



PTA Handbook

Welcome to our school

This booklet has been compiled by the PTA for the parents and carers of children within our school community. It aims to provide you with the information about the Aspley Guise Lower School Parent Teacher Association in order that you may feel like you are part of it, which you are, and answer any questions you may have about us.

Why do we have a PTA?

We are fortunate to have a PTA that is, and has been, an integral part of the school community for many years. The PTA has been central to fundraising for many of the school's facilities and we also raise money for additional extra-curricular activities such as school trips, classroom toys and discos.

However, the PTA is about much more than simply fundraising; the PTA exists to provide linkages between school and home and is a great way to bring staff, parents and friends together socially in support of the school and pupils. As with any organisation, this can incur challenges, but the PTA has always succeeded in its efforts thanks to the voluntary assistance of our parents, carers and school staff.

Contrary to popular belief, you do not need to be a Committee member to be part of the PTA; instead each and every parent/carer of each and every child at the school automatically becomes part of our PTA on joining the school. We are extremely conscious that our school has a very diverse mix and we respect that not every family has time/money to give to the PTA. Some of our activities are free; some do not require time from the parents. All we ask is that you assist in some way towards the goals of the PTA and the school – this could be by sending in a small item for our raffles or by supporting the firework display. Every little helps and is massively appreciated by all stakeholders of the school.

The Role of The Committee

Our PTA Committee consists of four officers: Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Vice-Secretary. We also have various members who attend most meetings, including Mrs Mercer, the Head Teacher.

We meet at least once a term, more often at the run-up to events. Everyone is welcome to attend and the dates are publicised by email and on the PTA section of the school website. The minutes of each meeting are circulated to all parents and carers shortly afterwards.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is held in September at the beginning of the school 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 over the past year, the funds raised and how the funds were/are planned to be spent. It is also when we elect new Committee members and Year Reps for the forthcoming terms.

Year Representatives

Our Year Representatives are a recent addition to the PTA. These Reps provide a familiar face and direct link between each class in the school and the PTA. We feel that the introduction of Year Reps might make the PTA more accessible to new parents/carers and will be vital to the running of the PTA, from spreading the word about events, to manning cake sales and organising happy helpers. The beauty of being a class representative is that you can be involved in the PTA without too much time commitment. Although Year reps would be very welcome at the meetings, for those times where you are unable to make it, any feedback can be sent directly to the Secretary who can feed back to the meeting on your behalf. It is a great way of being involved in the school without taking on too much. Our current list of Year Representatives can be found on the PTA section of the school website. Please contact the PTA if you would be interested in becoming a Year Representative.

Teachers and Staff

The teaching and support staff are invaluable to the work of the PTA; they attend meetings, provide ideas and suggestions for funding aims, man stalls at events and provide feedback from the children and parents to the PTA.

How we raise money

Like most PTAs, the majority of our funds are raised through the events and schemes that we run, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Summer Event: usually early July this is held on the school field with various stalls, activities for the children, refreshments and entertainment. This event is run most years except for the years we host a summer ball.
- Summer Ball: for adults only, this is a great chance to socialise with other parents, carers and staff in a formal setting with a dinner and fundraising in the form of auctions and raffles. This is not an annual event, but more like every 3-4 years as it requires huge amounts of time spent planning and is a large financial ask.
- Cake Sales: each class organises and runs one bake sale per year, held after school with all proceeds going to that class for something they choose – often a class trip. Dates for each year's cake sales can be found on the calendar and/or the PTA section of the school website.
- Fireworks night: this is held on the school field, incorporating refreshments served from the classrooms and open to the entire local community.
- Christmas disco: this is a favourite of the children run by parents and held after school in the last week of term. We have found that it is more successful to open it only to children in Year 1 upwards; Oak Class has an afternoon disco, usually held in their classroom on the same day.
- Ice-pops and tuck shop: run by volunteer parents, the ice-pop sales generate fantastic funds for the PTA every Friday in the summer months. A new addition to our fundraising, the Tuck Shop sets out to replicate this in the not-so-good months and encourages children in Year 4 to get involved in the running to give them an understanding of financial transactions and retail experiences.

- Easter event: the easter event is held after school during the last week of term and includes an egg hunt for the children and refreshments for the adults.
- Cinema club: the cinema club will be held after school and include popcorn and other refreshments.
- Fundraising schemes:
 - Christmas cards
 - Tea towels

If you have any ideas for fundraising please contact your Year Rep or any member of the PTA.

How we spend the money we raise

Following a fundraising event, the money is banked into the PTA account immediately. During the next PTA meetings it is decided what the funds should be spent on and this is deliberated and agreed by the PTA.

Usually, this is spearheaded by a wish list that Mrs Mercer may have. Recently, it was requested that the play equipment be added to and upgraded and a huge amount was raised to purchase the Galleon in response to this. Whiteboards have been purchased and other 'extras' that cannot be met by the school budget. In any event, the money is spent very quickly. In supporting our school, your children will benefit almost immediately whether in the form of classroom aids, new play equipment, or in paying for the hire of a coach for a class trip.

Communication

How we get information to you

On joining the school, parents will now receive a copy of this handbook to introduce the PTA. We also have a tab on the school website which is regularly updated to keep everyone informed of what is going on and includes contact information for members of the committee, details of Year Representatives and dates of forthcoming meetings.

PTA correspondence, including minutes of the meetings, is sent by the school office using the parentmail facility. We also have a PTA board near the school gate which publicises forthcoming events. Year reps are a great source of information too.

How to contact us

You can email us at pta.agls@gmail.com.

You can also chat to any committee member (including Mrs Mercer) or Year Rep in person. Please see the PTA section of the school website for details of who is on the Committee for the current year.

Helping Out

How you can get involved

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

To stage the events organised by the PTA, we rely on a large number of volunteers. At some events this is easy but for others we do struggle to find enough people and invariably it can be a huge amount of work for only a few parents. If everyone donated even just an hour of their time it would be so easy to make these events successful. Examples of how you could help include:

- Manning a stall at the summer event (on a rota – we wouldn't ask you to cover the whole duration)
- Helping with the disco
- Assisting with refreshments at a cinema club
- Donating to the raffles
- Baking/buying cakes for the cake sales

Volunteers are a great help in the success of PTA events and are greatly appreciated. As a Committee we have a list of "happy helpers", people we can ask to help with tasks such as those set out above. If you consider yourself to be a happy helper, please fill out the form at the back of this handbook and return it to school. Alternatively, please speak to your Year Rep or a Committee member.

If you have any contacts or skills you think may be useful to the PTA that would also be very helpful. Could you DJ at the Christmas Disco? Are you a dab hand at wrapping gifts/hampers? Could you run a fundraising workshop at the school for parents? Please get in touch with any ideas or information.

If you would like to be more involved, putting your name down as a Year Rep or a future Committee member would be very much appreciated and attendance at the meetings would be a good place to start.

We really couldn't achieve what we do without the help we receive.

Happy helper form

Name: _____

Mobile: _____

email: _____

Child(ren)'s names _____

Class(es): _____

How can I help?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Happy helper at any event |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Task/event-specific helper (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Year representative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Future Committee member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other – please give details: |
