors and a magic show for the Infants. The disco is always a tricky one for us – the children absolutely love it but we struggle with volunteers to prep (which in turn means a huge amount of work for one person) and volunteer on the day (which puts extra pressure on staff to help). We would dearly love to continue running this event but need more support to make it happen for your children.

Turning attentions to our summer event, we set ourselves quite the challenge! Having seen many schools hold successful circuses (including WPS many years ago) we set our sights on finding one that could attend, whilst still retaining the 'funfair' side of the event which the children love. Whilst the afternoon was a true success, raising £3,788, we realise we put ourselves and our volunteers under immense pressure by delivering a '2 in 1' event. We will take on board all learnings and feedback in order to plan our 2026 Summer event.

For the 25/26 academic year we also have the usual favourites planned into the diary, including the Christmas Fair, plus an upcoming visit from Gladiator Steel in April as part of the school day! We will take on board the end of year survey results and use these to help plan the remaining calendar of events. As always, we need to ensure a good balance of money-making events/initiatives versus those the children (and parents) love, which will create happy everlasting memories. And we must be clear and practical on what we can and can't physically deliver as a team.

Thank Yous

I would like to take this opportunity to say a BIG thank you to the Trustees & the wider team who have pulled together events and activities despite full time jobs, children, family and other commitments.

Furthermore I would like to thank Mrs O'Brien, the rest of the leadership team and all of the office staff for their continued support & patience with our many requests!

We have also received many generous donations from local businesses, who have been individually thanked throughout the year.

It goes without saying, that without the FoWS helpers, who generously donate items, bake, man stalls, lend equipment, sponsor, donate monies and contribute, our events would not be possible.

Final thanks must go to the whole school & local community for supporting us at each of our events. Without this support we would not have raised the monies we have, created some lifelong memories and been able to fund so many worthwhile much needed items for the school & children.

Plan for 2025/26 – detail of which will be discussed in the kick off meeting after the AGM

- Elect in the key officers for the year ahead.
- Discuss the events & initiatives we have in the plan for the Autumn term, namely:
 - October Prosecco & Painting evening (currently no volunteers to run this – or any alternative event)
 - Second Hand Uniform sale
 - Happy Bags collection, 3rd October
 - BTR Day, 10th October
 - Christmas Cards/merchandise
 - Christmas Fair, 23rd November
- The full Spring & Summer Term Events calendar will be worked up in due course, agreed with the school & shared with the school community
- Trustees to meet with Kareen O'Brien each half term
- The secretary to put regular social meetings in the diary for the coming months

All of our events & initiatives require support from the FoWS community. If you are interested in helping in any way or have any fundraising ideas, please contact the team on worplesdonprimarypta@gmail.com

Natasha Baxter, FoWS Chair
September 2025