

**Welcome to the  
Friends of Braywood PTA**



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## **Introduction**

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

This booklet has been compiled by our Friends of Braywood 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 (PTA) which forms a large 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 a number of 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 Friends of Braywood 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.

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 Friends of Braywood 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.

### **Role of the Committee**

Our Friends of Braywood PTA committee consists of four Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. We also have between 5 and 10 ordinary committee members to make up the full committee.

The Committee meet on a regular basis usually once or twice per term, with smaller working groups meeting as necessary when we are planning larger events.

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

Our Annual General Meeting is held at the beginning of the academic year and 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 year representatives.

## **Year Representatives**

Our class representatives undertake a very important role. There are usually 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.

Updated lists of our current PTA committee members and class representatives 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.

## **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:

School Disco, Phil The Bag, Quiz Night, Fashion Show, Yum Yum in my Tum Cook book, Christmas Shopping Evening, Summer Fayre & Christmas Fayre.

So you can see there is always something going on. We always try and respond to the parents and 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 extremely important. You can donate time, money, items for sale, raffle prizes and auction lots or skills.

## **Links with local businesses**

*The Fifield Inn, The White Hart, Savills*

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 Christmas 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.

## **easyfundraising.org.uk**

Raising money via [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://easyfundraising.org.uk), couldn't be simpler. We can raise money this way without doing anything! Every time you make a purchase online, the affiliated company will donate a percentage of your spend to Braywood School. All you have to do is click on "Support a good cause", find Braywood CofE School, then click on support this cause and log your details. There is a find and remind toolbar available which reminds you every time you go on to a website that is affiliated with the scheme – of which there is many! Amazon, John Lewis, Next, M&S, Argos to name but a few.

## **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 please talk to the Treasurer, 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 agreed.

Usually, Mrs Calvert 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, 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.

At the back of this booklet is a list of items donated to the school during the past couple of years.

## **How PTA get information to you**

We try to print all our important written communications on yellow paper – so they are easily recognised. A newsletter is published regularly to include information on forthcoming events and dates. It also includes things like requests for assistance, any actions required, information on how much the latest event has raised and what the money was spent on.

Your Year Rep will quickly want to establish a list of parents' email addresses, so we can contact you this way so please let the PTA Secretary or your Year Rep have your email address. Copies of the minutes of the PTA meetings are sent out by email from the school office to save on paper. We also have the school website where Newsletters and Minutes etc. can be found.

## **Braywood PTA Facebook Page**

At Braywood we are constantly trying to ensure our communication is as effective as possible and we are keen to explore new methods to engage with you on popular platforms. Social media is an avenue we avoided for some time, given the potential security risks and lack of control, but now Facebook has recognised this and developed secure groups. If you search for us on Facebook under "Braywood First School PTA" you can easily find us and send a request to join.

Facebook may not be something everyone is subscribed to, but we are assured it's a very popular choice and we would like to invite parents to join in with our discussions on the site. The Facebook group is secured and monitored, but it still allows two-way conversations for parents/guardians to share information and receive feedback from the school if required. We are encouraging you to use the page for general discussions as well as useful information

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

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

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.

### **Our Achievements**

We make a massive contribution to the resources at Braywood and ultimately the education of our children. Through our fundraising events we have raised enough money for:

- A Maths Scheme (Abacus) and associated software
- A Reading Scheme Read Write Inc by Ruth Miskin) with hundreds of books and teaching resources
- A Maths learning tool (Numecon)
- Bug Club and My Maths electronic homework schemes
- Hundreds of Reading books for our Reading Scheme
- An ICT suite of Dell standalone computers
- A suite of Dell laptops
- Visualisers and cameras
- The International Primary Curriculum
- Playground equipment
- Playground blackboards and larger play equipment

## 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:

**Name:**

**Contact telephone no:**

**Child's name and class:**

- 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: