

  
*PTA Charity Number 1001808*

**Ravenbank CP  
School  
PTA**

**Welcome Booklet  
For  
New Parents**

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## **Introduction**

### **Welcome to our school.**

This booklet has been compiled by our Ravenbank PTA especially for you, as a new family joining our school community. 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 with information about our Parent Teacher Association which forms a major part of school life.

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

### **Why do we have a PTA?**

We are fortunate at our school to have a PTA that is and has been an integral part of the school community for many years. In its time the *PTA* has raised thousands of pounds, which has been spent on equipment and resources to enhance our children's education experience and the school's facilities.

Our PTA is about much more than simply fundraising. The *PTA* 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 *PTA* helpers. Obviously, as in any organisation, we have experienced some challenges but with the continued support of parents and staff, our *PTA* has always succeeded in its efforts.

All parents and members of the school community are encouraged to get involved, even if they only have a small amount of time available. All families are automatically members of the Ravenbank CP School PTA when their child joins our school.

The *PTA* is extremely conscious of the ethos and diversity of our school, and we try very hard when organising and planning events to respect this. We always welcome any new ideas as fundraising events so please feel free to contact any committee member with your ideas.

### **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 *PTA* and how we conduct ourselves. If you would like to see a copy of the constitution, please contact one of the Committee members.

Being a registered charity enables the *PTA* 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

## **Our PTA history**

The Ravenbank PTA has been an integral member of our school community for many years and in fact many of our current parents have been past students at the school. Many of the people, who were committee members previously, still help us out in a number of ways today. So you can see we are a very close knit community.

## **Links with local businesses**

We have, over time, 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 Pamper Evenings and summer fairs. We are also extremely grateful to the local businesses who have participated in charity matched giving schemes. This has made a huge difference to our fundraising efforts.

## **Role of the Committee**

Our *PTA* committee consists of four Officers: Chair, Treasurer and Secretary x 2. We also have 6 ordinary committee members to make up the full committee.

The Committee meets on a regular basis usually 3 to 4 times a term, with smaller working groups meeting as necessary when we are planning larger events. General PTA meetings are held once a term at school and we encourage you to attend all of these.

## **Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

Our Annual General Meeting held at the beginning of the academic year (usually in October) provides an opportunity for all parents to come along and hear in more detail about the work of the *PTA*, the events we have run, the funds we have raised and how the money has been spent. It is also the occasion when we elect our new committee members and ask for new class representatives.

## **Class Representatives**

Our class representatives undertake a very important role. There are usually one to two representatives per class who provide a link between individual classes and parents and the PTA committee. The support from class representatives is vital when it comes to organising our main events from selling tickets to organising rotas of help. We really could not manage without them.

We have a growing list of PTA volunteers who commit some of their time to helping the committee. Every little bit helps, even just one hour assisting at an event is invaluable, so we ask you to kindly consider helping out when you can.

A list of current *PTA* committee members, class representatives and *PTA* volunteers is at the back of this booklet. Updated lists are sent out each year after the AGM. If you are interested in joining the committee or acting as a class representative or *PTA* volunteer, please do not hesitate to talk to a member of the Committee.

## **Support from PTA-UK**

Our *PTA* is a member of PTA-UK, 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 in current membership of the PTA-UK. We pay an annual membership fee which gives us lots of member benefits including comprehensive insurance cover for all *PTA* run events, support and advice on running the *PTA* plus fundraising ideas and good practice hints and tips. PTA-UK also provides us with the opportunity to meet and communicate with other PTAs to discuss and share experiences. We receive termly publications, which are displayed on the *PTA* webpage and we receive guidance to ensure our events are legal and safe. In addition, we have a valuable resource at our fingertips – [www.pta.org.uk](http://www.pta.org.uk)

## **How we raise money**

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

- Spring Ball
- Summer Fair
- Hog Roast
- Bonfire Night
- Pamper Evenings
- Barn Dance
- Children's School Disco

So you can see there is always something going on. We always try and respond to the children's requests; it is great to see them having fun at the events or enjoying using a piece of new equipment that the *PTA* has donated.

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

As our *PTA* is a registered charity, we are able to raise money through Gift Aid and company matched giving schemes.

## **Gift Aid**

In the past Gift Aid has boosted 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 *PTA*. The procedure for this is very simple. We ask our parents to sign the declaration form attached (this only has to be done once whilst you are at school) to confirm you are a UK taxpayer. The declaration can be cancelled at any time. Following this, every time you support the *PTA* with a cash donation or if you support a sponsored event, the *PTA* can claim the Gift Aid on your contribution.

There is nothing further for you to do and we need no other information from you. The issue of Gift Aid is taken on trust and you 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.

If you are a UK taxpayer, please complete the declaration form at the back of this booklet. If both parents are taxpayers, please request another Gift Aid form from our PTA Treasurer or copy the one you have. As a PTA 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.

### **Company matched giving**

Company matched giving is a 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. We have been helped enormously in the past by this type of donation, and 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 *PTA* 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 *PTA* committee members, or ask in the school office.

### **How we spend the money we raise**

Following a fundraising event the money is banked straight away. It is at our *PTA* Committee meetings, that the decisions on how to spend the money are considered.

Our Head Teacher, Mr Lawless will have a 'wish list' of items that the school would like the *PTA* to consider funding.

Sometimes this will be as a result of the children asking for something for example new outdoor playing equipment. The School Council (made up of children from each class) is consulted when the wish lists are compiled.

At other times it will be for resources to improve a particular area of the curriculum or school environment. The *PTA* 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.

*PTA* funds are not generally spent on improving the fabric of the school building as this is the responsibility of the school Governing Body however in these times of austerity the *PTA* assists in any way it can.

We always endeavour to spend our funds in ways that will benefit all our children across all areas of the school and curriculum. Many of the resources purchased have a direct link to the School Improvement Plan.

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.

Of course there have been times when we have been fundraising for a large project. In the past, we have supported the following special projects: the new classrooms and hall extension and the outside playing areas.

However, whilst saving for these, we have still managed to find funds for smaller items thanks to the generous and continued support of our parents.

### **How we get information to you**

All *PTA* letters we send home are printed on yellow paper – so they are easily recognised. The letters include information on forthcoming events and dates plus requests for assistance, when we are planning large events. Following a *PTA* event, we always put a note in the school newsletter to let you know how much was raised, and if we can, we tell you what the money will be spent on.

*PTA* letters are posted on the school website under the *PTA* page. We also use the school texting service to get information to parents as this service is fully funded by the *PTA*.

A summary newsletter is published in the *PTA Magazine* giving a round up of events, details of the total amount raised that term, any equipment we have bought for the school, and input from the children including stories, artwork, poetry etc.

We are currently trying to establish a list of parents' email addresses, so we can contact you this way. Please let the *PTA Secretary* have your email address if you would like to be part of this group.

### **How you can get involved**

There are lots of ways you can help and support your child through the *PTA*.

Offering to help before events or at other times during the year is so valuable. It doesn't matter if you can't help on a regular basis, or even if you can not 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 Class Representative or Committee Member. Or you can simply support the AGM and give us your ideas for fundraising events. This is also the time to ask questions or voice your opinion.

You can help by letting us know if you have any contacts or skills we could use, everything is potentially valuable to us.

If either or both parents complete the Gift Aid declaration form, your donations will be worth a lot more to us.

And finally, we are always extremely grateful to receive donations as mentioned before.

There is brief questionnaire at the back of the booklet to fill in and return if you are able to help in any way, no matter how small. Don't forget to include an email address if possible.

### **What the *PTA* means to our school**

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

"As a new parent to the school, it was a great way to get to know other parents"

"I really enjoyed being a part of the committee, it was my way of helping the school community as well as making life long friends. I would recommend it to anyone. Committee meetings were more like meeting a group of friends for a coffee - the bonus was raising much needed funds for the school!"

"We are always willing to help Ravenbank in their fundraising as they are such a fabulous group to work with - the Pamper Evenings are always so well supported and so professionally organised. We hope our association with them continues for a long time to come".

### **From the Governing Body:**

The *PTA* is an essential part of our school. All parents and carers are members and everyone's contribution is highly valued. The work of the *PTA* underpins the whole school. Financial support enables us to create a richer learning environment for our children with current examples being the development of the outside play area, enhancing the music curriculum and new percussion instruments, new computers, the creation and ongoing development of the allotment and the new reading books. These could never have been installed so quickly without the incredible support of our *PTA*. Numerous curriculum resources have been provided which children throughout the school are able to enjoy. The wide variety of social functions, allow us all to get to know one another in a more relaxed setting. The children see their parents and the school staff working together for their benefit. They appreciate this united effort and it adds to their feeling of security. Our school would not be the lively and welcoming learning environment it is without the enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of our *PTA*. All of us in school are very grateful to them.

### **From the children:**

"Having a *PTA* means we get given cool stuff like our special coin to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee"

"The *PTA* holds a disco every term and we get to have a party and treats with all of our friends"

"The *PTA* bought all new books for us which was great because some of the old ones were wearing out"

And last, but by no means least, Our Head Teacher, Mr Joe Lawless

"I am totally overwhelmed by the support and dedication of the *PTA*. *PTA* 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. The *PTAs* contribution to the school community provides a collective of professional skills, innovation and new ideas, creativity and collaborative working practices. Our *PTA* has achieved so much, and I look forward to continuing this valuable partnership in the coming year.

Joe Lawless  
Head Teacher



Thank you for taking the time to read our booklet. We hope you now know a little more about **your** *Parent Teacher 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 all the PTA Committee**

**Cassandra Bloxsom  
PTA Chair**

**June 2013**

**2012/13 PTA Committee**

Chair	Cassandra Bloxsom
Treasurer	Sarah Coke
Secretaries	Kim Doherty & Debbie Tongue
Marketing	Marianne Waite
Events co-Ordinator	Anne-Marie Cripps, Joy Parkinson, Sally Tribe, Kirsty Unsworth & Julie Smith
Catering	Emma Leach, Susan Oakley, Claire Steed & Sarah Miller

**Gift Aid Declaration**



Name of Charity .....

Details of donor

Title .....Forename(s) ..... Surname .....

Address .....

.....

..... Post Code .....

I want the charity to treat

\*the enclosed donation of £ ..... as a Gift Aid donation

\*the donation(s) of £ .....which I made on ...../...../..... as (a)  
Gift Aid donation (s)

\*all donations that I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you  
otherwise as Gift Aid donations

\*all donations I have made for the six years prior to this year, (but no earlier than  
6/4/2000) **and** all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify you  
otherwise, as Gift Aid donations.

**You must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to  
the tax that the charity reclaims on your donations in the appropriate tax year  
(currently 28p for each £1 you give).**

Date: ...../...../.....

\*delete as appropriate

**Notes:**

1. You can cancel this Declaration at any time by notifying the charity.
2. If you pay tax at the higher rate you can claim further tax relief in your Self Assessment tax return.
3. If in the future your circumstances change and you no longer pay tax on your income and capital gains equal to the tax that the charity reclaims, you can cancel your declaration.
4. If you are unsure whether your donations qualify for Gift Aid tax relief, ask the charity, or, refer to help sheet IR65 on the HMRC web site.
5. Please notify the charity if you change your name or address.



**Parents' Questionnaire**

All families of pupils at our school are members of the PTA. The PTA runs regular fundraising and social events for the whole school community. Our fundraising efforts have enhanced the education and experience of all the children at the school and will continue to do so with your support. We would like to know a little bit about you and the events and activities that interest you. The PTA Committee would appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire:

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Contact telephone no:</b>
<b>Child's name and class:</b>	

- What sort of events would you enjoy attending, e.g. quiz night, ladies night, family disco?

- Please list any skills or talents you have that the PTA might be able to use: e.g. good with computers, painting, carpentry, gardening, baking, financial, marketing

- Do you work for/own a company that might be prepared to support the PTA by donating a raffle prize or sponsoring a stall at our Christmas or summer fair? If yes, please give details.

- Do you work for a company that has a company matched giving scheme for employees, such as a bank or building society? If you don't know, would you be prepared to ask them?

- Would you be interested in supporting the committee to help plan and organise events as a class representative or PTA volunteer?

- Would you like more information about joining the committee, the roles and responsibilities and the time commitment involved?

- Is there anything specific you would like the PTA to fund? Please give details:

Every year we hold our AGM in *October* to report on the previous year's work and elect the new committee members. This is a meeting for all members of the PTA, not just the elected committee members. It is our chance to tell you about our achievements and the difference we have made. We need the support of parents so that decisions taken at the AGM are valid and in line with our constitution. Please confirm your intention to attend (delete as appropriate) Yes/No Details will be sent to you nearer the time.

Overleaf / attached are details of the types of events/activities that we regularly run. We would like to gauge your interest in helping at or attending these events. Just tick the box – we really appreciate your feedback.

