



SKIPS PTFA

Information Booklet

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1. Introduction

This booklet has been compiled by our Parent Teacher Friends Association (PTFA) to provide useful information to all those involved with our PTFA – our existing families, new families joining our school community, staff, friends and the local business and residential community. For those families joining us, we realise it can be strange and a little nerve-wracking starting at a new school and there always seems to be so many questions to ask. This booklet aims to provide you, and all other interested parties, with information about our PTFA which forms a major part of school life.

If you have any questions that remain unanswered, please contact one of the committee members or your class teacher.

2. Why we have a PTFA

We are fortunate at our school to have a PTFA that aims to be an integral part of the school community. In the short time since it was founded, the PTFA has raised several thousand pounds, which has been spent on equipment and resources to enhance our children's educational experience and the school's facilities.

However, our PTFA is about much more than simply fundraising. The PTFA exists to provide closer links between home and school and it is an excellent way to bring staff, parents and friends together socially in support of the school, working towards a common goal. It is fun too - just ask any of the Committee members or PTFA helpers.

All families are automatically members of the Skinners' Kent Primary School PTFA when their child joins our school and are encouraged to get involved, even if they only have a small amount of time available.

The PTFA is extremely conscious of the ethos and diversity of our school, and we try very hard when organising and planning events to respect this. Not all of our events are run as large fundraisers, for example, some events are run with the aim of giving the children a fun time and as a way of thanking families for their continued support for the PTFA.

3. Charitable status

As our PTFA is relatively new, we are still in the process of gaining charitable status. Charity law requires voluntary organisations such as ours with an annual income in excess of £5,000 to register with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. As a charity we must abide by Charity Commission rules and regulations and we are bound by a governing document referred to as our constitution. Our constitution sets out the rules about how we operate as a PTFA and how we conduct ourselves. If you would like to see a copy of the constitution, please contact one of the committee members.

Becoming a registered charity will enable the PTFA to:-

- receive charitable donations from local and national companies
- apply to grant-making charitable trusts; most charitable trusts will give grants only to groups formally recognised as charities
- receive donations made through payroll giving and company matched giving schemes
- apply for Gift Aid

4. Links with local businesses and community

We have developed strong links with the local community and are always well supported by both residents and businesses, for which we are very grateful. Many of our local shops are very generous providing donations for raffle prizes, auction items etc and some have taken part in our Christmas and summer fairs. Once we have gained charitable status, we would be looking to local businesses for charity matched giving schemes. This would make a huge difference to our fundraising efforts.

5. Role of the Committee

Our PTFA committee consists of three officers: Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, supported by a large group of parent volunteers who attend and support events and committee meetings.

This year the committee will be meeting on a regular basis usually once or twice per term, with a smaller working group or groups and/or sub committees meeting as necessary when we are planning larger events.

6. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is held in May and provides an opportunity for all parents to come along and hear in more detail about the work of the PTFA, the events we have run, the funds we have raised and how funds have been spent. It is also the occasion when we elect our new committee members and class representatives. This allows a smooth transition period between new and old committee members.

7. Class Representatives

Last year we introduced class representatives who undertook a very important role. We had two representatives per class who provided a link between individual classes and parents and the PTFA committee. This year we are seeking new 'Faces of the Classes'. We ask that these faces can be a contact for the PTFA to communicate with the rest of the class, to share ideas as well as bringing the class together on day to day PTFA support. The support from the 'Faces of the Classes' is vital when it comes to organising our main events, from selling tickets to organising rotas of help.

If you are interested in joining the committee or acting as a class representative or PTFA volunteer, please do not hesitate to talk to a member of the committee. You can email the committee via ptfa@skinerskentprimaryschool.org.uk

8. Support from Parentkind

Our PTFA is a member of Parentkind, which is a national charity and membership organisation providing support and guidance for all home school associations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our association is one of over 13,600 members who subscribe to Parentkind. We pay an annual membership fee which gives us lots of member benefits including comprehensive insurance cover for all PTFA run events, support and advice on running the PTFA plus fundraising ideas and good practice hints and tips. Parentkind also provides us with the opportunity to meet and communicate with other PTFAs to discuss and share experiences. We receive termly

publications, which are displayed on the PTFA notice board and we receive guidance to ensure our events are legal and safe. In addition, we have a valuable resource at our fingertips.

9. How we raise money

Like most PTFAs, the majority of our funds are raised through the events that we run. Some of our most popular events are:

Summer Fair

Christmas Fair

Disco

Although a small list there is always something going on. We always try and respond to requests and suggestions; it is great to see the children having fun at these social events or enjoying using a piece of new equipment that the PTFA has donated.

We raise money in other ways too. Donations from parents are extremely important. You can donate time, money, items for sale, raffle prizes and auction lots or offers of services and skills.

Once our PTFA is a registered charity, we will be able to raise money through Gift Aid and company matched giving schemes.

10. Gift Aid

Gift Aid would enable us to boost our funds considerably. It is tax claimed back from the Inland Revenue from donations made to us out of your earned income.

If you are a UK tax payer, we are able to claim 28.2p in every pound that you donate to our PTFA. The procedure for this is very simple. We would ask our donors to sign a declaration form to confirm they are a UK taxpayer. The declaration can be cancelled at any time. Following this, every time they support the PTFA with a cash donation or if they support a sponsored event, the PTFA can claim the Gift Aid on their contribution.

There is nothing further for donors to do and we need no other information. The issue of Gift Aid is taken on trust and donors can support more than one charity in this way. We do not, and are not, required to divulge any personal information to the HMRC from your completed forms.

The Gift Aid forms will be given out to parents once our PTFA has been awarded charitable status.

As a PTFA we are very conscious that with a relatively small school community, the demands are often not as widely spread as in larger schools, and because of this, we try to raise our funds from as many different sources as possible.

11. Company matched giving

Along with Gift Aid, once we are a charitable organisation we can begin a company matching scheme. Company matched giving is very simple. Companies or businesses pledge to donate to a charity such as ourselves an amount of money relating to the amount that an employee(s) donates or fundraises for us. There are several benefits to both ourselves and the company involved:

- employees' morale is boosted by having their efforts supported by their employer

- the company benefits from having charitable donations written off against taxable profits
- the company can endeavour to get publicity for their giving
- our PTFA benefits from receiving perhaps double what we have raised at an event

If you think that your employer has a matched giving scheme already in operation, or if you would like some more information about charity matched giving or setting up a scheme in your workplace, please talk to one of the PTFA committee members, or ask in the school office.

12. How we spend the money we raise

Following a fundraising event the money is banked into the PTFA bank account. It is then at our PTFA Committee meetings that the decisions on how to spend the money are agreed.

The school will have a 'wish list' of items that they would like the PTFA to consider funding. Sometimes this will be as a result of the children asking for something. At other times it will be for resources identified by the school to improve a particular area of the curriculum or school environment. The PTFA funds are spent on the 'extras' that are not provided by the school's budget, thus making our children's learning experiences so much more fulfilling and exciting.

PTFA funds are not generally spent on improving the fabric of the school building as this is the responsibility of the school Governing Body. Our constitution commits the PTFA to spending money on things that will benefit the children directly.

The money we raise is usually spent fairly quickly. That way, you can be sure that in supporting our school, your child/ren will feel the benefit, along with everybody else in the short term. Of course there may be times when we will be fundraising for a large project. However, whilst saving for these, we still find funds for smaller items thanks to the generous and continued support of our parents.

13. How we get information to you

All PTFA communication will be available via the Skinners' Kent Primary School website as well as on the school Facebook page, via email and on the fortnightly newsletters. PTFA information will also be posted on the school notice board which is situated outside the main entrance to the school. These forums allow us to give information about forthcoming events and dates plus requests for assistance when we are planning large events. Following a PTFA event, we will confirm how much was raised, and if we can, what the money will be spent on.

14. How you can get involved

There are many ways you can help and support your child through the PTFA.

Offering to help before events or at other times during the year is so valuable. It does not matter if you cannot help on a regular basis, or even if you cannot come into school. There are always jobs that can be done from home if you have half an hour to spare e.g. wrapping gifts, preparing raffle tickets etc. We really couldn't achieve what we do without the behind the scenes help that we receive.

If you would like to be more involved, you can volunteer to be a 'face of the class' or part of a sub-committee, or you can simply support the AGM and give us your ideas for fundraising events.

Please do contact the committee via the PTFA email address or talk to one of us at school. The AGM is also the time to ask questions or voice your opinion.

15. What the PTFA means to our school

Because our PTFA involves the whole school community, we thought you would like to know what others think about our PTFA.

Mrs Annabelle Baird, Chairman of the SKPS Governing Body:

“The PTFA is an essential part of SKPS and its success. All parents and carers are automatically members, and everyone’s contribution is highly valued. The work of the PTFA has many benefits which underpin the work of the whole school. Clearly, its financial support is of great value in creating a rich learning environment for our children. Just as importantly, the social functions allow parents and carers to get to know one another and the staff in a relaxed setting. A further benefit is that the children see their families and school staff working together for their benefit. They appreciate this united effort and it adds to their feeling of security. Governors recognise that SKPS would not be the lively, welcoming learning environment it is without the enthusiasm and hard work of our PTFA, and as Chairman I would like to thank everyone involved, on behalf of the whole Governing Body.”

Mrs Gemma Wyatt, Headteacher of SKPS:

“I am totally overwhelmed by the support and dedication of the PTFA. PTFA activities not only provide us with exciting social events, but also raise funds which help to give the children such an enjoyable education through new resources and experiences. The PTFA’s contribution to the school community provides a collective of professional skills, innovation and new ideas, and creativity and collaborative working practices. Our PTFA has achieved so much, and I look forward to continuing this valuable partnership in the coming year.”

Thank you for taking the time to read our booklet. We hope you now know a little more about your Parent Teacher Friends Association. On behalf of all the pupils we would like to thank you for your very valuable support which enriches their learning experience and makes their time in school so enjoyable.

From the PTFA Committee
Caroline Callaway (Parent) – Chairperson
Paula Fry (Staff) – Secretary
Emma Bullen (Parent) - Treasurer

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