



INTRODUCTION FOR NEW PARENTS TO FRIENDS OF ROUNDWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

A very warm welcome to our school!

Friends of Roundwood Primary School ("**Friends**") is the name of our Parent Teacher Association (PTA). We hope this document provides you with some helpful guidance on who we are, what we do and how we raise funds.

Even before this year, you will have seen the news headlines about school funding cuts and so our school is not unusual in becoming more reliant on the kind and generous support of our parents. COVID has impacted not just our ability to run events but also other income for the school (such as money they generate from hirings), all of which are invested directly in the school to benefit the children.

Our events calendar is (usually!) a busy one and we work hard to offer experiences that not only raise money for school, but which we hope the children and you will enjoy and remember. If you'd like more information, or if you'd like to get involved, please don't hesitate to get in touch!

WHY DO WE HAVE A FRIENDS ASSOCIATION?

We are fortunate to have a Friends Association that has been an integral part of our School community for many years. In its time, we have raised many thousands of pounds, which have been spent on equipment, resources and staffing to enhance our children's education and the School's facilities.

Friends is about much more than fundraising. We bring staff, parents and children together socially in support of the School, working towards a common goal. All parents and members of the wider school community are encouraged to get involved, even if they only have a small amount of time to offer. There are plenty of creative ways to help out in a really meaningful way, even if you can't spare much of your time!

THE FRIENDS COMMITTEE AND ITS TRUSTEES

The current Friends Trustees are:

Chair: Kate Novak (children in Years 1 and 5)
Deputy Chair: Anna Hamilton Watson (children in Years 3 and 6)
Treasurer: Olha Fenova (child in Year 1)
Deputy Treasurer: Amy Farnhill (children in Year 5)
Secretary: Lanna Shaw (children in Reception and Year 4)

The President of the Friends is Mrs Hooff.

In addition to our Trustees, we have a dedicated team of members who come along to meetings and organise and help out at our various events. As children move on to senior schools, we do see attrition in our members, and we are actively looking for new joiners to our team now.

CHARITABLE STATUS

Friends of Roundwood Primary School is a registered charity. Our charity number is 295958. As a charity, we must follow Charity Commission rules and regulations and we are governed by our own Constitution. The Constitution sets out the primary rules about how we operate and how we conduct ourselves financially. If you would like to see a copy of our Constitution, please contact one of the Trustees.

Being a registered charity enables Friends to:

- Receive charitable donations;
- Apply to grant-making charitable trusts;
- Receive donations made through payroll giving and company-matched schemes; and
- Apply for Gift Aid.

HOW DO WE RAISE MONEY?

In an ordinary year, the majority of the money we raise comes from **events** that Friends run. Some of our most popular events include:

- Our Summer and Christmas Fairs;
- The School quiz night;
- School discos for the children;
- Drinks evenings for parents and carers;
- Movie and bingo nights;
- Cake and ice lolly sales;
- Our annual sponsored walk; and
- The School Ball (every two years).

In addition to these events, Friends are always keen to try new initiatives and we will often run other fundraisers throughout the year.

We raise money in other ways too.

Parent Fund

Our School operates a discretionary Parent Fund, into which parents are asked to consider making a monthly donation by Standing Order.

This year, when the possibility for fundraising activities is severely limited, our Parent Fund donations are going to be more important than ever before.

Events such as the Ball, the sponsored walk and the Christmas and Summer Fairs usually raise significant funds and this year those just haven't been possible. We've been able to support school from previous fundraising efforts through this year, but this is obviously only possible for a finite time.

Historically, our suggested contribution rate has been £10 per child, per month, however we know that for some parents, paying regularly into the Parent Fund is the simplest way for them to contribute to school fundraising and so with this in mind, lots of parents make a bigger donation each month and we are very grateful for that. Any monthly or one-off contribution would be appreciated and will have an immediate and direct impact on our children's education.

Friends can claim Gift Aid, which will make your contribution 25% larger without any additional cost or effort for you (e.g. a monthly donation of £10 is worth £12.50 to the school, £15 per child would be

automatically increased to £18.75). Signing up for the first time is quick and simple; just set up a Standing Order with your bank, complete the form included in this pack and return it to school.

Company matched giving

Company matched giving is simple. Employers pledge to donate to a charity (such as ours) an amount of money relating to the sum that their employee raises or donates to us. Contribution rates differ across employers, but in some instances we have doubled the amount raised by an event simply by a parent helping out at that event and exercising his or her right to company matched giving in this way.

Many banks, financial institutions, large law firms and corporate employers offer company matched giving. Please speak to your HR or Benefits team to see whether it is a scheme your employer runs. If you are able to help Friends via a company matched giving plan, please contact Olha Fenova or Amy Farnhill (our treasurer and vice treasurer) in the first instance and we can liaise with your employer as required. A letter containing more details about matched giving is included in this pack.

Donations

Donations from parents and friends are extremely important. We will often call on parents to donate raffle prizes, auction lots, cakes, teddies and bric-a-brac for our events and we are always amazed at the response we get. Roundwood parents are typically a very generous bunch!

We have also developed strong links with businesses in our local community, who continue to support our School by donating generous raffle and auction prizes. We are extremely grateful for this support and we do not take it for granted. We also benefit from commissions from certain local businesses when parents and carers use their services. A full list of those businesses is maintained by Friends and is available on the Facebook page or from us directly.

We know not all parents can give much time to help Friends with their fundraising efforts. In recent times, parents who own **local businesses** have very kindly offered their professional services in order to raise money for Friends. Special podiatry clinics, dance and yoga lessons have all raised a lot of money for our school and we encourage parents to think about whether they might be able to offer something similarly creative in the future. Not only do we raise much-needed funds this way, but the businesses concerned also gain publicity and new clients.

Easy Fundraising and Amazon Smile

We encourage all parents and friends to register with Easy Fundraising and Amazon Smile, to raise money for our school at the same time as doing an online shop.

easyfundraising.org.uk
smile.amazon.co.uk

Once registered, every time you shop online, our school receives a percentage of your spend. The money comes to us from the retailer (not from you) and so it is completely free for you to use. It really could not be easier!

We have more than **150** people signed up to Easyfundraising, and have raised over **£7,450** so far just by clicking through their link and then shopping online as usual. A lot of your favourite shops participate, including John Lewis, GAP, M&S, Clarks, Expedia, eBay, booking.com, Notonthehighstreet.com, ASOS, Groupon, Made.com and hundreds more. Donations can be very significant when things such as holidays, car hire or big Christmas shopping orders are placed!

ACCESS FOR ALL TO OUR CHILDREN'S EVENTS

Whilst one of our aims, when organising events such as the children's discos, movie and bingo nights, is to raise money for our School, we also work hard to ensure that the children are offered access to events that they will enjoy and remember.

Children in receipt of Free School Meals (not UIFSM) will always be welcome to come to those events and will not be expected to pay to attend. Please liaise with the School Office if this applies to you, and we will ensure that your child(ren) receive(s) their ticket or event details in the same way as everyone else.

HOW DO WE SPEND THE MONEY WE RAISE?

In consultation with Mrs Hooft and the school governors, we decide early each school year what financial target we should aim to reach, to fund the various key projects that require financial assistance that year (and, sometimes, beyond that year). It used to be the case that Friends' funds would be spent on "extras" not provided for by the school's budget from the Government. However, as central funding in real terms has significantly decreased in recent years, we are unfortunately increasingly being called upon to help fund more fundamental, basic needs such as books, equipment and classroom resources.

Under our Constitution we are obliged to ensure that funds are used in order to promote or enhance the education of the children at our School. As a Committee, we receive requests for funds, which we either agree or reject, applying the principles of our Constitution.

In 19/20, Friends' funds were put towards the Hive (our breakout space), KS2 playground equipment, maintaining and enhancing the school library, iPads, online learning tools, music provision (e.g. steel pans, Year 4 cellos and Orchestra) and classroom resources such as craft materials, cooking ingredients and stationery.

The money we raise is usually spent fairly quickly. That way, you can be sure that in supporting our school, your child(ren) will benefit, along with everybody else.

FRIENDS MEETINGS

Our Annual General Meeting takes place in June each year and provides an opportunity for all parents and/or wider School community to come along and hear about our work in more detail. We elect new committee members at the AGM and we discuss the money that has been raised over the last financial year, and how it has been spent or earmarked.

Friends meets on a regular basis throughout the School year – usually at least once a term. Smaller working groups meet as necessary when larger events are being planned. Our major Friends meetings, including the AGM, will be advertised on our Facebook page and on the Friends noticeboard on the entrance path to the School.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

There are lots of ways you can help and support your child through Friends.

We always welcome new members to the committee, regardless of the volume of work you're able to take on! Some members run one event a year; others are involved in a number of different fundraisers throughout the school year.

There are lots of jobs that can be done from home even if you can't commit more of your time. Filling jam jars, preparing raffle tickets, liaising with local businesses about raffle prizes, typing up newsletters... There are a huge number of "behind the scenes" jobs and we wouldn't achieve what we do without people helping with those!

Support us by giving us your ideas. We love trying new fundraisers – some are more successful than others, but it makes for a more varied and fun school year when different events take place.

Contact any of the Friends and we would be delighted to hear from you!

HOW WE KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU

- All letters and newsletters from Friends will come as an attachment to an email.
- We will email to remind you about upcoming Friends fundraising dates and deadlines.
- Check our noticeboard at the entrance to School for information about upcoming events.
- Make sure you're signed up to the Friends Facebook page, which is updated very regularly.

Thank you in advance for all your support. It means a lot to us and to the children.

Kate Novak
Chair, Friends of Roundwood Primary School

Enclosures:

- Parent Fund Standing Order form
- Fund matching letter