

The Friends of Oxenhope (PTA) Policy

November 2018



Oxenhope Church of England
Primary School

Introduction

This policy has been compiled by Oxenhope C of E Primary School for The Friends of Oxenhope (Friends) members and committee. This policy gives more in-depth explanation about Friends and Safety and procedural Policies required for Charity organisations. In the Appendix is a copy of the handout we give to our new Members, the parents.

If you have any questions that remain unanswered, please contact one of the committee member or class representative.

Why do we have Friends?

We are fortunate at our school to have Friends that is and has been an integral part of the school community for many years. In its time Friends 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

Friends is about much more than simply fundraising. It 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 Friends helpers!! Obviously, as in any organisation, we have experienced some challenges but with the continued support of parents and staff, Friends 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 Friends when their child joins our school.

Friends is extremely conscious of the ethos and diversity of our school, and we try very hard when organising and planning events to respect this. Not all of our events are run as fundraisers. Friends financially assists extra-curricular clubs and school trips, aiming to giving the children an extra learning opportunities Friends also assists financially with school experience in many other ways, including Christmas presents for classes.

From the Head and Deputy Head Teachers

Friends is an essential part of our school. All parents and carers are members and everyone's contribution is highly valued. The work of Friends underpins the whole school. Financial support enables us to create a richer learning environment for our children e.g. the investment in i-pads, experiences, the school equipment and play equipment. These could never have been installed so quickly without the incredible support of Friends. Numerous curriculum resources have been provided which children throughout the school are able to enjoy. The wide variety of social functions, allow us all to get to know one another in a more relaxed setting. The children see their parents and the school staff working together for their benefit. They appreciate this united effort and it adds to their feeling of security. Our school would not be the vibrant, nurturing and welcoming learning environment it is without the enthusiasm,

commitment and hard work of Friends. The staff and everyone at Oxenhope C of E Primary School hugely value your support.

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. 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 Friends and how we conduct ourselves financially as well as an entity. If you would like to see a copy of the constitution, please contact a Committee Member.

Being a registered charity enables Friends to:-

- receive charitable donations from local and national companies.
- apply to grant-making charitable trusts; most charitable trusts will give grants only to groups formally recognised as charities.
- receive donations made through payroll giving and company matched giving schemes.
- apply for Gift Aid.

Role of the Committee

Friends committee consists of three Officers: Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. This is a minimum requirement for a charity however there are further committee members and observers which make up the full committee.

The Committee meet on a regular basis usually 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 class representatives.

Support from PTA UK (Parent Teacher Associations)

Our PTA is a member of the PTAUK, which is a national charity and membership organisation. We pay an annual membership fee to the PTAUK which gives us lots of member benefits including comprehensive insurance cover for all PTA run events, support and advice on running the PTA plus fundraising ideas and good practice hints and tips.

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:

- Christmas Secret Santa
- Summer Fair
- Easter Egg hunts

- Discos

So you can see there is always something going on. We always try and respond to the children's requests via the School council; it is great to see them having fun at the events or enjoying using a piece of new equipment that Friends have 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 offers of services and skills.

How we spend the money we raise

Following a fundraising event the money is banked straight away. It is at our Friends Committee meetings, that the decisions on how to spend the money are agreed.

Usually, Mr Parkin our Head teacher will have a consultation with the children and staff to discuss items that the school would like the PTA to consider funding.

At other times it will be for resources to improve a particular area of the curriculum or school environment. Friends 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.

We always endeavour to spend our funds in ways that will benefit all our children across all areas of the school and curriculum. Many of the resources purchased have a direct link to the School Improvement Plan.

The money we raise is usually spent fairly quickly. That way, you can be sure that in supporting our school, your child/ren will feel the benefit, along with everybody else.

How we get information to you

- All Friends letters we sent via the school APP and website. with hard copies for those not on the internet. The letters include information on forthcoming events and dates plus requests for assistance, when we are planning large events.
- Friend's events are posted at the entrances to school.
- Events are also posted on the school admin notice board outside the school office

How you can get involved

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

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 Friends Helper 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.

Safeguarding and volunteer checks

PTAs have a duty of care to consider the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults, so make sure this is considered when risk assessing your event.

Who can be checked?

All committee members will be subject to a DBS check via the school office.

Not all people who have contact with children are required to have a DBS check. It will

depend on:

- how often they have contact with children

and

- whether that contact is considered regulated activity.

What is NOT considered regulated activity?

Most activities carried out by a Friends Helper cannot be considered regulated activity because they are not unsupervised, and are not carried out on a regular basis.

Examples of Friends activities that are not regulated could be:

- Helping at a school disco two or three times a year
- Helping at a monthly film night
- Helping at a school fair
- Running an event where parents accompany their children
- A volunteer Santa.

What is considered a regulated activity?

Regulated activity relating to children comprises only:

1. Unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children
2. Work for a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: for example, schools, children's homes, childcare premises. Not work by supervised volunteers
3. Relevant personal care: for example washing or dressing; or health care by or supervised by a professional
4. Registered child-minding; and foster-carers.

Work under category 1. or 2. is a regulated activity only if conducted on a regular basis, which is generally defined as 'carried out by the same person once a week or more, or on 4 or more days in any 30-day period. It also includes any activity

undertaken overnight (regardless of how often this occurs)'.

Examples of PTA activities that are regulated activities could be:

- running a weekly after school club, unsupervised
- running an overnight sleepover event, unsupervised
- listening to children reading in school on a weekly basis, unsupervised
- running any even unsupervised

Work by 'supervised' employees or volunteers is not regulated, so if these activities were supervised your Helpers would not need a DBS check. However, the employee who is doing the supervising must be someone who works in a regulated activity and with an Enhanced DBS with a Barred list check, i.e. a member of teaching staff.

What type of check is needed for Friends Committee Members and Helpers engaged in regulated activity?

A Friends Committee Members and Helper working in a regulated activity will need an Enhanced DBS with a Barred list check.

A Friends Helper engaging in a non-regulated activity, but having frequent supervised contact with children may be eligible for an Enhanced DBS check.

How do we ask for a DBS check?

Ask your school if they can apply for you, or contact an umbrella organisation. More information is available on the government Disclosure and Barring Service website.

Safeguarding Checklist before events

- Numbers of children and adults attending the event given to the school office
- Registers available together with contact details and how children are travelling home are organised prior to the event (this organisation must happen on school property and data collection and distribution must be compliant with GDPR regulations)
- Fire marshal trained staff attend the event
- Helpers have a safeguarding briefing before the event to ensure they are clear that they cannot be alone with any child
- Committee members with a DBS check and any school staff member must wear a Friends of Oxenhope t-shirt or a high vis jacket to identify them
- A risk assessment for the event must be presented to the Senior Leadership Team before the day of the event if on school property
- A school safeguarding lead must attend the events
- Fire procedures must be made clear to all Helpers and Volunteers
- Monies must be counted on the school premises and banked straight away or locked in the school safe
- Any documents featuring names, telephone numbers or any other sensitive information must be kept on the school premises and handed in to a member of senior leadership after the event who will then shred the information

- At Friends events on School premises during school time or after school such as A Fun Run or Disco parents will be asked to sign in and out under the Schools Safeguarding Policy.
- Staff, Committee Members and Helpers will ensure that there will be no mobile phone use from anyone attending Friends events and no photographs will be taken. This will be through APP reminders, verbal reminders and safeguarding lead involvement
- Any person preparing and serving food must have an up to date food hygiene certificate

Safeguarding is the primary concern of all events organised.

Members Code of Conduct

A safe community is obtained not only through the use of written rules and consequences but is derived from a nurturing atmosphere in which all individuals are treated with respect and compassion. Our school community consist of staff, children and parents learning together in an environment in which each person feels safe, valued, respected and stimulated.

This policy should be viewed as a means to strengthen our community of learners. It describes the basic expectations for behaviour, as well as the rules and consequences at Friends sponsored activities.

The guide begins with the Members' Rights and Responsibilities, followed by School Rules and Guidelines for Behaviour at Friends Functions. Throughout this document the word "members" refers to the children, staff and parents within our school community.

Members' Rights and Responsibilities

- Members have the right to be treated with compassion and respect. They have the responsibility to be respectful of and sensitive to the feelings of others.
- Members have the right to be themselves. They have the responsibility to treat each other with fairness, courtesy and respect, because each is different from the other and each is special.
- Members have the right to be safe physically and emotionally. They have the responsibility to maintain the safety of others.
- Members have the right to be heard. They have the responsibility to listen to the ideas of others and to communicate calmly and clearly.
- Members have the right to communicate together. They have the responsibility to use technologies (including social networking sites) responsibly by not disrespecting any other member or the school in general.
- Members have the right to expect that their personal and communal property will be safe and secure. They have the responsibility to respect the school building, school equipment, other members' property and their own personal belongings.
- Members have the right to learn about themselves. They may express their feelings and opinions appropriately without being interrupted. They have the responsibility

to respect the feelings and opinions of others.

School Rules and Guidelines for Behaviour at PTA Functions

The children will:

- Keep hands, feet and other objects to themselves.
- Show respect for all adults and other pupils by their words and actions, and listen carefully to directions when they are given.
- Respect school and personal property.
- Refrain from name calling, swearing at or teasing others.
- Not engage in activities that may injure others whether intentional or unintentional.
- Not bring/use mobile phone during Friends events
- Whenever a pupil violates any of the above listed rules at Friends sponsored functions, he/she becomes subject to correction and may not be allowed to attend future events

Adult Responsibilities:

It is the right and responsibility of an adult attending a Friends function to correct, or to report to the event coordinator, any misbehaviour by any pupil or parent that occurs at that specific Friends event.

Parents/legal guardians attending Friends sponsored functions with their children are expected to assume responsibility for their children's and their own behaviour and safety.

Parents/legal guardians unable to accompany their children to Friends sponsored functions are expected to designate or identify an adult who will be present and who will assume responsibility for their children's behaviour and safety. In the case of a school Disco, those present representing Friends will assume this responsibility.

The corrective action taken by the adult may range from simple verbal reprimand to suggesting the pupil be excluded from attending future Friends sponsored functions.

Written by Alice Jones

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