

A Guide To Your PTA

For parents at Clare House Primary School



This document is produced by Clare House Parent Teacher Association. Clare House PTA has made every effort to ensure the content is accurate and correct at the time of publication, but some details may be subject to change without notice.
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Introduction

Welcome to our school

This booklet has been compiled by Clare House Parent Teacher Association (PTA) especially for you, as a new family joining our school community. We realise there is a lot of information to take in at a new school and there will be many questions you want to ask. This booklet aims to provide you with information about our PTA which forms a major part of school life.

If you have any questions that remain unanswered, please contact one of the committee members, we'd love to hear from you.

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 can be a lot of fun too - just ask any of the Committee members or PTA helpers. That's not to say it doesn't take a bit of hard work and effort along the way, but with the continued support of parents and staff, and of course the children, 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 Clare House PTA when their child joins our school. The PTA is extremely conscious of the ethos of our school, and we try very hard when organising and planning events to respect this. We aim to hold a range of fundraising events to ensure that all families feel they have the opportunity to participate and enjoy what is on offer.

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 download the PDF available on the PTA section of the school web site.

Being a registered charity enables the PTA to:-

- Exemption from the payment of income and corporate tax.
- Eligibility to receive charitable donations from local and national companies.
- Eligibility to apply to grant-making charitable trusts, statutory and lottery funding organisations.
- Eligibility to receive donations made through payroll giving and company matched giving schemes.

- Eligibility to apply for Gift Aid.
- Promotes the messages that our PTA is working for the benefits of others.
- Establishes a clear set of rules by which the PTA operates.

Links with our local community and businesses

We continue to develop strong links with local businesses, and the local community. We are supported by a number of local companies through sponsorship of specific projects at Clare House for which we are very grateful.

Many of the shops in Beckenham and Bromley are very generous providing donations for raffle prizes, and many parents with businesses at Clare House take up paid opportunities for advertising through the PTA in support of the school.

St Barnabas Church which borders Clare House grounds is always extremely supportive of both Clare House School and the PTA.

Role of the Committee

Our PTA committee consists of four key officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. We also have up to 8 committee members to make up the full committee. All of the PTA committee members are volunteers; there are no paid roles on the PTA. Every PTA committee member has an up to date DBS certificate and most have a First Aid qualification.

The Committee meet on a regular basis usually the first Wednesday of each month, with smaller working groups meeting as necessary when we are planning events.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is held every October and provides an opportunity for all parents to come along and hear in more detail about the work of the PTA; how we raise money, 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 committee members for the following school year.

Class Representatives

We are very lucky to have the support of class reps throughout the school; they undertake a very important role in helping to communicate with parents in each year. There is usually one parent per class who provides a link between individual classes and parents and the PTA committee. We really could not manage without them.

Class reps usually volunteer when their child first joins the school in Reception, if there are lots of volunteers then names are drawn from a hat. The PTA supports Class Reps by helping to put together a class contact list for parents. Class Reps maintain the contact list and help pass on PTA messages usually by email or Whatsapp, many take on an informal role by organising parent and family

social events for their class. Generally each class and individual class reps decide when to pass on the role to somebody new.

Volunteers

The PTA relies on volunteers to be able to hold events across the school calendar. Without the support of volunteers and those who help from time to time we would be very limited in our activities and fundraising. We are very grateful to all those who help out, whether by baking cakes, helping to run a stall, putting up Gazebos or providing professional support such as graphic design, printing, catering, carpentry or electricians.

Support from Parent Kind

Our PTA is a member of Parent Kind formerly known as PTA-UK, which is a national charity and membership organisation providing support and guidance for all school associations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our association is one of over 13,700 members in current membership of the Parent Kind. We pay an annual membership fee which gives us lots of member benefits including comprehensive insurance cover for all of our PTA run events.

How we raise money

Events

Like most PTAs, a lot of our funds are raised through the events that we run. Some of our most popular events are: The Christmas Fayre, The Spooky Disco, Quiz Night and After School Clubs for the children.

There are certain times in the school calendar that are important to us for fundraising. We like to make the most of special times of year such as Christmas when we work with teachers and children to produce gift items and Christmas Cards which are sold to parents and families. We run a Christmas Fayre in December and we organise group tickets to the Pantomime at the Churchill Theatre. We also try and hold events and activities around dates such as Easter, Halloween and World Book Day.

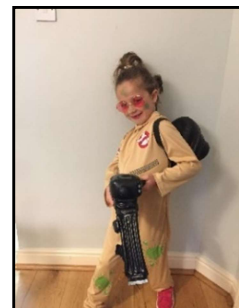
Christmas Fayre



Barn Dance



Spooky Disco



Donations

We raise money in other ways too. Donations from parents are extremely important, and from time to time the PTA may ask for donations from parents to support us in our fundraising efforts for the school. Here are the ways in which you can make a financial contribution to the PTA:

Regular Giving

Support from parents that give a regular amount to the PTA and Clare House is an invaluable source of fundraising. By donating monthly by direct debit or standing order you will be helping our headmaster Mr Budden and the PTA to plan ahead.

Standing Orders

You can donate directly to the PTA via Standing Order. It's quick and easy to set up a monthly or annual standing order. The PTA is very grateful for any amount; small donations from across the school make a real difference over time.

You can download the Standing Order Mandate from the PTA section on the Clare House Website, use online banking or forms available from your bank to set up a standing order. You will need details of the PTA Donations Account listed below.

Special donations

The PTA is lucky enough to receive occasional one-off donations from parents, whatever the size of gift we are always delighted when parents are in a position to do this. We realise that sometimes parents prefer for donations to be discrete and the PTA respect this.

PTA Banking Information for Donations

Clare House PTA has a bank account to receive donations the details of which are below. When making a regular or one-off donation to the PTA please use your child's first initial and surname as the reference. It is important we know where donations come from as we are often able to claim Gift Aid on donations.

Clare House Primary School PTA
HSBC Beckenham
Sortcode 40-09-25
Account 21716034

The PTA welcomes cheques made payable to 'Clare House PTA'.

(If you are paying for PTA events or other fundraising activity please do not use this account)

Gift Aid

As our PTA is a registered charity, we are able to raise money through Gift Aid and company matched giving schemes. In the past Gift Aid has boosted school 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 25p in every pound that you donate to our PTA. The procedure for this is very simple. We ask 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.

If you are a UK taxpayer, please complete the declaration form at the back of this booklet. If both parents are taxpayers, please download a copy from the school website 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.

Do you pay higher rate of tax?

If you pay a higher rate of tax you can benefit from tax relief on your donation. Please see the HMRC website for more details. WWW.HMRC.GOV.UK/INDIVIDUALS/GIVING/GIFT-AID

Payroll Giving

Payroll Giving is a scheme which allows anyone who pays UK income tax to give regularly and on a tax free basis to the charities and good causes of their choice. Payroll Giving donations are deducted before tax so each £1.00 you give will only cost you 80p, and if you're a higher rate tax payer it will only cost you 60p.

Payroll Giving (also known as Give As You Earn or workplace giving) is a valuable, long term source of revenue for the PTA, it can provide a regular income to help us budget and plan ahead more effectively. Employees can choose to support any charity of their choice with a regular donation direct from their pay.

It's cheaper because its tax free - for example, a donation of £5 per month costs the basic rate tax payer £4.00 (the taxman pays the rest!)

Higher rate taxpayers- the only way to pass on your 40% or 45% tax to charities. Only 28% can be recouped via other ways of giving.

If you would like to support the PTA through Payroll Giving, please ask your employer about the scheme.

Company matched giving

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. As a PTA we hope to benefit from 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* officers, 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 Committee meetings, that the decisions on how to spend the money are agreed.

Usually, Mr Budden and Mrs Holland will have a list of items that the school would like the PTA to consider funding. Sometimes this will be smaller items that the children ask for such as the friendship bench for the playground, or free ice-creams on Sports Day. Other suggestions may come from parents, or from the PTA Committee. At other times it will be for resources to improve a particular area of the curriculum or school environment.

The PTA funds are generally 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. A proportion of the funds we raise through Regular Giving is given to Mr Budden for the further improvement of education standards at Clare House. PTA 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 PTA to spending money on things that will benefit the children directly.

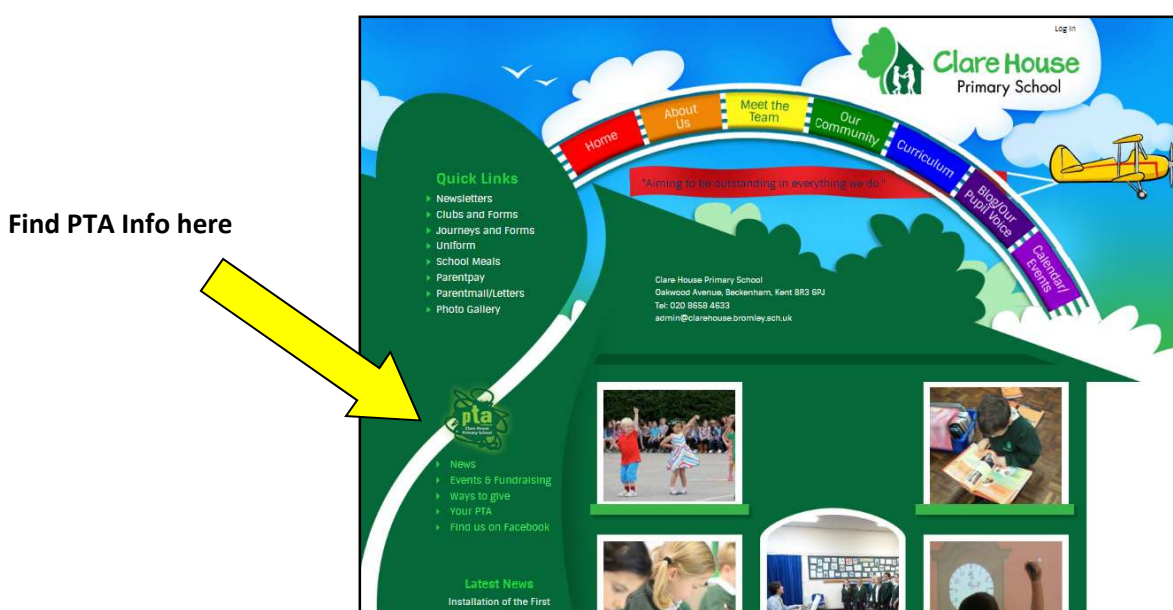
We always endeavour to spend our funds in ways that will benefit all our children across all areas of the school and curriculum. The money we raise is usually spent fairly quickly. That way, you can be sure that in supporting the PTA, your child will feel the benefit, along with everybody else.

Of course there have been times when we have been fundraising for a large project. In the past, we have provided the school with a new library and new Ipads. 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

Online and email

The PTA has its own section on the Clare House web site. You will find details of what's happening, what's coming up, Newsletters and information about fundraising, the PTA Committee and meetings as well as forms and booking information for events. We also have an active Facebook page which all parents are welcome to join. You can also follow us on Twitter @ClareHousePTA.



The PTA does not hold contact details for parents, but we rely on Class Reps to forward on messages and information to parents through the email lists they maintain. If you want to receive information from the PTA, and that which we send out on behalf of the school it is important to let your Class Rep have a current email address.

Newsletters

PTA News is our newsletter for parents produced each term and for special events such as the Christmas Fayre. We let you know what's coming up, give information on recent events and how much they have raised for the school, as well as asking for volunteers for large events. The latest issue and back copies are available online and in the reception waiting area is a folder with all back copies.

The PTA has a section at the end of every Clare House Weekly newsletter. The newsletter is posted on the school website every Tuesday. We use this to let you know about dates, times and specific details of events, and for requests for help and donations.

Letters and posters

From time to time we will publicise events through posters around the school and in the playground noticeboard. We will also send home letters, flyers and booking forms for events home in your child's book bag on a Tuesday.

How can you help

There are lots of ways you can help and support your child's school 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't 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, baking cakes, blowing up balloons 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 through any of the ways described in this booklet.

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.

From our Head Teacher, Mr Budden

"I am always extremely grateful for the support and dedication of the PTA. PTA activities not only provide the school community with exciting social events, but also raise funds which help to give the children at Clare House exciting new opportunities and experiences. Our PTA has achieved a great deal for Clare House, and I look forward to continuing this valuable partnership in the coming years."

From the Parents

"The music and swimming provision, alongside other activities such as the Halloween disco and Christmas/summer fairs are just some of the amazing things the PTA provide for children at Clare House. The PTA work tirelessly to give the children the best experience of what primary school is about: having fun and making friends."

Elaine Ponte, Parent Year 6

"So many of the things that make Clare House special are funded by the PTA, my children have always really enjoyed all the different music opportunities that wouldn't be possible otherwise."

Karen Littlewood, Parent Year 4

“The PTA greatly enhance school life at Clare House, fundraising through fun events that enable children to socialise with their friends and also adult events for parents to get together. The funding goes towards providing experiences and equipment for the children that hugely benefit them and their learning.”

Helen Bateman, Parent Year 3

From the Community

“Clare House PTA and St Barnabas Church enjoy a growing relationship of mutual benefit to the school, church and local community. I am delighted the pupils of Clare House Primary now benefit from the wonderful space the church affords for their special traditional Christmas and now summer performances. It brings me great joy to be involved with the life of Clare House, with both the school and myself looking forward to many exciting future initiatives.”

Father Tim Hide, St Barnabas Church, Beckenham

From the Governing Body

“The PTA at Clare House has always been an integral part of the school and pivotal in developing the community that we are so proud of here.

As governors we focus on providing strategic leadership to the school, including overseeing the financial performance. We are very aware of the impact the fundraising done by the PTA has had over the years and continues to have. We are extremely grateful to the PTA for having funded large one off items such as the school library, as well as the ongoing commitments to support the excellent music and sports provision.

It isn't just the financial side where the PTA has an impact though. Through the organisation of a variety of events for both children and adults throughout the year, the PTA supports the school community and makes our school a fun and friendly place to be part of.

All parents and carers are automatically part of the PTA and whatever contribution you make, whether it is attending events, supporting financially or helping to organise the summer fayre, your support is valuable.

The enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of the PTA alongside that of staff and governors helps to ensure Clare House remains a vibrant and exciting learning environment. We are very grateful to those in the PTA, without whose contribution those added extras that make a real difference for the children would not be possible. We hope you all find a way, big or small, to continue to support the hard work of the PTA.”

Anna Clough Chair Of Clare House Governors

From the children on our School Council

"Film club is so much fun!"

"I enjoyed creating my own Easter bonnet for the parade."

"If I ever feel lonely I know the PTA friendship bench is where to go and meet and make friends."

"I love ice-cream Fridays because it refreshes me, it also raises a lot of money so the school can pay for things like coaches for Sports Day."

"The Clare House sports kit make us feel proud, important and special at sports events it makes Clare House really stand out."

"I really enjoyed the Summer Fair. I was able to soak my friends in the stocks, play games and win cool prizes."

"I enjoy the Christmas Fayre because we got to have a picture with Father Christmas."

"Sports Day at Norman Park was brilliant."

"I loved dressing up as a ghostbuster for the Spooky Disco and catching my ghost friends."

"Learning Djembe drumming was brilliant and such fun!"

From the PTA Committee

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. We hope you now know a little more about your Parent Teacher Association and how we are involved in Clare House. On behalf of all the pupils we would like to thank you for your valuable support which enriches their learning experience and makes their time in school so enjoyable, and we all look forward to getting to know you and your child.