



Colchester High School Association

NEWSLETTER

2015/16



Welcome to Colchester High School Association's newsletter for the 2015/16 academic year – a round up of all the activities we have organised and items we have funded for the school. We hope it helps you feel more informed about the work we do. Our members, including staff and parents, work incredibly hard every term to organise various fundraising events so that all pupils in the school can benefit from added extras to enhance their life at school.

Fundraising highlights

We started the 2015/16 academic year with £20,000 in the bank. To date, we have raised £4,635 from our fundraising activities this year, with approx £3,000 still to collect from the May Ball, which will bring the total to nearly £8,000.

Macmillan Coffee Morning, September 2015

We kicked off the academic year with our Macmillan Coffee Morning and AGM. This event is intended to raise money for Macmillan but also to be a welcome event for new parents at the school, a chance to meet up with friends and get to know new people. This year we managed to raise just over £500, so thank you to all the parents who showed their support.

Christmas Bazaar, December 2015

Our annual Christmas Bazaar is always a really fun event for staff, parents and pupils. This year, Liz Walker very kindly made us some smart new signage which looked amazing! We had a record number of pupil stalls this year – they are always so popular, adding to the fun atmosphere. With Santa's Grotto and a whole host of games and activities, we managed to raise £2,189 for the CHSA pot.



Fundraising highlights (continued)

Mother's & Father's Day stalls, March & June 2016

Last year's Mother's Day stall proved to be very successful, with lots of positive feedback from parents and pupils, so we ran it again this year. With a wider range of presents to choose from, the pupils had great fun choosing their gifts. We also ran a Father's Day stall in June, for the first time. This proved to be just as successful, raising £623! We couldn't have done it without the amazing help and support from Natalie Napier, who sourced and wrapped the presents. We hope you all enjoyed receiving the gifts that your children chose for you.



May Ball, May 2016

On Friday 20 May we held our May Ball in the beautiful surroundings of Le Talbooth in Dedham. We hired a magician for the first time and he performed some stunning tricks to keep us entertained during dinner. Our auction was once again a huge success with lots such as a Caribbean holiday and Porsche driving day helping us to raise over £6,000! The event was sponsored by Haart Estate Agents who have been very supportive with our fundraising efforts over the years, and a very special thanks to Elite Island Resorts who very generously donated the holiday.

A special thank you to Amanda Nieuwenhuis and Corinne Bishop who worked so hard to organise the event.



Fundraising highlights (continued)

Sports day refreshments

Once again, the CHSA set up and manned a refreshments stall at each of the sports days in the Summer term. Our team of volunteers served tea, coffee, squash and cake (courtesy of Thomas Franks caterers) to thirsty parents whilst they cheered on their children. Our gazebo was also a useful shelter during the frequent showers! Thanks to all the parents who made a donation for their drinks and to the parents who volunteered their time – Mrs Bishop, Mrs Evans, Mrs McMahon, Mr Neville, Mrs Nieuwenhuis, Mrs Thomas, Mrs Wallace and Mrs Wright.

We managed to raise a total of £250 over the four events.



Fun events

As well as organising fundraising events, we try to include events throughout the year which are just for fun, about getting the school together to celebrate a special day or event taking place in the wider community. For example, we provided crackers for the whole school Christmas lunch, Easter eggs for the Prep Easter egg hunt and a fun trip to Go Bananas for Junior school pupils.

Halloween disco

In October 2015, we organised a Halloween disco for the Lower school at Marks Tey Village Hall. We have done this for a number of successive years and it always proves to be very popular for our younger pupils.

Queen's 90th birthday afternoon tea & baking competition, 10 June 2016

To coincide with the Queen's official 90th birthday celebrations in London, we organised an afternoon tea in the school playground for all staff, pupils and parents. We also ran a baking competition with the theme 'A cake fit for a Queen' and were overwhelmed by the response from pupils, with some fabulous designs! Fortunately the sun shone for us and the playground looked suitably regal, decked out with bunting made by lower school pupils, flags, balloons and gazebos. Well done to all our category winners and thanks to all the parents and staff who spared the time to help out.



Items we have funded this academic year

In total we have distributed £11,315 back into the school in 2015/16.

- ✓ Whole school – RHS rocket science project
- ✓ Whole school – Production club materials
- ✓ Whole school – Playground shelter (to be built Summer 2016)
- ✓ Whole school – Three defibrillators
- ✓ Whole school – Peer mentor notice board
- ✓ Whole school – Crackers for the Christmas lunch
- ✓ Sixth Form – Maths in Action talks & lectures
- ✓ Sixth Form – Year 13 leavers breakfast
- ✓ Senior school – Fun maths workshops
- ✓ Senior school – Year 11 Prom
- ✓ Senior school – Year 11 leavers breakfast
- ✓ Senior school – Urban Gardening Club
- ✓ Senior school – Science equipment including cloning kits, finger print kit & ant farm
- ✓ Senior school – Guest speaker for School Council to discuss democracy
- ✓ Senior school – Geography mural
- ✓ Senior school – Set of 20 Latin books
- ✓ Senior school – Photo and video editing software
- ✓ Lower school – Cookery club equipment
- ✓ Lower school – Materials for boys and girls friendship club
- ✓ Lower school – Author visit for World Book Day
- ✓ Lower school – Subscription to Charanga Music School, interactive resource
- ✓ Lower school – French touring theatre
- ✓ Lower school – Workshops to support Curriculum Week on the theme of Diversity
- ✓ Lower school – Quiz Club subscription
- ✓ Lower school – Year 6 leavers books
- ✓ Lower school – Library seating
- ✓ Lower school – Easter eggs (Prep & Nursery) and a trip to Go Bananas as an Easter treat (Juniors)
- ✓ Nursery – Wide range of equipment including CD player, home corner kit & fish tank
- ✓ Nursery – Christmas party entertainer
- ✓ Nursery – Living Eggs

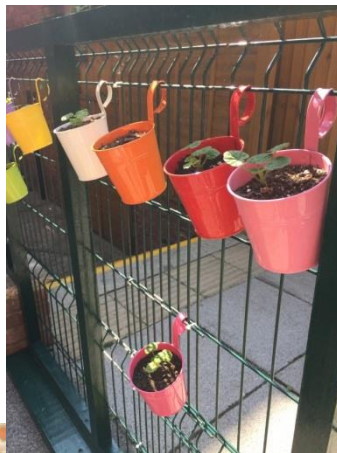
Examples of how pupils are benefitting from our fundraising

Year 7 Urban Gardening Club

The CHSA contributed £300 towards creating an Urban Gardening Club for Year 7 pupils. The money has been used to purchase plants, planters, a small greenhouse and equipment such as trowels, gloves and aprons. The pupils are loving their new urban garden, making the very most of a small area at the back of the school. One pupil said: "This club is really exciting! It encourages pupils to become gardeners. We have completed projects, grown and watered plants and much more! It has been a great year and I can't wait for next year."

Joanna Riddell, who set up and runs the club, says: "Gardening club was initially a challenge – first of all finding a space, and then getting it fenced off and ready for the short growing season. For us, the rain has helped turn a concrete space into a lush, green, fantastic garden! We have had a 100% success rate with our plants, herbs and vegetables. I have focused on seasonal planting so students can see the results before the end of term. They have enjoyed eating the chocolate mint and spearmint the most! The tomatoes are still tiny but the potatoes should be ready by the end of term so I can make a potato salad for us all to enjoy eating. We also ran a miniature garden competition, which was won by Bryn.

"It's a lovely quiet space for the students to be with their friends. I am looking forward to meeting the new Year 7s next year and will make time for the Year 8s who want to come again. I would like to thank the students for all their hard work and a big thank you to the CHSA as without you this wouldn't be possible."



Examples of how pupils are benefitting from our fundraising

Sixth Form students see Maths in Action

The CHSA paid £195 for A Level maths students to attend a series of lectures at the Institute of Education in London. The sessions were interactive, inspiring and entertaining, enthusing students while teaching them invaluable mathematical thinking skills. All the pupils attending thoroughly enjoyed the day and felt that the experience will enhance their UCAS applications, to show interest beyond the classroom.



French touring theatre

A donation from the CHSA enabled all KS2 pupils to experience a French touring theatre company at school. The show was called “Le Tour de France” and even though it was completely performed in French, the children all thoroughly enjoyed it. French teacher Mrs Porter said: “I can safely say that everyone watching it was in hysterics!”

Life cycle of a chick in Nursery

The CHSA paid £265 to purchase some eggs for Nursery pupils. They arrived in an incubator and the children had great fun watching and waiting for the eggs to hatch! Once hatched, the children enjoyed holding them and making a pen in the garden so they couldn't escape. They also enjoyed learning about the life cycle of a chick.

Defibrillators

The CHSA was able to purchase three defibrillators for the school – one placed in the Junior school, one in the Senior school and one mobile unit which can be taken out to the sports field. A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest and is an essential lifesaving step. Many public places now have them and we are proud to be able to provide this resource for pupils at the school.

Examples of how pupils are benefitting from our fundraising

Goodbye Year 11

This year, the CHSA donated £1,350 towards the Year 11 Hawaiian-themed Prom, the grand finale to their time at CHS and a very special night for all involved. Our contribution helped to pay for a DJ, sweet trolley, photo booth, casino tables, decorations and a registered doorman.



We also donated £360 to provide Year 11 with a special surprise breakfast at Missoula, on the last Friday before their GCSE study leave started. This can be a very stressful time with exam pressure looming and the breakfast enabled the pupils to relax and chat with their friends and teachers.

One pupil said: "It was a really unexpected surprise and made our last official day at school one that we will always remember. The teachers came too so it was an opportunity for us to have special, informal time with people that we have grown to respect over our years in the Senior school. It is a very stressful time and little things like this mean an awful lot."

Feedback like that makes it all worthwhile and the CHSA are really delighted to be able to support this event, particularly as some of these Year 11 pupils have been at CHS since Reception!



How can you help?

The role of the CHSA is to organise social events for pupils, parents and staff and to raise funds to purchase those extra items for the school which may not be a direct academic necessity but improve the learning environment and enrich the education of the children.

We believe the CHSA plays an important role in school life. However, we rely on volunteers and can only survive and prosper with the support of parents and staff. Events such as the Christmas Bazaar and Summer Fete take time and effort to organise and yet it is very often the same parents who come forward to help. **All** our children benefit from the events we organise and the funds we raise, so please do volunteer to help in any way you can, however small.

Our Committee meetings are generally held once or twice-termly at the school. Meeting dates are advertised in the weekly school newsletter, on the playground noticeboard and on the CHSA pages of the school website. Meetings are open to all parents and members of staff. The next meeting will be AGM on Friday 23 September at 9.30am.

However, if you don't have time to attend a meeting, you can still help by coming along to our social events, donating a prize to the raffle or offering ideas via the school office, all of which are equally important.

Any support is always gratefully received!!

Thank you.

The CHSA Committee

The CHSA Committee for 2015/16 is:

Chair – Corinne Bishop

Treasurer – Paul Neville

Secretary – Emma Wallace

Staff Committee Members: Stephen Burridge, Andrew Croydon, Victoria Groves, Liz Hill, Lisa Milburn and David Young.

Parent Committee Members: Ruth Bean, Jo Davenport, Katharine Evans, Chantelle Firkin, Lee-Ann Hubbard, Julie Kokkinos, Bev Maynard, Louisa McCrae, Vanessa McMahan, Natalie Napier, Amanda Nieuwenhuis, Ana Sanz, Jenny Stokes, Jeni Tyler and Sonia Whitlam.