



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 are a group of parents from across the school, who organise events with the main aim of raising vital funds for the school, and bringing staff, parents/carers and children together, thus building and maintaining a vibrant school community.

Our events calendar is 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 as well.

This document provides you with some further guidance on who we are, what we do and how we raise funds. If you'd like more information, or if you'd like to get involved, please don't hesitate to get in touch: Friends@roundwoodprimary.herts.sch.uk

WHY DO WE HAVE A FRIENDS ASSOCIATION?

You may have heard about the financial pressures schools face - brought about by (historical) funding cuts, and rising costs not mirrored by sufficient government compensation. So, our school is not unusual or unique in becoming more reliant on additional fundraising, mostly through the kind and generous support of our parents/carers. All the funds raised are invested directly in the school to benefit all children.

We are fortunate to have a Friends Association that has been an integral part of our School community for many years. In its time, many thousands of pounds have been raised, 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!

THE FRIENDS COMMITTEE AND ITS TRUSTEES

All parents / carers with children at the school are automatically members of the Friends committee, even if they don't get actively involved. The Committee is headed up by five Trustees, responsible for the day-to-day management of Friends and communication with the School. The current Friends Trustees are:

- Chair: Floor Smakman-Timmons (children in Years 5 and 6)
- Deputy Chair: Ellen Roscow (children in nursery and year 2)
- Treasurer: Olha Fenova (children in nursery and Year 3)
- Deputy Treasurer: Laura Faiz (children in Years 3 and 5)
- Secretary: Claire Saunders (children in nursery and year 2)

The President of the Friends is the Head of our school, Mrs Hoof.

In addition to our Trustees, we have a dedicated team of members who come along to meetings, 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 now actively looking for new joiners to our team, and/or people who would like to take on the organisation of a Ball (scheduled for May 2024).*

CHARITABLE STATUS

Friends of Roundwood Primary School is a registered charity (Reg. No. 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?

Events

The majority of the money we raise comes from events that Friends run. Some of our most popular events include:

- The Summer and Christmas Fairs;
- The School quiz night;
- School discos for the children;
- Movie nights;
- Cake and ice lolly sales;
- The annual book fair;
- The silver coin challenge;
- The 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, including:

Parent Fund

Our School operates a discretionary Parent Fund. The Parent Fund was introduced for those who want to support school through voluntary financial donations. As a registered charity Friends can claim Gift Aid on these donations. All funds thus raised go directly to the school supporting vital classroom resources.

Over the past few years, we have found that parents have given on average between £10 to £20 per month. Many parents with more than one child in the school have decided to donate more each month. We are grateful for any amount parents feel able to donate regularly, especially if you are able to Gift Aid your donation (meaning Friends can claim an extra 25p for every £1 donated).

We've made it easy to set up your standing order for the Parents Fund - just click on the following link to get started: <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/21842>.

Alternatively you can set up a Standing Order with your bank by completing the form included in this pack and return it to the Friends letter box at school reception.

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 (our 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 or sponsoring big events like the Ball. We are extremely grateful for this support and do not take it for granted.

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 other commission schemes

We encourage all parents and friends to register with Easy Fundraising (easyfundraising.org.uk), to raise money for our school when shopping online. Once registered, every time you shop at one of your favourite shops (including John Lewis, GAP, M&S, Clarks, Expedia, eBay, booking.com, Notonthehighstreet.com, ASOS, Groupon, Made.com and hundreds more), 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 £8,000 so far.

School uniforms (particularly jumpers!) are notorious for getting lost and without a label it is impossible to reunite them with their owner. So, it is important to label all clothing with your child's name. You can order labels online through one of the following companies that offer Friends commission (up to 30%) at no extra cost to you:

- <https://www.stikins.co.uk> (30% to Friends). Enter code 17142
- <https://www.mynametags.com> (up to 24% to Friends) Enter code 26099
- <https://stamptastic.co.uk> (no code needed)

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 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.

The following are just some examples of projects/items we helped to finance recently:

- ✓ The acquisition of 22 brand new desktop computers (for use across the school) delivered in 2022 (funded through proceeds from the May Ball and fund matching);
- ✓ Forest school;
- ✓ Interactive Whiteboards;
- ✓ The KS1 playground;
- ✓ An inner porch for the School entrance (increasing security and the safety);
- ✓ Online learning tools such as Abacus and Clickr7.

Upcoming projects that Friends will support include:

- Refurbishment and upgrading of sanitation blocks;
- Outdoor redevelopment for the Foundation Stage;
- Continued support for school's rolling IT replacement.

But Friends funds also go towards ongoing provisions such as:

- ✓ Our School librarian and library books;
- ✓ Music teachers;
- ✓ Vital upgrades to the School IT systems; and
- ✓ Classroom materials, subscriptions, stationery and other resources.

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.

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.

Please speak to one of the Friends team or to your Class Rep, who can put you in touch with us. We know everyone is busy, but any time you can give is greatly appreciated by Friends and the School.

HOW WE KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU

- ❖ Through the School newsletters, which are sent by email from the School Office (Friends news is usually at the end of the letter);
- ❖ Via emails from our own school email address: Friends@roundwoodprimary.herts.sch.uk
- ❖ Through our social media and other apps: We have a Facebook Page, are on Instagram and make use of the Classlist App for all our news, information, promotion of events and ticket sales (please review the terms & conditions of each of these sites as they are external third-party sites);
- ❖ The Friends noticeboard on the entrance path into school.

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

Floor Smakman-Timmons
Chair, Friends of Roundwood Primary School

Attachments:

- Parent Fund Standing Order form
- Fund matching letter