



St Francis Catholic Primary School PTA

Welcome to St Francis Catholic Primary School

This information has been put together by the St Francis PTA for our new families joining our school as well as our existing school community. Starting school is an exciting time for the whole family. 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 document provides you with information about the PTA and lets you know how you can join in.

Why do we have a PTA?

We are fortunate to have the PTA as an integral part of the school community. We have raised thousands of pounds which has been spent on equipment and resources to enhance our children's educational experience and the school's facilities. Our association 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's fun too - just ask any of the Committee members or volunteers. 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 PTA when their child joins our school.

Below is a bit about us and why we love being a part of the committee.

Miki Critchley - Chair

I enjoy being part of this passionate team whose only objective is to enrich the lives of the kids at St Francis. It's lovely to see our hard work be the reason for the smiles on the children's faces. We welcome all and any help, so please get in touch with me if you have any ideas. pta@stfrancisprimary.org

Hayley Curry - Vice-Chair

I enjoy being an active member of the PTA. There is a real sense of achievement and unity when we work together to make a positive impact and change. The reward is seeing the smiling faces of the children at our events and when we are able to deliver new experiences. I'm proud to be part of the committee and the wider community that supports the initiatives to enhance the experience of every child in school. I get a lot more out of volunteering than I put in. The PTA is at the heart of this remarkable parent community at St Francis.

Jenna Dunstall - Secretary

I joined the PTA in 2022 when my daughter started at St Francis. I really wanted to be involved in our school community and to help create an enriching environment for all our children. Through my PTA involvement, I've witnessed the positive

impact our collective efforts can have on our children's educational experience. I hope to continue making meaningful contributions for the benefit of our children.

Laura Burt - Communications Officer and Treasurer

My daughter is in year 4 and I joined the PTA last year to become more involved in the school community and help raise funds for the school. It's very rewarding to see how our efforts enhance the children's experience at school & join with like-minded people who are just as passionate at enhancing the experience of all the children throughout their time at St Francis.

Dorota (Dee) Underwood - Governance Officer

I am a mum of two boys. My older son is in Year 6 and my younger one is in Year 2. I joined the Committee in October 2019 and I am very proud to be a part of such fantastic group. All the members are very passionate and dedicated, working towards school improvements which our children benefit from every day. We are very lucky to have so many amazing parents whose involvement is greatly appreciated and paramount. We all do our best to support school objectives through volunteering, fundraising, and enhanced educational opportunities for our children.

Mariana Tassara - General Committee

Being part of the PTA is something that I feel passionate about. Collaborating with parents to enhance our children's school experience has been very rewarding.

With two children in school, our journey since arriving in the UK has been enriched by the sense of belonging within the school community. Joining the committee provides a fantastic chance for me to contribute and give back.

Simona Chiorescu - General Committee

I really enjoy being part of such a lovely community and the opportunity to have a say in building the best school that we can for our little ones. Better facilities and resources will enhance their education, development and school journey overall and it feels great to be able to bring my contribution and help whenever I can.

The Committee, often with the Class Representatives (see below,) meet on a regular basis with sub-groups meeting as necessary when we are planning specific events. These are a mixture of face to face and Zoom meetings. The Committee also hold open PTA meetings; any member can come along to find out what the association are planning, share ideas and get involved.

Class Representatives

Our class reps play a very important role, providing a link between individual classes and parents, and the PTA committee. The support from class reps is vital when it comes to organising our main events, we really could not manage without them. Each class has a minimum of two class reps which change each year and are typically parents of children in that year. As with the Committee, anyone keen to be involved is welcome to volunteer to be a class rep.

Volunteers

We welcome any help from parents, teachers and friends, and have a growing list of volunteers who commit some of their time to helping the association. Every little helps, so just one hour of assisting at an event or painting stones for egg hunts or folding raffle tickets (just a few examples) would be invaluable. If you would like to join us please speak to a committee member, come along to our next meeting or email us – pta@stfrancisprimary.org

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is typically held in September and provides an excellent opportunity for all parents to come along and hear more detail about our work, the events we have run, the funds we have raised and how the money has been spent. It is also when we elect our new committee members and announce that year's class representatives.

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 have been the School Discos, Bake Sales, Christmas and Summer Fairs. 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.

Many companies offer fund matching for their employees when they spend time supporting an event which has raised funds for a charity, like ours. This boosts funds raised and sometimes doubles it! For example, Microsoft and BP offer their employees amazing fund matching opportunities and parents who work for these companies have secured thousands of additional pounds for our charity. We encourage everyone employed to explore this further with their HR department.

We're also registered with Easyfundraising which means you can help us for FREE.

Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself. These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stfrancisascot/>

How we spend the money we raise

The PTA committee are responsible for deciding how our 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 also invite input from parents too, so if you have an idea of something that would benefit all the students in the school, please do share it with the Committee. We can discuss it at a meeting and 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. Our Constitution commits the association to spending money on things that will benefit the children directly. Some of the recent items we have donated to the school are listed below:

- Brand new library space
- New reading books for KS1 and KS2

- Old play area clearance in woodland Easter egg hunts
- New replacement iPads used by the Teaching Assistants in each class etc.

How we keep you up to date

We distribute updates and sometimes a newsletter via the school office in addition to the school's weekly newsletter. This includes information on upcoming events and dates, as well as details of the help we are looking for to support larger events. Following an event, we feedback how much was raised and when we reach our target, we tell you what the money will be spent on. For questions, feedback and input please feel free to email pta@stfrancisprimary.org We look forward to welcoming you to our school and PTA!