



B L E S S I N G T O N
E D U C A T E T O G E T H E R
N A T I O N A L S C H O O L

PARENTS ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MANUAL

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Introduction

Welcome to the Blessington Educate Together National School Parents' Association manual.

Over the years the Parents Association Committee has changed and grown with the school. Like every Parent's Association, we have been involved in organising and running many events for our school. We have made some mistakes along the way, and we have learned many things.

Each year as new parents join and other parents leave, lessons from previous years have to be passed along to the new committee. To try and formalise this procedure, we have decided to create a manual detailing all the activities that take place and how to run them. As new activities are undertaken they will be added to this manual.

This manual is broken up into the following sections:

School Committees.	This is a short outline of the role of the different committees in our school including our Parents' Association
PA meetings:	This chapter outlines how we should run an Annual General Meeting and how we should organise regular monthly PA meetings.
End of Term parties.	At the end of each term we usually have a party in the school for all of the children. These include Halloween, Christmas, Easter and end of school year. There are also other occasions which the PA Committee needs to organise refreshments at the school, e.g. Cheerios Childline Breakfast morning, School Christmas Play, St. Patricks Day Parade, Sports Day and end of year Graduation.
Annual Events.	Christmas Fair, Open Day, new Junior Infants play day, Sports Day.
Setanta Book Club and Book Fair.	This details how the book club orders are placed and distributed and how the book fair is organised.
Sponsorship and Fundraisers.	Skipathon, Mini Marathon etc. Bag Packing. Lenrec clothes and mobile phone collections Hot Food Fridays Christmas Cards Calendar

Extra-curricular activities: At present we do not have a programme of extra-curricular activities but we hope to change this in the near future.

Miscellaneous School Photos
School Tours
Milk Scheme

Accounts Requisition Forms

Expense Forms

Accounts Log

Notes:

The word “parents” used throughout this document also includes guardians.

The committee of the Parents’ Association represents all of the parents in the school. In this document, we will generally say “Parents’ Association” or “PA” to mean “committee of the Parents’ Association.”

School Committees

Board of Management

The Board of Management has eight members: the school Principal, a teacher representative, two nominees from the Patron, two representatives from the Parents and two representatives from the community.

Parents' Association

The Parents' Association represents all of the parents in the school. The PA committee is elected by the parents at an Annual General Meeting, which all parents can attend.

The aims of the Parents' Association are:

..... to represent the views of parents

..... to inform parents of developments in education and in the school

..... to foster co-operation between parents, teachers and school management.

Here is how we attempt to fulfil those aims:

Represent the views of parents

The Annual General Meeting is an excellent opportunity for parents to meet and discuss their views. The PA should have regular meetings at which parents' views can be brought up. The members of the committee should talk to other parents and bring any ideas, suggestions and opinions to committee meetings. There is now a suggestion / comment box located in the hall at the front door. All comments and suggestions submitted need to be signed and dated or they will be discarded immediately.

These meetings include the Annual General meeting, coffee mornings and evening meetings. It would be helpful to have at least one parent from each class represented on the committee.

Inform parents of developments in education and in the school

A regular newsletter or letter is a great way to communicate with the parents. Ideally an update should be sent home after each PA Committee meeting. A newsletter could be produced at the end of each term to summarise the events and the work that was undertaken by the committee.

Foster co-operation between parents, teachers and school management

Regular meetings should occur between the Principal and the Chairperson of the PA Committee in order to foster two-way communication: we present parents' views and concerns, discussing forthcoming events, and discuss ways to support the school.

The PA should be in regular contact with the Board of Management. There are two parent representatives on the Board and the Board may ask these reps to liaise with the PA on specific issues. One or both of the parent reps on the board should attend regular PA meetings. The Chairperson of the PA Committee may also be invited to attend part of the Board Meetings.

Parents Association Meetings

Annual General Meetings

- Find a Venue
We generally use a room in the school.
When using the school, you need permission from the principal and you need to be sure that there will be someone available to open and close the school.
- Set a Date
When looking for a suitable date for the Annual General Meeting some things to consider are:
Are there other activities in or near the school at that time?
Will there be someone available to open and close the school?
Is it a school day? (This seems obvious, but check to see that it is not a school planning or teacher training day)
- Advertising. You will need to advertise the AGM early and often.
Notes should go in school bags at least two weeks before the AGM and then a reminder note should go in the bags about 3 days before.
Posters should go on the notice board, and indeed anywhere that parents will see them.
Word of mouth is most important – tell anyone you know everyone you see and anybody you think might be interested. Parents are more likely to attend these events if they know someone else who is going.
Get a text reminder sent on the day of the meeting. The School Secretary can arrange this.
- Attracting participants
If possible, keep the length of the AGM short.
If the budget allows, a cup of tea, coffee and some light refreshments will give parents a chance to mingle. This is also another excellent opportunity for the members of the committee to get parents' views on the upcoming year.

AGM Business

The AGM is chaired by the Chairperson of the Parents Association. The order of business¹ is usually as follows:

- PA Chairpersons Greeting. A short greeting is made by the Chairperson, welcoming all attendees and outlining the agenda for the evening.
- Board of Managements Chairpersons Greeting. The Chairperson of the Board of Management is usually invited to say a few words.
- Principals Greeting. The Principal of the School is usually invited to say a few words.

¹ See sample AGM Agenda attached.

Committee Reports

There are usually three reports at Parents' Association Annual General Meetings:

Secretary's Report

The secretary may read the minutes of the previous AGM and then present a report on the events of the past year. If you prefer, you can pass out photocopies of the minutes and these can be incorporated into the Chairperson's address.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer prepares a written report showing all of the income and outgoings since the previous report. Photocopies of the treasurer's report are made available to everyone who attends. The Treasurer then makes a short presentation to the meeting and is available for any questions from the floor.

Chairperson's Address

The Chairperson's report may cover events of the past year, upcoming events, and any issues concerning parents.

Elections

Election of committee members

There is no set number of members for the committee of the Parents' Association. If there is a huge interest in membership of the committee, an election may be held. In practice, an election is not usually necessary – those who are willing to put their names forward for the committee will be accepted onto the committee.

The Chairperson should thank committee members who are standing down and name those who are prepared to stay on. The committee should consider approaching possible new members in advance of the AGM to explain what the PA does and to see if they would join.

It would be helpful to have at least one parent from each class on the committee.

The committee will choose its chairperson, secretary, treasurer etc. at its first meeting, so these positions do not need to be chosen at the AGM.

Election of Representatives to Board of Management

Under Department of Education rules, school Boards of Management must be replaced every four years. There are two parent representatives on the Board of Management and these must be elected by the parents. The AGM is the best time to do this.

The Department of Education sets out the correct way to elect parent representatives. In essence, these are:

The Executive Committee (the Patron of the school) calls the election

Nominations are called for from the parents

If there are more than two nominations, an election is held with a secret ballot

There must be one female and one male parent representative.

Any other business

This is the time to open up the AGM to questions / suggestions from the floor. It is the best time of the year to check in with parents on whether they are satisfied with the work of the PA and if there are new issues they wish the committee to deal with.

Refreshments

A cup of tea or coffee and some refreshments will allow all participants to relax, mingle and get to know one another. This is an important time for the members of the committee to talk to parents, to further the aims of the PA. The PA Committee are responsible for organising this and also the clean up afterwards.

Regular PA Committee Meetings

Dates

We should hold meetings generally once a month during the school year. In discussion with the members of the committee on the first meeting after the AGM, the committee decides which days are best to meet and sets out the calendar² for the year. Every member of the committee then knows the dates and is responsible for their own attendance.

It may be necessary to hold extra meetings in the run up to a large event.

Some meetings will require committee members only to attend. The Chairperson or Secretary should be responsible for sending a text reminder to all committee members.

If all members of the Parents Association need to be invited to attend, e.g. for a large event like the planning of the Christmas Fair, a note should be circulated to all parents and a text reminder sent out.

Agendas

It is helpful if the agenda³ for the upcoming meeting is circulated one week before the meeting. Agendas are prepared by the Chairperson or the Secretary and circulated before the meeting; members of the committee can have an item put onto the agenda.

Timing

Keeping meetings running to a reasonable timetable is perhaps the most difficult task of the chairperson. Each member of the committee should be able to put forward their point of view, but equally the meeting should not go on all night.

Minutes

Minutes⁴ of all committee meetings are taken by the secretary. These are circulated as soon as practicable after the meeting.

Many committee members have email nowadays, which makes this task a great deal easier for the secretary. Otherwise, minutes can be put in a child's schoolbag.

Committee Lists

Keeping an up to date list of committee contact details⁵ is very important.

² See attached PA / School calendar.

³ See attached sample PA Committee Meeting Agenda

⁴ See attached sample PA Committee Meeting Minute format.

⁵ See attached sample PA Committee members contact sheet.

End of Term Parties.

Halloween.

The Halloween party is usually held on the last day before the midterm break. This needs to be agreed with the Principal.

The day before the party the school needs to be decorated. Volunteers are required to attend the school from 3pm in order to get all of the decorations and as much preparation done for the following day.

On the day of the party there needs to be at least 4 or 5 parents there with the teachers to help out with the food and games and the clean up afterwards.

Usually the children will go to school as normal and the party starts at 11am with a parade of the children in their costumes around the outside of the school. This is the time the set-up of the food and drink needs to take place.

Last year we set up the tables in the middle Rosemary's room so all children could sit together and eat. There was a row of tables along the side of the room with all of the food and drink laid out and the children came up in a line to choose what they would like.

After the children have eaten the games will be ready for them in the other 2 classrooms. Attached is the agenda⁶ for last year's party.

Although a lot of planning went into this party last year there seemed to be a miscommunication with the teachers on the day so it is best that the plan for the day is laid out and agreed upon in advance.

A week before the party, a note should go home with all children giving the date and details. Ensure to say it is a fancy dress party. A request for volunteers and donations of decorations and food for the day should be included. A €2.00 donation should also be sent in with each child for the purchase of the food and drink.

Two days before the party a text should be sent out to remind parents of the need for volunteers to help out with the decoration of the school and donations of decorations and food for the day of the party. The €2.00 donation should also be brought in on the day before the party.

The day before the party another text could be sent to remind parents of the fancy dress party and donations of food and drink and a reminder of the decoration of the school at 3pm that day. All money should be collected from the teachers and used to purchase additional food and drink that evening.

The day of the party the committee members and any additional helpers should be at the school a half an hour before the party commences to set up as much as they can. The burco boiler will need to be filled and switched on at least 45 minutes before the party starts. All plates, cups, napkins, tea, coffee etc. can be found in the PA press in the front classroom.

When the party finishes all classrooms need to be cleaned and reorganised and all equipment returned to the PA press.

⁶ See attached Halloween party agenda.

Christmas Party

The Christmas party is usually held on the last day of the first term. This needs to be agreed with the Principal.

The week before the party the school could be decorated for Christmas. Volunteers are required to attend the school from 3pm in order to get all of the decorations done.

On the day of the party there needs to be at least 4 or 5 parents there with the teachers to help out with the food and the clean up afterwards.

Usually the children will go to school as normal and the party starts at 11am.

Last year we set up the tables in the middle Rosemary's room so all children could sit together and eat. There was a row of tables along the side of the room with all of the food and drink laid out and the children came up in a line to choose what they would like.

After the children have eaten there could be some games set up or a Christmas movie could be set up for them in Lynn's room.

Last year there were a number of selection boxes left over from the Christmas fair and these were given as a present to each of the children.

A week before the party, a note should go home with all children giving the date and details. A request for volunteers and donations of decorations and food for the day should be included. A €2.00 donation should also be sent in with each child for the purchase of the food and drink. The €2.00 donation should be brought in on the day before the party.

The day before the party another text could be sent to remind parents of the party and donations of food and drink. All money should be collected from the teachers and used to purchase additional food and drink that evening.

The day of the party the committee members and any additional helpers should be at the school a half an hour before the party commences to set up as much as they can. The burco boiler will need to be filled and switched on at least 45 minutes before the party starts. All plates, cups, napkins, tea, coffee etc. can be found in the PA press in the front classroom.

When the party finishes all classrooms need to be cleaned and reorganised and all equipment returned to the PA press.

Easter Egg Hunt and Party.

The Easter Egg Hunt and party is usually held on the last day of the second term. This needs to be agreed with the Principal.

On the day of the party there needs to be at least 4 or 5 parents there with the teachers to help out with the Easter egg hunt, party food and the clean up afterwards.

Usually the children will go to school as normal and the Easter egg hunt starts at 11am.

Last year we set up some pictures⁷ around the school grounds. Each child had to find three different pictures and return them to the committee members in order to collect their goodie bag. All bags were labelled with the child's name and had a selection of Easter themed goodies inside. Plain brown paper bags were used for this and stickers made up with the child's name. These bags can be found in the PA press.

After the children have completed the hunt there could be some games set up or an Easter movie could be set up for them in Lynn's room.

A week before the Easter Egg Hunt, a note should go home with all children giving the date and details. A request for volunteers and donations of Easter goodies should be included. A €2.00 donation should also be sent in with each child for the purchase of the Easter eggs.

The €2.00 donation should be brought in on the day before the party.

The day before the party another text could be sent to remind parents of the Easter Egg hunt and donations of Easter goodies. All money should be collected from the teachers and used to purchase the Easter eggs that evening.

The day of the party the committee members and any additional helpers should set up the Easter egg hunt by taping the pre-printed pictures around the school grounds. This could be done at 9 am after the children have been dropped into school and should only take 20 minutes or so.

Half an hour before the hunt commences the Committee members and volunteers should fill the Easter bags with the donated goodies and eggs bought from the donations the children gave.

When the party finishes all classrooms need to be cleaned and reorganised and all equipment returned to the PA press.

End of School Year Party / 6th Class Graduation.

The end of school year party and 6th class Graduation is held on the last day of the school year. This needs to be agreed with the Principal.

On the day of the Graduation party there needs to be at least 4 or 5 parents there with the teachers to help out with the food and the clean up afterwards.

Usually the children will go to school as normal and the party starts at 11am. Unless the school is closing at 12 then it will commence at 10am with the Graduation of the 6th class going first and then refreshments served afterwards.

It is easiest to set up the refreshment area in the front classroom. There was a row of tables along the side of the room with all of the food and drink laid out and the children came up in a line to choose what they would like.

A week before the graduation, a note should go home with all children giving the date and details. A request for volunteers and donations of food for the day should be included. A €2.00 donation should also be sent in with each child for the purchase of the food and drink. Unless there are sufficient funds in the PA account then the PA may make the decision to subsidise the entire party. The €2.00 donation should be brought in on the day before the party.

⁷ See attached sample Easter Egg Hunt pictures.

The day before the graduation another text could be sent to remind parents. All money should be collected from the teachers and used to purchase additional food and drink that evening.

The day of the graduation the committee members and any additional helpers should be at the school a half an hour before the party commences to set up as much as they can. The burco boiler will need to be filled and switched on at least 45 minutes before the party starts. All plates, cups, napkins, tea, coffee etc. can be found in the PA press in the front classroom.

When the party finishes all classrooms need to be cleaned and reorganised and all equipment returned to the PA press.

The PA Committee usually gives a present to the 6th class children that are leaving. Last year it was a Newbridge Silver pen engraved with their name. This needs to be organised in advance and presented to them on the day.

Additional Parties / Coffee Mornings etc.

Cheerios Childline Breakfast morning.

In the first week of the new school year, the PA will usually receive a letter from the Cheerios Childline breakfast morning event. A call will need to be made to let the organisers know how many children are in the school.

The Childline event goes on for a week so discuss with the Principal which day suits best to have the breakfast morning. Friday is usually the best day.

A week before the breakfast event, send a letter home to all parents to inform them of the breakfast morning and asking for volunteers to help out. This is purely a charity fundraiser; no money is kept by the school. A suggested donation of €2.00 is usually put on the letter. This opportunity could also be used as a coffee morning for parents.

The day before the breakfast a reminder text should be sent.

All paper bowls, spoons, milk etc. should be bought from PA funds. Some cartons of orange juice could also be bought and a cup offered to the children with their breakfast.

The day before the event, Rosemary's classroom should be set up to cater for all the children. This can be done at home time and should only take a few minutes. Some of the older children sometimes like to help out. All of the tables should be laid out in the centre of the room with the chairs on the outside.

On the morning of the event, try to get access to the school about 10 or 15 minutes before school starts in order to set up the last few items.

Once all the children have finished, the classroom needs to be cleaned and reorganised.

If a coffee morning is also running in conjunction with this, it is best to use the front classroom and permission should be sought from the Principal first.

All money needs to be collected and lodged to the Childline account. These details will be in the information pack received after registration.

Christmas Play

Before the Christmas Play the PA Committee organise tea, coffee and some refreshments for all of the parents attending. It is best to set this up in the front classroom. The Burco needs to be filled and turned on at least 45 minutes before it is needed. Donations of cakes are usually requested from the parents the day before the play and some cakes and biscuits will need to be bought to supplement those that are donated on the day. After the play it is best to have some drinks and sweets / cakes provided for the children also. The date for the play will be set by the teachers.

Once everyone is finished, the classroom needs to be cleaned and reorganised.

St Patricks Day Parade.

On the day before the Patricks Day breakup the children may have a small parade around the school grounds wearing their green clothes.

If requested, the PA Committee organise tea, coffee and some refreshments for all of the parents attending. It is best to set this up in the front classroom. The Burco needs to be filled and turned on at least 45 minutes before it is needed. Donations of cakes are usually requested from the parents the day before the parade and some cakes and biscuits will need to be bought to supplement those that are donated on the day. After the parade it is best to have some drinks and sweets / cakes provided for the children also.

Once everyone is finished, the classroom needs to be cleaned and reorganised.

Annual Events

Christmas Fair.

The Christmas Fair is one of the big fundraisers of the year and as such the more organisation that is done the better the event will be.

The organising of this event should start as early as possible.

The Venue needs to be booked well in advance. St Kevin's Hall in the village is the best venue as it attracts a lot of the locals. It is best to organise the start of the fair around the time the local mass ends to attract as many people as possible. This needs to be paid for at least a week in advance of the fair. We usually have access to the hall the night before the fair in order to set up. This needs to be organised with the staff of St Kevin's as a key and alarm code will be required.

As much advertisement as possible should be done in the lead up the fair. The local newsletter should be contacted to place adverts at least 4 weeks prior to the fair. The local papers could also be contacted to advertise. The Facebook page and website should be constantly updated with the progress of the organisation to let as many people as possible know what is going to be there. If possible try to organise a leaflet drop or create flyers⁸ to be put in all the local shops and businesses and as much signage as possible around the town.

Local businesses should be contacted to organise donations of raffle prizes. A letter⁹ requesting donations should be drafted up if it requested by any of the businesses.

A Santa and Santa suit needs to be booked for the day. Last year we had a Fire Engine to transport Santa through the village. If this is to be done again, the local fire station needs to be contacted in advance. A small gift for the Firemen is recommended. Remember to have a backup transport plan in the event of an emergency that the fire service needs to attend. Advise the Guards that Santa will be travelling through the village on the morning of the fair.

Santa's Grotto will need to be set up. This was done on the stage for the last couple of years and worked well. A chair will be needed for Santa to sit in and a large Christmas tree put up on the stage. We have borrowed one in previous years. A large supply of selection boxes will need to be bought so watch out for the best deals in the supermarkets and cash and carry. A sticker could be put on the front of the selection boxes with the schools logo and thanking people for supporting our school. Don't forget to have a present for Santa when he finishes. Bring the bell from the school for Santa to ring as he arrives.

The children should be there to greet Santa as he arrives and then go on stage to sing some seasonal songs. Get the teachers involved in the organisation of this. There are Santa hats in the PA press for all of the children.

The number and type of stalls needs to be agreed and organised, e.g., Books, Cakes, Toys, bric and brac, Christmas decorations, DVD's / CD's and allocate a table for the Student Council. A homemade Christmas decorations stall was very popular previously. Sara Bethel made some wonderful Christmas logs which were a great seller on the day. Enquire if she is willing to do again and if so what help she might need or supplies required.

⁸ See attached Christmas Fair sample flyers.

⁹ See attached sample donation request letter.

A Face painting and colouring station could be set up for the children while they are waiting to visit Santa.

Have some Christmas music playing on the day to add to the atmosphere.

The Café¹⁰ is usually run by Fiona Browne, check if she is willing to do it again. Supplies will need to be purchased, e.g., tea, coffee, sugar, cups, milk, napkins, scones, cakes, mince pies, soup, crisps, juices etc. Tablecloths will need to be bought from the cash and carry to put on the café tables.

Request donations from parents for all stalls and also for items that can be used to make up hampers and raffle prizes.

A list of raffle prizes should be included on the advertisements for the fair and a poster thanking all of the businesses that donated prizes should be put around the hall on the day of the fair.

Organise volunteers on the Friday before the fair to be at the school from 3.00p.m. to get all donations from the container to sort and price.

On the Saturday evening, bring all the items from the school to the hall to be laid out on the tables. The tables are in the hall but will need to be laid out the way we want them and decorated. A large roll of paper can be bought from the cash and carry to cover the tables. Try to have as many people as possible helping out as there is a lot of work involved.

Create a rota for working the tables on the day of the fair. Remember to give each table a small float, little plastic containers can be used for this. Collect the money at regular intervals during the day. Nominate one person to be responsible for the money all day. Remember to tell everyone if they have to leave their table at any time during the day to either bring the cash box with them or get someone to look after it.

Once the fair is over the hall will need to be cleaned and tidied. All left over goods should be brought back to the school and put back into the container.

All money raised on the day will need to be counted and lodged to the PA back account.

Sports Day

The date for Sports Day should be set by the Principal.

In the past we have had both an evening Sports day incorporating a Family Fund day and also a school time Sports Day where Parents, friends and family have also been invited to attend. The decision on the type of sports day that is to be held should be made by the Teachers and the PA Chairperson.

If it is an evening event, the following needs to be organised.

Check with the Secretary to see if the grass needs to be cut

The PA Committee will organise the medals for the events. The list of medals required will be provided by the teachers.

¹⁰ See attached Café price list.

There will need to be at least 2 barbeques to cook the sausages and burgers. These will be bought from PA funds. There is usually a charge for these on the night.
Tea, coffee and cakes should also be provided and again a small charge is placed upon them.
A bouncy castle is usually organised by the PA Committee.
Someone to do face paints is organised by the PA Committee. There will be a small charge for this.
Some additional games and events that can attract the wider community could also be arranged.
A cake stand and bric and brac stall is sometimes organised also.
A week before Sports Day, send a letter home to all parents to inform them and asking for volunteers to help out. A donation of €2.00 is usually put on the letter to purchase the food and drink required for the night.
The day before Sports Day a reminder text should be sent.
Once Sports Day is over, the classrooms and school grounds need to be cleaned and reorganised.

If the Sports Day is to be held during School hours the following needs to be organised.

Check with the Secretary to see if the grass needs to be cut
The PA Committee will organise the medals for the events. The list of medals required will be provided by the teachers.
There will need to be at least 2 barbeques to cook the sausages and burgers. These will be bought from PA funds. There is usually a charge for these on the day.
Tea, coffee and cakes should also be provided and again a small charge is placed upon them.
A bouncy castle is usually organised by the PA Committee.
Someone to do face paints is organised by the PA Committee. There will be a small charge for this.
A week before Sports Day, send a letter home to all parents to inform them and asking for volunteers to help out. A donation of €2.00 is usually put on the letter to purchase the food and drink required for the night.
The day before Sports Day a reminder text should be sent.
Once Sports Day is over, the classrooms and school grounds need to be cleaned and reorganised.

Open Day

The date for the Open Day for new enrolments should be set by the Principal. The PA Committee is required to organise the clean-up of the school and grounds prior to the open day. On the weekend prior to the open day a clean-up should be arranged. Letters should be sent home on the Monday before and a text reminder sent out on the Friday. As many volunteers as possible will be needed to get the school looking its best for this important day for attracting new enrolments.

As soon as the date is set as much advertisement as possible should be done in the lead up the open day. The local newsletter should be contacted to place adverts. The local papers could also be contacted to advertise. The Facebook page and website should be used to advertise the open day and all of the local playschools and preschools should have leaflets dropped to their door.

A representative from Educate Together could be contacted to attend and give a short talk but this should be agreed between the Principal and the PA Chairperson.

On the Day itself the PA Committee need to set up the front classroom for tea, coffee and refreshments. It is also a good idea to have some tables set up with colouring pages and crayons to keep the children occupied.

Once the Open Day is over, the classrooms and school grounds need to be cleaned and reorganised.

New Junior Infants Play Day

The date for the Junior Infants Play Day should be set by the Principal. The PA Committee is required to organise the clean-up of the school and grounds prior to this day. On the weekend prior to the play day a clean-up should be arranged. Letters should be sent home on the Monday before and a text reminder sent out on the Friday. As many volunteers as possible will be needed to get the school looking its best.

It is up to the Secretary to contact the new Junior Infants to inform them of the play day. She can give an indication of how many are due to attend.

On the Day itself the PA Committee need to set up the front classroom for tea, coffee and refreshments. It is also a good idea to have some tables set up with colouring pages and crayons to keep the children occupied.

Once the Play Day is over, the classrooms and school grounds need to be cleaned and reorganised.

Setanta

Book Club

Each Term a package of Setanta Book club brochures¹¹ will arrive to the school.

These should be given to the teachers to hand out, 1 to each pupil. Ensure to write the date you wish them to be returned on the back of the catalogue.

A text could be sent that day to inform parents that they have been sent home.

On the day before they are due back a reminder text should be sent.

Once all the order forms have been received and money collected, log on to <http://clubs-teachers.setantabookclubs.ie/> and using the PA Account number¹² and password order the books required on the master order form. At present we receive virtual rewards.

Print out the order summary¹³ and attach to the order forms and place into the file.

Lodge the money received from the orders into the BETNS PA account and send a cheque to Setanta Book Clubs.

When the books are delivered to the school, check the picking note against the order summary and divide the books out for each child.

A summary¹⁴ of their order is attached to the bag that contains their books. This is done on an excel spread sheet, copying the details from the master form online.

Book Fair

The book fair is run once a year during World Book Week. A package will be sent to the school a month in advance of the fair which contains everything needed to set up the fair including advertising posters and invitations. There will also be vouchers for free books that will need to be given to each child on the day the fair begins.

At this time a schedule and rota¹⁵ should be set up for the management of the fair.

The fair will run for five days. The cases will be delivered to the school on the morning of the first day. It will need to be set up each day by 1.40 to allow the younger classes browse before they go home. It will need to be kept open until 3.00p.m. each day. All cases should then be closed and locked and all additional materials tidied away. All cash should be kept in a locked box and the person responsible for the money should take home each day. It is recommended to have a least 2 people working on the fair each day.

Once the fair is over, all cases must be packed up and any additional material repacked into their boxes. The cases will be collected at the end of the school day on the last day of the fair.

Complete the online cash report form. Fill in the bank giro and lodge all money to the bank.

There is a more in-depth planner in the PA file.

¹¹ Sample Setanta Book Club Brochure attached.

¹² All account numbers and passwords will be held by the Chairperson.

¹³ Sample Setanta order summary attached.

¹⁴ Sample individual summary order attached.

¹⁵ Sample Book Fair rota attached.

Sponsorships and Fundraisers

Skipathon

A date for the Skipathon should be set by the Principal. Once this date is known a sponsorship form¹⁶ and cover letter should be sent home to all parents.

Check with the school that there are enough skipping ropes to go around. If not, additional ropes will need to be purchased using PA funds.

The day before the Skipathon a reminder text should be sent requesting all sponsorship forms and money to be returned.

On the day of the Skipathon there will need to be a couple of volunteers to assist the teachers with the children.

Collect all money received and lodge into the PA Account. File all sponsorship forms.

Mini Marathon

The Flora Women's Mini Marathon is held in June each year. Registration usually takes place in March. A text should be sent out to all parents to try to recruit some of the mothers to walk or run this race in aid of the school.

Registering for the race is up to each individual. A sponsorship form¹⁷ and cover letter should be sent home to all parents.

Once the race is completed all forms and money should be returned and all money lodged to the PA Account.

Lenrec clothes and mobile phone collections

Lenrec will contact the school approximately 6 weeks in advance of a collection. Send letters home to parents at regular intervals once this date is known to encourage them to donate all clothes, shoes, bags, belts and mobile phones to the school. A notice could be put in the local newsletter asking the wider community to drop their unwanted items to the school or other designated point.

A drop off date should be written on the letter. A text should be sent out to remind parents of the collection 1 or 2 days before Lenrec arrives. There will need to be a committee member or volunteer available to meet with the driver.

Hot Food Fridays

Each Wednesday a text is sent out to all parents informing them of the hot food available on Friday and the cost (€2.00). There is a requirement to provide a vegetarian option.

¹⁶ Sample Skipathon sponsorship form attached.

¹⁷ Sample marathon sponsorship form attached.

On Friday morning all money is collected from the children as they are in their class and marked off the list¹⁸.

Calculate how much food is required from this list and purchase using the money received. All extra money needs to be lodged to the PA Account.

The food will need to be cooked and returned to the school at approximately 12.10. Using the front classroom to distribute, each class is sent in and receives their hot food. Only those that have paid will receive. Paper plates, knives, forks etc. can be found in the PA press.

Once all food has been distributed, the class needs to be cleaned and all rubbish disposed of.

Christmas Cards

As early as possible in the new school year, the Christmas cards need to be organised. Register on www.christmascardsforschools.ie. You will then receive an information pack and some blank sheets¹⁹ which will need to be filled out, 1 for each class with all the children's names, the name of their teacher and the school role number.

Once this has been completed, place all sheets in the envelope supplied and return to Christmas Cards for Schools.

They will then send out the blank templates²⁰ for each child to colour in. When these have been returned a sample card will be sent out for each child attached to an order form. Send each child's card and order form home with them with a cover letter detailing when they are to be returned.

Collect all order forms and money. Return the forms to Christmas Cards for Schools and lodge all money to the PA bank account.

Once all Christmas card packs have been received, post a cheque to Christmas Cards for Schools.

The packs cost €5.00; there are 10 cards in a pack. Whatever the PA decides to charge over the €5.00 is what we keep. In the past couple of years we have been charging €10.00 for a pack of 10 cards with envelopes.

Calendar

There was a calendar produced for the school for 2012. A photo was taken of all of the children and inserted into a calendar created using a word document. This was then converted to a PDF and sent to a printing company to get printed onto A3 Cards. It wasn't a good seller and we ended up losing money on this, so wouldn't advise continuing unless orders were taken upfront.

¹⁸ Sample hot food list attached.

¹⁹ Sample blank Christmas card form attached.

²⁰ Sample blank Christmas card template attached.

Bag Packing

In the first week in January a letter²¹ should be sent to the local supermarkets requesting a date for bag packing. This should be followed up by a phone call to ensure they have received our letter. This is an excellent fundraiser so try to get as many dates as you think you will be able to get volunteers for.

As soon as the dates are received they should be put into the PA calendar. Set up a rota²² for the bag pack and get as many people as possible to volunteer to help out. It is easier if the time slots are broken up into 1.5 - 2 hour slots.

The collection buckets are in the PA press along with the t-shirts that each collector should wear. All money received needs to be counted, bagged and lodged to the PA account.

Extra-curricular activities

At present we do not have a programme of extra-curricular activities but we hope to change this in the near future.

Miscellaneous

School Photos.

In the past 2 years we have used County Photos to take the photographs of the children. If they are to be used again they need to be contacted to arrange a date for them to call to the school.

A letter and text should be sent home to parents informing them when the photos will be taken. On the day they arrive, it is useful to have a list²³ of the photos that are required, e.g. individuals, siblings, class photos or 1 school group photo.

Once the photos have been taken, County Photos will send an order pack to the school. This needs to be given to each child to bring home. A reminder text should be sent in order to get the forms returned on time.

It is advisable to keep a log of all photo packs returned and the cash received. County Photos will arrange a date to collect these packs from the school. The finished photos will be returned and should be distributed to each child.

School Tours

The PA may be called upon to assist in the supervision at the school tours. The Committee may also decide to contribute towards the cost of the tour in order to minimise the cost to the parents.

²¹ Sample bag pack request for volunteer's letter attached.

²² Sample bag pack rota attached.

²³ Sample school photo list attached.

Milk Scheme

At the start of the new school year a letter²⁴ should be sent home to all parents informing them of the school milk scheme and the cost per term.

Along with this letter send a form²⁵ for parents to fill out if they wish to participate in the scheme.

Indicate that all money must be paid up front before the order is placed.

Once you have the list of participants and all the money has been received and lodged to the PA bank account, make up the weekly list²⁶ which will need to be sent to the school for each Monday morning.

From this list, calculate how much milk needs to be ordered. The order needs to be placed each Friday before 5.00p.m using the schools account number²⁷.

²⁴ Sample milk scheme letter attached.

²⁵ Sample milk scheme form attached.

²⁶ Sample milk scheme weekly list attached.

²⁷ Glanbia Account number held by the Chairperson.

Accounts

Requisition Forms

All funds required from the PA Committee will have to be submitted in writing.

In order to request funds, prices must be obtained and submitted on the Requisition Form²⁸.

The Treasurer will review these forms and approve if they are a priority and if funds allow.

Please be aware that if money is spent on an item that is not deemed a priority, there may be a delay in being reimbursed.

Expense Forms

If money has already been spent then the Expenses Form²⁹ must be completed and all receipts attached.

The Treasurer will review these forms and approve if they are a priority and if funds allow.

Please be aware that if money is spent on an item that is not deemed a priority, there may be a delay in being reimbursed.

Accounts Log

A log³⁰ of all funds in and out of the PA Account must be kept by the Treasurer. This should be kept up to date and be available at all times to any parent requesting it and to the Board of Management.

²⁸ Sample Requisition Form attached.

²⁹ Sample Expenses Form attached.

³⁰ Sample Accounts Log attached.

List of Attachments

- ❖ Sample AGM Agenda.
- ❖ PA / School calendar.
- ❖ Sample PA Committee Meeting Agenda
- ❖ Sample PA Committee Meeting Minute format.
- ❖ Sample PA Committee members contact sheet.
- ❖ Sample Halloween party agenda.
- ❖ Sample Easter Egg Hunt pictures.
- ❖ Sample Christmas Fair flyers.
- ❖ Sample donation request letter.
- ❖ Sample Café price list.
- ❖ Sample Setanta Book Club Brochure.
- ❖ Sample Setanta order summary.
- ❖ Sample individual summary order.
- ❖ Sample Book Fair rota.
- ❖ Sample Skipathon sponsorship form.
- ❖ Sample marathon sponsorship form.
- ❖ Sample hot food list.
- ❖ Sample blank Christmas card form.
- ❖ Sample blank Christmas card template.
- ❖ Sample bag pack request for volunteer's letter.
- ❖ Sample bag pack rota.
- ❖ Sample school photo list.
- ❖ Sample milk scheme letter.
- ❖ Sample milk scheme form.
- ❖ Sample milk scheme weekly list.
- ❖ Sample Requisition Form.
- ❖ Sample Expenses Form.
- ❖ Sample Accounts Log.