

Newstead Wood PA Meeting Minutes

Date: 19/6/25 **Time:** 7.30pm **Location:** Zoom

1. Chair's Welcome and Apologies:

AdC welcomed attendees and noted apologies.

- **Chair:** Adrian Clarke (AdC)
- **Meeting and Admin. Secretary:** Nicola Lang (NL)
- **NW Head Teacher:** Alan Blount (AB)
- **Attendees:** Brinda, Chi, Gloria Bian (GB), Kerlai Counsell (KC), Keya Desai (KD), Nishith Mahajan (NM), Richa, Simmi Maharaji (SM).

Apologies: Treasurer: Arindam Chaudhuri (AC).

2. Head's report

- Tours for prospective students are ongoing.
- Open Day is Saturday 5 July 2025.
- Development work across the school is progressing. Work has started in the Art Department, with visible updates including teal and yellow-coloured walls and some new features to enhance the area's aesthetic.
- Public examinations for GCSE are complete, and the Year 11 Prom is scheduled for Friday (20/6/25)
- End-of-year assessments are nearly complete for all year groups.

3. Treasurer's report

- Accounts for the year are now closed and filed and are available on the Charity Commission website under the charity name: Newstead Wood Parents Association.
- There are few steps remain regarding the on-line bank account access, but progress has been made since the last meeting.
- Suggestions were invited for moving funds into a savings account to earn interest. To assess and propose suitable option; the interest rate, notice period for withdrawals and any limitations on the number of withdrawals per year to be considered.

ACTION: AC & AdC

- The Treasurer has requested any school-led projects suitable for PA contributions, be suggested before the next meeting, so these can be reviewed once funds are confirmed. **ACTION: AB**

4. Update on Charity Commission and Access to Donation Organisations

- No further progress has been made on updating Charity Commission records.

ACTION: AdC

Benevity Causes

- Emails (addressed to Xinyun Wang) have been received requesting submission of the Annual Declaration of Appropriate Use of Funds by 31 July 2025. Failure to complete this could affect the PA's ability to claim future donations.

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- There is currently an issue with logging in, as a two-step authentication is needed - it's unclear who receives the authentication code.
- NL contacted the Benevity Helpdesk, who advised to create a personal account and then apply to take ownership of the other account. A step-by-step guide has been received for this process. **ACTION: AdC & NL**
- **Easyfundraising**
 - The PA receives regular emails indicating donations are being made to NW through online shopping. It was noted that the bank account should be checked to confirm if these funds are being received. **ACTION: AC**
- **Give As You Live**
 - Emails have been received asking the PA to activate their account.
 - It's unclear if an account currently exists or if the emails are phishing attempts.
 - We need to clarify status and legitimacy of the Give As You Live account. **ACTION: AdC & NL**
- **Zettle**
 - The Zettle brand is now PayPal POS (PayPal Point of Sale). Features remain unchanged and the same hardware is used, with no impact on our account or operations.
- **Stikins (Name Labels)**
 - Stikins has now discontinued support for secondary schools. As a result, the PA can no longer earn from the scheme.
 - Any leftover label packs will be sold at a small price to clear stock.
 - Stikins promotion to be removed from future PA promotional materials and the PA sections of the Head's update.

5. Familiarisation tests

- The final FAM test is scheduled for Saturday 21 June 2025.
- Currently, volunteer numbers are low, particularly for the morning session.
- Over 150 children are expected for the 9am session, and 120 and 110 for the 12pm and 3pm, respectively.
- Currently only five volunteers are confirmed. Minimum required: 2 people setups, 4 people for registration and 2 people outside the sports hall to supervise children before their test and manage toilet visits.
- Urgent call for more volunteers – even 30 minutes of help would be appreciated.
- Potentially low volunteer turnout may be due to the St. Olave's test being scheduled on the same day.
- There has been concern from parents about the forecasted hot weather. The test venue has no air conditioning, but the building stays reasonably cool. Fans may be used to help with airflow.
- A debrief meeting will be arranged following the final FAM Test. The purpose being to discuss what worked well, identify areas for improvement, and better prepare for future events.

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6. Summer Disco

- Thursday 26 June 2025, 6-8pm.
- Tickets are on sale, with 96 being sold to date.
- Lights and DJ are booked. Food and refreshments will be arranged early next week. Stocks of snacks and drinks in the PA cupboard can also be used.
- Currently have nine volunteers.
- Additional volunteers to be on registration this year. There were delays at last year's event due to only two people managing the entry point.
- Proposed registration structure to reduce queueing:
 - Split by year group (Year 7, 8, 9).
 - Further divided by House where possible.

7. Uniform Sales

- The sale at the Y6 Curriculum Evening: Preparing for Newstead (Thursday 12 June 2025) raised approximately £1000.
- A further uniform sale on 17 June 2025 raised £40.
- Uniform donations are expected to increase in July/September as: Y9 move into Y10 and no longer need green uniform and Y11s moving to Y12 no longer need main school uniform.
- There is currently a significant shortage of PE kit.
- AB reported that the school is currently awaiting guidance from the Trust regarding any potential changes to compulsory branded uniform items, in connection with the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill.
- Next sale is Tuesday 1 July 2025. Volunteers, please email/WhatsApp if you can help.

8. Upcoming Events & Refreshments

- Quiz at St. Olaves 3 July 2025 – open to Y7,8 & 9.
- Night at the Musicals 9 July 2025 – PA to provide refreshments. Alcohol will be served at the event. We understand and respect that some may prefer not to assist with serving alcohol, and there will be plenty of opportunity to help with serving soft drinks and other refreshments.

9. Committee Update

- Open Roles
 - Vice Chair Position – role includes supporting the Chair, acting in the Chair's Absence, promoting the PA and helping coordinate events where possible.
 - Refreshment Lead – role includes checking stock, ordering supplies as needed, organising volunteers for events. Optionally, attending events in person to support and supervise refreshment volunteers.

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10. A.O.B.

- PA Hut Door Replacement
 - A big thank you to AB and estates team for resolving the broken door issue. A double-glazed door has now been fitted.
- Suggestions on Engaging with Parents to Join the PA
 - Leaflets were handed out at the recent new Y7 evening to introduce the PA and encourage involvement.
 - Provide a calendar at the start of the year outlining PA events and how much time commitment is typically involved.
 - Address perceptions - emphasise the flexibility of volunteering – even half an hour of help is appreciated, aim to make the PA feel welcoming and manageable and continue to communicate funding achievements and their impact within the school.
 - Chair of PA could have a five-minute slot at the Y7 curriculum evening to highlight role and activities of the PA.
 - Important to get timing and style of any event right to maximise attendance.
 - Please submit any suggestions by email/WhatsApp.
- Comment from Parents WhatsApp - concern about the lack of genre variety in the school library and could parents donate books?
 - Direct donation of used books is often not appropriate – they are typically outdated or unsuitable and often end up being re-donated to charity.
 - Instead, the school maintains a live Amazon Wish List curated by the librarians, which is updated regularly.
 - Books donated from this list go directly into the library and a nameplate is placed inside each book acknowledging the donor.
 - The link to the Amazon Wish List will be circulated in the Head's Update

ACTION: AB

 - If a parent wishes to donate a specific title not on the list, they are welcome to do so — the school will gladly consider such donations.
 - The school runs a book swap event in the autumn term. This encourages reading, reuse and community sharing of literature.

11. Date for next meeting

- TBC **ACTION: AdC & NL**

Meeting Adjourned at 8.10pm.