



Friends of Worplesdon School Chair's Report, September 2026

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
- Kirsten Heffer – Treasurer
- Jen Stanhope - Secretary

Other committee roles that were held during the 2025/26 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 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. However a number of these volunteers were year 6 parents who have now left.

It must be noted that some Trustees & key volunteers are to step down in the 26/27 academic year & we therefore need to recruit:

- Natasha Baxter – Chair
- Karen Pointer – Vice Chair, Traditional comms & 2nd Hand uniform

- Jen Stanhope – Secretary
- Marta Ward – Design Expert & lead
- Sarah Gosden – Social Comms lead

Natasha Baxter & Jen Stanhope will continue as trustees until Christmas if required, after that point if new Trustees have not come forward to be elected, the FoWS will sadly close (due to the need to have 3 Trustees in place for a Charity to operate).

Lauren Shelton will pick up our relationship with the Seymours advertising team and will lead the 2nd hand uniform shop.

This year we are therefore appealing (as always) for more volunteers, but now at least 2 new Trustees, a volunteer to become our new Design Expert & lead and another to run our social media.

Each and every one of you is so very welcome to join the team, in whatever capacity that may be – whether you can spare a few minutes each week to drum up support in your classes, lead one of our smaller events (with the Trustees' full support and direction) or spare a few hours to prep for one of our key 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/whatsapp or in person if you want to become more involved!

If any of you are interested in becoming a key member of the team do drop us an email and one of us would love to talk you through it.

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
- Christmas Fair & Raffle
- Christmas Cards/merchandise
- Uniform & Fancy Dress sales
- Break the Rules (BTR) Days
- Wonka Bars
- 2026 Challenge
- Junior Disco
- Infant Entertainment
- Summer Fair
- Frozen Fridays

Plus:

- Other sources of income as per the Treasurer's report

We started the year with £13,563.87 & our total income for the year (including any ad-hoc donations) was £20,603.06. Our expenses for the events above were

£2,774.95. We spent £12,517.36 on support for the school and £223 on other costs, giving a total expenditure of £15,515.31. Full details can be found in the Treasurer's Report.

During 2025/26, 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 the final six interactive white boards, meaning every class is now benefitting from this hugely beneficial piece of equipment to aid both learning for the children and ease of lesson delivery for the staff. It's also worth noting our visit from Zac George – aka the Gladiator Steel - who brought his Zactiv workshop into WPS for the morning, holding 2 interactive and engaging sessions educating pupils about the importance of fitness & diet. Truly an inspirational man who was worth every penny – definitely one of the highlights of the year for pupils and staff alike.

Key Successes & Lessons Learnt

This was our third year in role with a change in Treasurer when Kirsten joined us. It has been another successful year, although we did struggle a little more with parent / carer engagement from a volunteer perspective so we were really mindful of what we were able to organise and achieve.

We kept the ever-successful Happy Bags, BTR Days & Frozen Fridays in the diary – these are easy wins for us, raising good money for very little effort on our part. And along with 'easy' income from Guildford Lottery and EasyFundraising, we held a fancy-dress sale ahead of Halloween & WBD and the Easter Challenge, which we would recommend replicating once again. It must be noted that the Easter Challenge has very few participants for the amount of money it raises. It would be super to try and push this a little more through Mrs O'Brien and the staff to encourage more participants, as it's an easy initiative to organise and a brilliant thing for children to do during the holidays.

Our Christmas Fair and Grand Raffle were another roaring success raising £5,559 versus £5,394 in 2024. 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. We are very excited about this year's dedicated Christmas Team organising our 2026 event.

We held our Worpleicious (Wonka) bar event for the 2nd year running which was a real hit with the children once again. This year we opened it up to staff as well with a separate bundle of prizes to win. Everyone loved getting involved and it raised an amazing £797 (up £379 on 2025!). We would definitely recommend continuing this fun event if a team can manage it - as with all of our events, we have a full 'how to' guide to help with this.

This year Broad Entertainments came into school for the afternoon to entertain the Infants (for games and dancing), whilst this isn't intended as a big money spinner we did only raise £239 so would recommend looking at alternatives to both entertain and raise a little more. The Junior disco was a roaring success (with plenty of volunteers

on the day) with new learnings gleaned about how best to manage the logistics and overall excitement of the children moving forwards. This is a must do for the Juniors - we have a great template in place and already have a volunteer (Rachel Pengelly) to take this on next year.

Our Summer Fair was stripped right back to brilliant basics – with our traditional pocket money games, tuck shop and soak the teacher to note a few. All stalls, except for the ice cream van, were FoWS-run to ensure it could be as profitable for us as possible. We were delighted to raise £2,826, only £962 less than the 2025 fair/circus combo and £8 more than 2024 (£2,817.60)!. We truly believe this is what the school community love at this busy time of year but of course we fully appreciate a new team may come in with some fresh and equally perfect ideas.

For the 26/27 academic year we also have the usual favourites planned in the Autumn Term, including the Christmas Fair, which is this year being planned & run by our newly recruited Christmas Team. A huge thank you once again for them stepping up and forming this working team; they have such a wonderful campaign in the making - look out for details soon. We dearly hope we find a new board of Trustees to continue our wonderful work from January-July and beyond.

Thank You

I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge heartfelt 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 site team, Judith Strange our staff rep 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.

As always a 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 2026/27 – 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:
 - Second Hand Uniform sale – dates tbc
 - Happy Bags collection, 18th September
 - BTR Day, 16th October

- Christmas Adventure journey
- Christmas Cards/merchandise
- Christmas Fair, 29th November
- Spring & Summer Term Events calendar pending election of new Trustees
- Kirsten & Christmas Team to meet with Kareen O'Brien each half term

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

Natasha Baxter, FoWS Chair, September 2026