

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2020 – WBHS PTA

AGM 22nd February 2021

It is with great delight and a tinge of sadness that I present the annual report of the PTA's activities for 2020. Delight because it is an opportunity to reflect on what we – a small group of volunteers have achieved in what can only be described as a difficult year and sadness as it signals the end of my six-year involvement with the PTA.

The PTA has three main functions: to provide help where required at school events, to act as a social forum for parents and caregivers of the school, and to raise funds to help enhance facilities at the school.

I will cover off each of these areas separately:

Supporting Westlake

Although some of the events and activities that the PTA are usually involved in did not go ahead in 2020, we still managed to assist at the school events that did occur. First on the calendar was the "Welcome to Westlake" evening in February, at which families whose boys have recently started at the school have a chance to find out more about how things work the Westlake way. This is a great forum for parents to come and talk to us about joining the PTA and we were thrilled to see some of these new parents become actively involved.

Last year the school made the decision not to hold Parent/Teacher Evenings in the auditorium but in individual classrooms. This meant our services of providing refreshments to parents with a gap between their appointments was not required. This year, with a return to the auditorium, we will once again help at these evenings.

In late July we assisted at the school's Open Evening for prospective students and the following day again helped at the very popular and busy annual Grandparents Day. 2020 saw the biggest turn out ever and with three refreshment stations the PTA's assistance was vital to help serve endless cups of tea and coffee! Our final official duty for event assistance was to help set up the auditorium for the Year 13 Graduation Dinner at the beginning of December.

In addition, we were invited by the school to take part in a Focus group run by the senior leadership team when they were reviewing the teaching timetable. We were able to voice our opinions, on behalf of all parents, on the review of daily form period, school start and finish times.

PTA Events

Following our July meeting the PTA organised and ran the highly popular “Meet the Prefects” evening. With close to 200 RSVP’s this is fast becoming a ‘must do’ event for the PTA to hold and we have already received emails from parents asking when the 2021 event will be! At “Meet the Prefects” in 2020 our senior prefects spoke to an audience of interested students from all year levels and parents about their personal journey at Westlake. Afterwards we had a Q&A session followed by an informal mix and mingle. This was a great opportunity for current students to meet the senior prefects and chat to them one on one. At this point I must acknowledge the hard work of Tracey Smith who initially organised this event to be held in May – and then due to lockdown, reorganised it all again for July. Thanks Tracey.

One of the annual highlights at the end of October is to organise a special Morning Tea for all staff. This is a chance for Westlake parents to say thank you to the teachers and support staff who work hard throughout the year for our sons’ benefit. The morning tea is highly anticipated and appreciated by staff. For 2020 the theme was “Mardi Gras” complete with necklaces of beads, colourful decorations, and music. I’d like to acknowledge Susie Turner for taking the theme and running with it – her enthusiasm and skill in decorating was hugely appreciated. We are also grateful to have so many parents donate food and gifts for this event, and we were able to provide a real feast and a gift for every staff member. I want to thank everyone who contributed to making it a special event, whether by donating things, helping during the week beforehand, setting up the staffroom on the day or clearing up afterwards.

Social Events

The PTA enjoyed a couple of fun social evenings during the year. In the middle of winter, we got together for drinks and a movie at the Bridgeway cinema, a highly enjoyable evening. Thank you to Mridula for organising this event for us.

Our final social event of the year in late November was dinner out at Mexico Restaurant in Takapuna, this was our fourth year in a row and as always was a great night out with plenty of food and laughs.

Fundraising – PTA Second-Hand Uniform Shop

The PTA run second-hand uniform shop had another successful year in 2020, raising funds for the school and providing a much-needed service for our community.

Under the leadership of Robyn Dean, the shop maintained a steady income and despite the two lockdowns, sales were only down approximately 15% on the previous year. This income enabled a substantial amount to be donated to the school. Thanks to the funds raised this year, the PTA were proud to donate almost \$26,000 to furnish five classrooms in the new Louis Borok languages block.

Several improvements to the shop’s operations have taken place this year, including an online stock control, payments, and sales system. The shop also held several weekend open days in 2020. We are grateful to all those who volunteer their time to open the shop every Friday lunchtime and

especially to Robyn Dean and Lyn Cuthbertson for many, many volunteer hours they put into running the second-hand uniform shop.

Acknowledgements/Thank You's

Leaving us tonight is Liz Peters our staff representative. Thank you, Liz, for your contribution to the PTA. You have been a great support to us over the last couple of years. We welcome new staff representative Michele Cain.

Also, leaving us tonight is Vivien McAvoy our Secretary for the past 18 months. I'd like to thank Viv for her superb admin skills in minute taking, sending out agendas, advertising meetings and all the other tasks involved as PTA Secretary. Thank you, Vivien, the PTA will miss both your secretary skills and your sense of humour.

A special thank you to our Treasurer Mridula Rajan. Her calm and friendly manner and professional ability in handling the financial side of the PTA has made my job so much easier – thank you Mridula.

Finally, none of the PTA's activities would be possible without the volunteer input of our committee. To each and every one of you – thank you for your time, contribution, and enthusiasm for the Westlake PTA, I have genuinely enjoyed getting to know you and working with you.

Fiona Scanlen

WBHS PTA President 2020