

## **CASE STUDY: SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **Repairing budget cuts without a school PTA around to help you is hard for any Head teacher**

Written November 2019

When Tom Garner, headteacher at Fairhaven Primary School in Stourbridge, West Midlands awarded his staff between 2% and 10% pay rises based on local and national agreements, he reckoned the consequences would be severe.

With forward knowledge that budgets for 2019 were to be stalled at 2018 levels – a tough, indirect budget cut was looming. Worse still, contrary to most of his fellow heads, he has a very small and limited PTA. He has had to step in as chair just to keep events for children going, rather than generating additional funds for his school.

Plus, with Fairhaven Primary being a Silver Award Eco School, Tom was keen to find environmentally safe events to boost the school coffers.

By sheer luck, the Stourbridge head caught sight of an email from Purepages Group Limited, based in Bolton, Greater Manchester that had gone into his Spam Box. The note was alerting him to <https://ecoracing.co>, the World's only 100% eco-friendly virtual balloon race system to use real weather data and no negative environmental impact on birds, animals or litter. With no setup fees or prizes to source, it seemed a major risk-free opportunity with many educational spin-offs.

Any charity, cause, school PTA or club can create their own page on the Ecoracing.co system for free in 3 minutes or less. All the virtual balloons purchased by cause supporters can be decorated with colours, patterns and text plus tracked on Google Maps and Satellites once the race is launched.

Prior to the launch date, balloon flight parameters such as helium content, rubber thickness and shape can be altered to suit the predicted weather conditions of the race, thus enhancing chances of winning. This means the platform is therefore considered a game of skill and not of chance.

With great prizes to win and lots of fun taking part in a 7day race, Ecoracing.co is set to gain significant market share from donation-only based models such as JustGiving.

Tom duly put the school up on <https://ecoracing.co> as a cause but wondered how much money he would make in just a few days before term was to finish? After the launch, timed for school assembly at 9am, Tom pinged over, "Just a quick note to say the launch went well this morning. About 75% of our children attended to watch - they were so excited! The sales rocketed this week which was great - all the publicity I did worked. We had parents buying on their phones outside the gates this morning! There is a real buzz about school."

So, the pupils were happy with their great computer game and the chance for themselves and their school supporters to win some top prizes. Tom, meanwhile, was more than pleased to have sold 139 balloons in just a few days, bringing in nearly £340. Welcome cash indeed.

Tom's final comments will probably ring a bell with many when he said, "not everyone wants to swim Windermere or climb Ben Nevis, so a prize-based fundraising system that works really well on your laptop or mobile has to be the way forward."

#### **Web Links**

<https://ecoracing.co> <http://www.rentaballoonrace.com/dangers-of-real-balloons/>

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