

MINUTES OF BHSA MEETING

January 20th, 2022, 8pm

1. Welcome.
2. Apologies from non-attendees, including some Class Reps couldn't attend but will be involved in the Class Rep meeting in early February.
3. Minutes from the last meeting were approved.
4. Review of the Activities during the Autumn Term and recent BHSA endeavors.
 - Thank you to all the Class Reps and the volunteers for the events of last term. We all owe you a debt of thanks for helping to lift up the community spirit, which has been tested so much during Covid.
 - Secondhand Uniform Sales. Going very well with lots of donations and lots of sales. We now have some senior school stock – please keep sending that in as it sells well. Last term we saved over £11K for the parent group through these sales instead of parents shopping for full price uniform. PLEASE wash your donations before sending them in. When buying, please bear in mind that it's not a professional shop run by a full time team, it's volunteers helping out when they can, so delays may happen throughout the process. A huge thank you to the school office staff in both junior and senior school for helping the BHSA immensely with this by facilitating donations and order collections on top of their usual workload.
 - Welcome Drinks A very popular event. We had lots of feedback that it was a great evening enjoyed by all. It's really important to do something that isn't asking parents to do anything more than turn up and have a nice evening.
 - Diwali Party Huge shame that a very popular event (sold out at 225 attendees within two days,) had to be cancelled due to Covid. A huge amount of work was put into this by the team but it was the right thing to do. Thank you so much for your hard work on this. Almost everyone who bought tickets kindly allowed the charity to keep the ticket money and when we create the next Asian party event these people will a) be contacted first with first refusal on tickets b) if we can create a discount for them we will as the non perishable items have been saved for the next event.
 - Christmas Trees and Wreaths Sales Once again very well supported – great response from those who bought them; very good quality. Many thanks to Jarlath and his team for organising. Please send your photos of your trees in to the BHSA. We'd like to use them next year in our promotion of this.
 - A series of Christmas events These took place just after the Covid wave at school so numbers were affected. We created events for both junior and senior school families: bauble decorating, primarily for juniors, the wreath decorating for seniors/KS2 and the walk and carols for everyone. We also had a super covid secure activity in the form of the Cauliflower Christmas cards – thank you Alex for organizing. The events were a nice mix of fund raising and girls having fun across all of these events and they kept the Christmas spirit alive. The walk and carols event was seen as a really important way of connecting.
 - Coffee Shop Has had a stop/start journey this past term due to Covid. We are restarting again soon, but we REALLY need more volunteers to help especially from the younger years as many of the current volunteers will be leaving for the senior school soon. The Coffee Shop is an important and popular part of the school

community and is well supported by the parent group. The BHSA can no longer accept home made baked goods due to GDST rules concerning allergens though the school caterers have been very supportive in making some pastries and muffins for us.

- In addition to these events:
 - The BHSA has been working on a Welcome Document to be given to all new families starting at BHS. It was identified that new parents have found it difficult to find their way into the parent WhatsApp groups, and often felt lonely after joining the school, mostly due to Covid constraints. This is in stark contrast to how the girls feel about starting so the BHSA decided there was room for improvement there. The document will explain how to find out who your Class Rep is, what the BHSA does, that we have a second hand uniform shop before they have bought and started to wear all-new uniform. We will work with the school to ensure the messages are aligned.
 - The BHSA is developing a questionnaire for all senior school parents to find out how we can improve our support of families at the senior school.

5. Financial Update, by Simon Chambers.

- The BHSA has had quite a good financial result this term.
- Second hand school uniform continues to be very profitable and the online payment system has helped.
- Coffee Shop profits have been a bit limited due to Covid restrictions, the event only being fortnightly, and the cost of new machines. But it remains profitable.
- Diwali. Healthy tickets sales, and would have been a successful event financially had it gone ahead. A lot of food had been prepared for this event that was no longer needed at late notice. The school offered to pay 50% of this cost.
- Christmas Events All did quite well. As was reported by the whole of the leisure industry, this period suffered from fewer attendees due to Covid and the BHSA was no exception.
- Welcome Drinks It is a cost but it serves a good purpose of getting a lot of people together.
- The BHSA has moved online and to cashless payment systems which have incurred some purchasing costs and small ongoing processing costs but these are worthwhile as it's the way things work now.
- Parents voted last term to spend approx. £15,000.00 of the current funds (£50,200.00,) on the bids that were submitted. Hopefully people liked the new format of voting on the bids.
 - Qu from Iain Sousby: Have we had payment from the Amazon Smile donations? I don't see them on the financial report
 - ✓ Simon Chambers: No payments have been received recently. I shall look into that, it may be due to recent bank account changing
 - Qu from Jade Cooley: Why so much money in the account?
 - ✓ Simon Chambers: The past 2 years have had very little spending as the big playground spend was anticipated. That project became unfeasible hence why we're looking for new spending opportunities in the school for the benefit of the girls. Of the £50,000 about £15,000 is earmarked for last terms bids, and we usually like to keep about £5,000.00 in the accounts so there is no reason why the BHSA wouldn't spend the rest on projects when they come up.
 - Qu from Alex da Cunha: Can the BHSA fund swimming lessons with this money?

- ✓ Mrs Skevington: The school has the funding but there is no availability for swimming lessons. There is huge demand from lots of schools, though swimming lessons are going ahead for Y3&4 after half term.

6. Spending plans/bids

- There are no bids this term for us to discuss. Going forward the school will provide the BHSa with details of any bids in time for us to post them on the website for a week before the meeting so that more meaningful discussions can be had which is a slight tweak from last term when the bids were put online after the meeting. The voting will still place online, one week after the meeting.
- Last term's bids were all successful and we are awaiting those invoices from the school.
- The junior school has advised the BHSa that they are in the process of gaining some professional advice on how to improve the junior school playground and the BHSa is expecting to be able to contribute to those improvements with the money that was raised in previous years for the slide. This way that money is still used in the same spirit in which it was raised, ie, for the playground.

7. Future events

- The BHSa is very keen to have lots more fund raising and community building events in the rest of this year, and we have a meeting scheduled in early February with Mrs. Skevington and the Class Reps to plan out the events. Events can only happen with the support of the parent group, so volunteers will often be required.

In no particular order

Comedy Night,

Quiz Night,

More weekend walks, ending with some socialising

Camp Night,

Summer Soiree/Parents' Party

Summer Fete

Autumn Welcome Drinks Party

Diwali Party

Christmas Wreath Decorating/ Bauble decorating

Please come forward with other suggestions for events or fund raising ideas.

- We shall be continuing with the coffee shop, second hand uniform sales, Christmas tree sales, as and when!
- Please try to link up your Amazon account to our Smile account, it's simple to do and the small amount is automatically sent to the BHSa. Our Easy Fundraising link is another excellent way of supporting us – details all on the website.

<https://www.bhsaonline.org.uk/#fund-raising>

8. Class Rep and Communications update

- Huge thank you to our junior school Class Reps who send out the BHSa weekly update of BHSa info to their WhatsApp groups. If you're keen to have a form or year wide drinks or meet up of some sort please speak with your Rep as this is one of the things they do on your behalf. They are there to help the group connect.
- Please ensure your Class Rep has your updated contact details so they can send out this term's list to your form, which will go out very soon.
- There have been reports of some trolling in our parent WhatsApp groups, which is totally unacceptable. The BHSa will be asking the school to look at some sort of code of conduct being set out for parents to abide by if it continues.

- I'm aware that some parents don't always receive all the BHSA emails and/or texts when we send things out via the school. If this continues please speak with the school office – there is nothing the BHSA can do ourselves as we don't hold your data for those sorts of things. But please follow us on the social media channels if you're social media savvy, or check the website as this is our main method of communicating with you
- <https://www.instagram.com/bhsasocial/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/BlackheathHighSchoolAssociation>
- <https://www.bhsaonline.org.uk>

9. Questions.

- Mrs Zeshan (Y7): Is there a WhatsApp group for BHSA?
- ✓ Natalie Sensier Renaud: There isn't one for the senior school, but we will ask senior parents what they might like from the BHSA and will address the results.

10. Any Other Business

- Sarah Skevington: Thank you to all the parents involved, it's a huge team effort. It was lovely at Christmas to have so many in the playground for carols. We're really looking forward to some proper events and welcoming parents back into the school – our first assembly is next week, and we have a teatime concert for Y6, so thank you to all the parents for your support.
- Carol Chandler-Thompson: I want to add my thanks to that! It's been a uniquely challenging year due to all the uncertainty. We really appreciate all the work the groups have put in, for things to be cancelled. Everyone's commitment to keeping everything going makes all the difference, so thank you.
- Michelle Chambers: Thank you Natalie - brilliant info! And for organising the events that were able to happen!

11. Close.