

Friends of St Peter's

Minutes of Coffee Morning – Thursday 18th September 2025
8.30–9.30am, Cedar Hub

In Attendance

Mr Mark Thomas (Headteacher), Mrs Capps (Bursar), Mr Burns, Mrs Burns, Mrs Knappett, Mrs Wells, Mrs Mangere, Mr Harris, Miss Butt, Mrs Jones, Mrs Lloyd, Miss Mikolajczyk, Mrs DiFazio, Ms Fonge, Mrs Heathwaite

Apologies

Ms Collier, Miss Maudling, Mrs Palmer

Welcome and Refreshments

The meeting began with hot croissants, pain au chocolat, tea and coffee served from 8.30am.

Mr Thomas welcomed all those present and expressed his gratitude for such a strong turnout, noting that parents are always busy and it was wonderful to see such commitment to school life.

Background and Context

Mr Thomas gave a brief history of the former PTA at St Peter's and outlined developments over the last three years. He explained the key requirements for any constituted parent association, including:

- The £5k turnover threshold for charity registration
- The requirement for a written constitution
- Elected officers (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary)
- Trusteeship
- Accounts

This provided useful context for the discussion on whether the new group should begin informally or move straight towards a more formal structure.

Discussion: Purpose and Direction of the Group

Parents reflected on the purpose of a parents' group, highlighting both the social and fundraising dimensions. Views were expressed around:

- Reigniting the social side of the parents group, building on successes from previous years
- Supporting the children through events, enrichment activities, and volunteering
- Considering financial contributions and fundraising once the group has re-established itself

It was evident that there was a strong sense of energy and enthusiasm in the room, with contributions from both new and long-standing families. Representation spanned all year groups.

Decision: Group Identity

It was agreed that the group should be known as "Friends of St Peter's." This name reflects inclusivity, and the shared ambition to support the school community.

Short-Term Priorities and Events

1. School Disco – Friday 17th October 2025

- Parents were keen to ensure the traditional school disco happened this term.
- Date and time confirmed: Friday 17th October, 5.45pm in the School Hall.
- This will be a free event for all children.

- A sub-group of parents volunteered to plan decorations, music, and games.
 - Liaison with Mr Thomas agreed.
 - Actions:
 - Mr Harris volunteered Mrs Harris to produce the Disco poster.
 - Mrs Wells and Miss Mikolajczyk offered to help with decorations.

2. Christmas Celebrations

- Parents were enthusiastic about Santa's visit and the possibility of a Christmas Fayre.
- One parent has a Santa suit and volunteered to be Santa.
- A WhatsApp group has been set up for communication and idea-sharing.
- Action: Mr Thomas to set up an email group for those not on WhatsApp.
- A follow-up gathering will take place in the first week of Michaelmas 2 to finalise plans.

Fundraising and Structure

- Some parents expressed interest in beginning income generation and moving towards a more formal structure with officers such as Treasurer.
- Several parents noted expertise within the community that could be harnessed.
- It was agreed that this development should be considered after the disco, once momentum and commitment had been established.
- There was broad consensus that the group should evolve naturally over the term, ensuring enthusiasm is matched by sustainability.

Uniform Shop

- Mrs Lloyd has volunteered to restart the second-hand uniform shop on behalf of the school
- She will meet with Mrs Capps to confirm logistics.
- The shop will sell donated uniform at 50% discount and proceeds will go into its own nominal code in the school's account, with the funds ringfenced for enrichment opportunities.
- The Friends can suggest how the funds are spent for the benefit of the pupils.
- The group welcomed this initiative and highlighted the sustainability benefits of reusing good-quality items.

Principles of the Group

Parents discussed delegation, commitment, and realistic expectations. Key points:

- The group should remain inclusive, supportive and not onerous.
- If there are not enough volunteers for an activity, it will not go ahead.
- Aspirations for future large-scale fundraising are positive, but must be balanced with pragmatism.
- The group should remain open and informal at this stage, while allowing natural growth.

Mrs Knappett eloquently summarised that the group should combine aspiration with openness and informality and suggested a more formal meeting later in the term.

Mrs Jones shared valuable experiences from past events, offering suggestions for improvement, such as a whole-school bowling event.

Summary and Closing

- A very positive and well-attended meeting.
- Clear enthusiasm to restart a parents group - Friends of St Peter's, with social events at the heart.
- Short-term focus: School Disco (October) and Christmas activities.

- Medium-term focus: developing structure, income generation, and appointing officers as the group matures.

Mr Thomas thanked everyone for their time and energy, noting how encouraging it was to see both new and returning parents contributing.

Next Steps / Actions

- Mr Thomas to set up an email group for non-WhatsApp users.
- Sub-group to plan October Disco, liaising with Mr Thomas.
- Follow-up gathering in the first week of Michaelmas 2 for potential Christmas planning.
- Mrs Lloyd and Mrs Capps to meet regarding the uniform shop.
- Parents to spread the word and encourage more volunteers.