



Friends of Worplesdon School Minutes
Tuesday 22nd September 2026

Attendees

Natasha Baxter
Kirsten Heffer
Jen Stanhope
Judith Strange
Edith Pozzoni
Iren Puj
Michelle Seymour
Tina Warner
Rachel Pengelly
Lucy Dibsdall

Apologies

Tori Bispham
Christina Gurney
Jane Sumners
Lauren Shelton

Welcome

Natasha welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

Points for discussion:

1. Recruiting a new FoWS committee

- a. With current Trustees stepping down, there was a discussion around how FoWS could run in future if no one steps forward to take on these roles. There was a suggestion of having silent trustees who run only the simple events that require minimal input.
- b. The question of whether school events, such as a disco, can be run without a PTA in position and how the generated funds are given to the school, was brought up. This will be considered further if we reach a point where the FoWS is dissolved.

2. Class representatives

- a. There is a new Whatsapp community in place which simplifies disseminating FoWS advertising and reminders for events.

- b. Class representatives are still valuable to drum up support and volunteers.
- c. The class representative list will be reviewed and requests will be sent out to fill any gaps.

3. Committee-run Autumn term events:

- a. **Happy bags** - run by Kirsten.
 - i. We had the smallest haul to date with Happy Bags this year. There was a suggestion that maybe it was run too close to the start of term when some Reception children had only just started.
 - ii. The option of running the collection on different weekdays to catch a varied audience was also suggested.
- b. **Break the rules** - run by Kirsten.
- c. **Xmas4Schools (Christmas cards)** - run by Jen.
 - i. Artwork supplies are in school ready to be sent home on 12th October and returned to school on 3rd November to be sent off.
 - ii. We will need a team to help collate orders per class once products arrive in school.

4. Operation Christmas Magic and the Christmas Fair - Edith provided an update from the Christmas Fair team:

- a. Edith introduced Operation Christmas Magic, their six-mission whole-school engagement campaign leading to the FoWS Christmas Fair on Sunday 29 November, from 11:30am to 2:30pm.
- b. The campaign has already been approved by Mrs O'Brien and is now moving from the planning stage into delivery. Its purpose is to build excitement and family participation by connecting the school's established Christmas collections and Fair activities through one clear journey.
- c. Children will receive Christmas Adventure Passports and complete missions linked to the hamper, raffle, bottle, chocolate and cake collections, with the final mission taking place at the Fair.
- d. The campaign includes free participation routes so that every child can be involved, whether or not their family donates, sells raffle tickets, uses a passport or attends the Fair. Teachers' workload has also been deliberately limited: the FoWS Christmas Fair Team is responsible for the resources, parent communications, collections and most of the administration.
- e. Key dates:
 - Teacher and staff briefing: Thursday 24 September
 - Whole-school launch assembly: Friday 25 September
 - ParentMail, Newsflash, posters and North Pole Portal launch: Friday 25 September
 - Mission 1 Hamper Collection: Friday 2 October
 - Raffle ticket distribution: Friday 6 November
 - Bottle Collection: Friday 13 November
 - Chocolate Collection: Friday 20 November
 - Cake Collection: Friday 27 November

- Christmas Fair: Sunday 29 November, 11:30am–2:30pm
- f. Current planning position:
- i. A substantial amount of the Fair and campaign infrastructure is already in place, including:
 - KS1 and KS2 Christmas Adventure Passports for approximately 500 children
 - Classroom resource boxes and teacher packs
 - Teacher Handbook, staff email and briefing materials
 - Launch assembly video
 - A large Santa letter and envelope for the assembly
 - North Pole Portal and Christmas Help Hub
 - ParentMail, Newsflash and social-media communication plans
 - Main campaign and Mission 1 posters
 - Mission 1 Parent Guide and collection resources
 - A campaign timeline covering all six missions
 - Year 5 and Year 6 Ambassador and North Pole Checkpoint plans
 - Santa's Grotto and vulnerable-children planning
 - Games review and development
 - Vendor application and administration process
 - Raffle distribution, returns and extra-ticket process
 - 500 A5 raffle information leaflets, sponsored and printed free of charge
 - Sponsorship materials and business prize vouchers
 - g. The named workstream leads are:
 - Edith – Campaign Lead and School Liaison
 - Marta Ward – Design
 - Jean – Raffle
 - Sophie – Vendors and Marketplace
 - Iren – Social Media
 - Kirsten – Treasurer
 - Natasha - Santa and his elf and vulnerable-children arrangements
 - h. Raffle discussion:
 - i. There was a useful discussion about previous raffle arrangements and the importance of allowing enough time for prize sourcing and ticket sales.
 - ii. Trustees explained that last year there was a dedicated raffle WhatsApp group and a spreadsheet recording businesses contacted, responses, follow-ups and donated prizes. Edith agreed that this was a helpful working method that we should incorporate this year.
 - iii. Previous donor and business-contact lists will be valuable historical references. However, all current activity will need to be entered into this year's central raffle tracker so that they can:
 - See which businesses have already been contacted
 - Record who made each approach and when
 - Prevent businesses receiving duplicate requests
 - Track responses and required follow-ups

- Record prizes promised, received or awaiting collection
 - Allow other team members to assist with sourcing
- iv. The raffle process itself has already been designed, including family allocation, distribution, returns, requests for extra tickets and Fair-day sales. The outstanding task is to bring all prize-sourcing activity into the shared system and then widen the volunteer group in a coordinated way.
- i. Vendor discussion:
 - i. Vendors were also identified as an important operational area.
 - ii. A vendor application process, booking structure and central tracker have already been created, and vendor recruitment is underway. The current system records applications, documentation, payments, raffle-prize contributions and outstanding follow-ups.
 - iii. The discussion highlighted that not all vendor activity was yet visible within the central records. The next step is therefore to bring the information together so that the core team has one accurate overview of:
 - Vendors who have applied
 - Vendors who have been accepted
 - Payments received or outstanding
 - Insurance and food-hygiene documentation
 - Raffle prizes offered by vendors
 - Enquiries and applications awaiting a response
 - The balance of food, drink, activity and marketplace stalls
 - iv. Edith explained that this is a coordination and visibility matter rather than an absence of a vendor plan.
- j. Collaborative working and shared systems:
 - i. One of the main outcomes for Edith was the importance of ensuring that all work is visible to the core FoWS Christmas Fair Team
 - ii. The shared Gmail account, Google Drive, central raffle tracker, vendor tracker and Christmas Fair planning documents have already been established. These now need to be used consistently by everyone working on the project.
 - iii. Previous spreadsheets and earlier Fair records are welcome as valuable references. Current activity, however, needs to be recorded in the current shared system so that the team can see the full position, provide accurate updates and step in when somebody needs support.
 - iv. Not everybody needs to enter information into a spreadsheet personally. Where that is difficult, notes or a handwritten list can be passed to another team member to add. The important point is that the final information becomes centrally visible rather than remaining within separate lists, private accounts or individual WhatsApp conversations.
 - v. Edith confirmed at the meeting that she would discuss these working arrangements directly with the core Christmas Fair Team. The purpose of the core-team meeting is to support Sophie and Jane, consolidate the information and agree how the systems will be maintained going forward.

- k. Experience from previous fairs:
 - i. There was useful discussion about previous Fair arrangements, including:
 - Previous raffle donors and reliable local business contacts
 - Volunteer recruitment and realistic staffing levels
 - Teachers traditionally supporting Santa's Grotto in pairs for approximately 45-minute slots
 - The need to confirm alcohol-licensing arrangements
 - Storage of raffle prizes and donated items
 - Fair-day layout and use of the school spaces
 - Setup, clear-down, queues and possible bottlenecks
 - Processes or activities that worked particularly well
 - ii. Edith felt that this practical knowledge was welcome and will help strengthen the current plan. She felt it is most useful when the experience identifies not only a previous problem, but also what worked, what should be retained and what practical solution is recommended for this year.
- l. Wider FoWS support:
 - i. As the project moves forward, they will need the wider FoWS community to help with:
 - Sourcing raffle prizes through allocated personal or business contacts
 - Setup before the Fair
 - Short Fair-day volunteer shifts
 - Clear-down after the Fair
 - Santa's Grotto
 - North Pole Checkpoint and prize room
 - Games and activities
 - Mission 1 collection and sorting
 - Sourcing any remaining materials and decorations
 - Sharing reliable suppliers and constructive lessons from previous fairs
 - ii. The FoWS Christmas Fair Team is already progressing an ambitious but carefully structured plan. What will help most now is positive reinforcement, practical collaboration and shared ownership, together with the strongest experience from previous fairs.
 - iii. Edith's aim is to respect and learn from what has been done before while giving the current team the space and support to deliver the agreed 2026 plan.

5. Spring & Summer term events:

- a. On hold until a new committee is appointed.

6. Other large fundraisers: The following items will be discussed at a future meeting due to time constraints.

- a. **Pre-loved uniform**

- b. Easyfundraising**
- c. Grant applications**
- d. Further event suggestions and volunteers to lead**