

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to Friends of The Norwood School, our PTA.

This information has been put together by **Friends of The Norwood School** especially for you, as a new family joining our school community. Starting school is an exciting time for the whole family and studies show that there's a direct link between parental involvement and how well children do, so why not get involved from the start! This letter provides you with information about our PTA and lets you know how you can join in.

Why do we have a PTA?

Friends of The Norwood School (FOTNS) is intended to be a partnership between family members and carers, staff and students at our school. Working together, we are looking to raise funds to support the school in providing well-rounded experiences and opportunities for learning and discovery across all year groups. Our fundraising efforts will include supporting existing regular school events to raise money for the school but also create new events and opportunities for parents to get to know each other, particularly with the new Year 7 intake as the transition from Primary School to Secondary School is a big change.

We would like **FOTNS** to provide closer links between home and school and it is an excellent way to bring staff, parents and friends together socially working towards a common goal.

Many of you will have been active in your Primary School PTA's and we would love to have you onboard with your various experiences and learnings. Perhaps you were on the committee and would be able to help with that again, or perhaps you are great at organising events or cake baking! 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 automatically become members of **FOTNS** when your child joins our school.

Role of the Committee

We have a committee (Chair/Treasurer/Secretary) and have adopted the Parentkind PTA Constitution so that we can get charitable status. We are members of Parentkind (used to be PTAUK.co.uk) who support us through that. The Committee meets on a regular basis with smaller working groups gathering as necessary when we are planning larger events.

The Committee will also hold open PTA meetings to which any parent/carer can come along, find out what the association are planning, share ideas and get involved. Some of these meetings are held online as it is easier for parents juggling childcare and busy working lives.

Volunteers

We welcome any help from parents, teachers and friends, and already have a growing list of volunteers who will commit some of their time to helping the association. Every little helps, so just one hour of assisting at an event or wrapping lucky dip prizes or folding raffle tickets (just a few examples) would be invaluable. If you would like to join us, please email us at friendsofthenorwoodschool@gmail.com.

WhatsApp Year Groups

The WhatsApp year groups set up by the PTA have become invaluable to parents to keep on top of busy school lives, obtain second-hand school uniform and share general information. We also have some specific groups if your children have special educational requirements. Please ask in groups for details.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

We will hold an Annual General Meeting where committee members can be voted in plus providing an excellent opportunity for parents to hear in more detail about what we have achieved and what we are planning for the future.

Support from Parentkind

FOTNS is a member of Parentkind, which is a national charity and membership organisation providing support and guidance to over 13,500 parent associations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Membership includes comprehensive insurance cover by Zurich Insurance plc for all our association run events and gives access to support and advice on running the association plus fundraising ideas and good practice hints and tips.

Parentkind also provide resources for Parents and if you would like to sign up to their Parent e-Bulletin please visit <https://www.parentkind.org.uk/Signup>

How we raise money

Like most PTAs, the majority of our funds are raised through the events that we run. Keep an eye on all the channels for when these events will take place – school emails, PTA Facebook page, WhatsApp groups and so on.

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.

We use [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) so that you can raise money for the school FOR FREE just by shopping online as you would do normally at no extra cost to yourselves. From Just Eat to John Lewis, there are over 3000 retailers they work with so whatever you are purchasing you can raise funds for the school. You can sign up here:

- <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friendsofthenorwoodschoolcrowndale/>

How we spend the money we raise

The PTA committee is responsible for deciding how PTA funds are spent. Usually the School Leadership Team provide a 'wish list' of items that the school would like us to consider funding.

We will also invite input from parents too, so if you have an idea of something that would benefit all the students in the school or you would like to run an event, please do share it with the Committee. We can discuss it at a meeting and provide feedback.

Funds are typically 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. Funds are not generally spent on improving the fabric of the school building as this is the responsibility of the school. Our Constitution will commit the association to spending money on things that will benefit the children directly.

How we keep you up to date

Facebook, WhatsApp and school emails will include information on upcoming events and dates plus details of the help we need for larger events. Following an event, we will always let you know how much was raised, and when we reach our target, we will tell you what the money will be spent on.

If you have access to **Facebook**, please like and join our [Friends of The Norwood School page](#) - a private group for school parents and carers.

If you would like to join our **WhatsApp Groups**, please see the links on the homepage.

We look forward to welcoming you to our school!