

Friends of Castlethorpe School News

Autumn/Winter Term 2008

Issue 1



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Upcoming Events

- ◆ FOCS Planning Meeting (26/11)
- ◆ School Decorations
- ◆ Mummy's Night out
- ◆ Xmas Raffle

Welcome to F.O.C.S!

Hi, I'm Jackie. For those who don't know me I am the Chair of FOCS, and have enjoyed the role for the past year. My daughter is Eleanor Brain in year 2. I also, as many of you will have noticed, work at the hospital, as a Midwife, between 2 and 4 days a week (please believe me that the uniform is not fancy dress). So, as for all of us, there's never a dull moment!

Welcome to our first edition of the FOCS newsletter, which will be published every term and keep you up to date

Spooky Party

The Spooky Party is a regular event in the school calendar and is funded entirely by FOCS. The decorations looked fantastic - they seem to get better every year so thanks to all of those mums who helped out with making these. It looked frighteningly amazing and the children's costumes were brilliant - a lot of effort had obviously gone into them. Thanks also to all those parents who lent a hand

with what's going on in and out of school. We finished last term with the Summer Fete, which was a huge success, raising just over £2,000 pounds. This would not have been possible without the help and support of staff, parents, the children and local businesses. So a big THANK YOU to all of you!

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and we would welcome any feedback or suggestions that you have - so don't be shy.

*Jackie Cheshire
Chair*

with setting up the hall, tidying up afterwards and preparing and serving the food. With all great planning aside, these events never go without any hitches, particularly when we realized the Disco Man was booked to turn up an hour after the party had started!

Thanks to Sam King's powers of persuasion she saved the day and made it another FOCS success.

*Anja Schwark
Secretary*

Great North Run

Two of our mums, Natalie Westwood and Fay Fricker decided to take part in the Great North Run this year and offered to donate the sponsorship money to FOCS. First of all, congratulations on completing the run and most importantly a huge THANK YOU for doing so.

Here's a short summary of the event by Natalie Westwood:

It was a bright sunny morning when we arrived at the lineup for the Great North Run 2008 on Sunday 5th October.

The atmosphere was exhilarating and the support along the 13.1 miles by the crowd was brilliant. A very memorable occasion.

The early morning training runs have now all been worth the time and effort. It was very exciting to receive the amount of sponsorship received from Mums and Dads from school and also our own family and friends who supported the good cause - Castlethorpe First School.

We raised a massive £500.00 - so a very big THANK YOU goes out to everyone who took the time to sponsor us.

If you have any other fundraising ideas then please do come forward.

*Natalie Westwood-
Shadow Secretary*

Recruitment



"FOCS can be fun and it really does give our children greater opportunities".

FOCS is a charity run according to a constitution. Under this there are four main roles, which are the Chair (Jackie Cheshire), Vice Chair (Sam King), Treasurer (Jen Robson) and Secretary (Anja Schwark/Natalie Westwood).

Due to other commitments Zoe Clayton has had to stand down as Secretary. She has made a huge contribution to FOCS and we would like to thank Zoe for all her hard work, it was truly appreciated.

The good news is that the FOCS Committee now has a full house, as well as some very willing helpers. However, on the flip side, (oh, isn't there always one?) 75% of the Committee is made up from year 2 Mummy's, "oh no", I hear you gasp!

Now would be a great time for anyone who has ever felt that they may like to be on the Committee to come forward to hopefully shadow a member or just generally find out what FOCS is all about. Come September there will be a whole year's programme of events already planned and in place. Remember, Committee is not a naughty word! No-one expects miracles, no-one has to be a saint with a cast iron halo that doesn't slip (although this helps). It has even been suggested that anyone joining the Committee need only sign up

for a year or even a term.

It is reported in this newsletter that I saved the day at the Spooky Disco because the time had been sent out incorrectly to parents, so now I am a hero! What wasn't mentioned was it was my mistake in the first place, so you see you don't have to be perfect!

We understand that nowadays most of the parents at school have young children, full or part time jobs and life is a huge juggling act as it is, but we really do need parents to come on board please (I'm not going to beg)! OK I'll beg.....

FOCS can be fun and it really does give our children the opportunities that they otherwise wouldn't get. There are loads of great activities planned which are about getting everyone together, not just shaking the collection tin.

Remember everyone is a member of FOCS and if you don't like what's planned for the future please, please come up with some suggestions and help move us forward. Better stop writing now before I get edited out!

*Sam King
Vice Chair*

Bags 2 School



Twice a year we organise 'Bags 2 School'. It usually takes place during May and November of each year. For every tonne of collected bags we get a £200 donation.

Bags 2 school is a low effort, big result event, giving you the opportunity to de-clutter your home whilst at the same time raising money for our children. Thanks to everyone who helped distributing, filling and collecting

the bags this year.

We raised around £300 this time and we hope to continue and build on this success in the future.

*Anja Schwark
Secretary*



"The money you raise helps to give the children of Castlethorpe First School a very special introduction to their early school life by providing exceptional facilities and events".

Where does the money go?

We all spend a lot of time and effort raising money to enhance and improve our children's experience at Castlethorpe First School - but where, and how, is the money spent?

Every term Jackie Cheshire and I meet with Julie Baldwin to discuss the school's 'wish list' for equipment and funding for events. We then bring this to a FOCS meeting, to which all parents are invited to make decisions on where funds should be spent! The next such meeting will be on 26th November at 8pm at school and we would love to see you there.

In the last financial year (September 2007 – August 2008) FOCS were able to fund the following, due to YOUR support:

- Annual Spooky party – disco, decorations and food
- Christmas party – professional entertainer, party food and a gift for every pupil from Father Christmas
- Annual trip to the Christmas pantomime - tickets and coach travel
- Trip to Milton Keynes Museum March 2008 – tickets and coach travel
- Summer school trip to Wildlife Trust – tickets and coach travel
- Coach to Emberton School carol service
- Refurbishment of School library to value of £4,000 including decoration, soft furnishings, new bookcases and of course new books!



Every penny counts!

- Coach to Milton Keynes Music Festival
- Refreshments at Sports Day, Nativity and Harvest Festival events

The money you raise helps to give the children of Castlethorpe First School a very special introduction to their early school life by providing such exceptional facilities and events. As Treasurer, but foremost as a parent, I am so proud of what we achieve as such a small voluntary group, so please keep up the good work!

Full details and a copy of the signed Annual Report and Accounts will be available on request from me once they are signed at the AGM in January 2009.

*Jen Robson
Treasurer*

Contact us:

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!!! Important !!!

**FOCS Meeting 8 pm, 26th November at School
- To decide spending projects for next year -**

*Everyone welcome
This is your chance to have your say!*



Get your diaries out!

FOCS Diary - Volunteers needed!!!!

Below is a detailed overview of our future events where we need your support. Can you please let us know which event(s) you will be able to help at.

Please contact Anja Schwark, Daniel Hammond's mum (Secretary) on 07753 868166 or anja.schwark@googlemail.com. The sooner you let her know the better as it will give us a chance to coordinate the *onslaught* of volunteers...



What	When	Where	Notes
Put Christmas decorations up in school	28/11/08 (3.15 pm)	School	Decorate school for Christmas season!!
Nativity play afternoon	09/12/08 (2.00 pm)	Church	Volunteers needed to serve refreshments in church
Nativity play evening	10/12/08 (6.30 pm)	Church	Volunteers needed to serve refreshments in church
Christmas present Wrapping	11/12/08 (8.00 pm)	Gavin's House (Holmstead House, 22 North Street)	Help Santa get the children's presents wrapped for the Christmas party over a glass of wine and a mince pie
Christmas Raffle	tbc		Volunteers needed to do house-to-house ticket sales.
Christmas Party Food Preparation	16/12/08 (11.00 am)	Sam King's House, 1 Lodge Farm Cottage	Make sandwiches
Christmas Party and Christmas draw	16/12/08 (12.00 pm)	School	Help with setting up tables, serving out food, clearing up etc.
Decorations down	18/12/08 (3.15 pm)	School	Remove all Christmas decorations and store away for next year.

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Y Y Y Y Mummy's Night out Y Y Y Y

When: Date Friday, 5th December,
Where: Dim t at The Hub
Time: 8.30 pm

We will be meeting at Las Iguanas from 7.30 pm for a pre dinner cocktail (make mine a large one!)
 Please let Carolyn Chamberlain, Harry's Mum, know whether you would like to attend by Friday, 28th Nov, £5 deposit is required per person please.

Let the party season begin!

