



PTA FAQs

What is the PTA?

The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is a registered UK charity run by volunteers with the aim of raising money for the school and fostering a vibrant, supportive and fun school community. All funds raised are used directly for the benefit of the pupils at the school.

The PTA does not have any say in the running of the school and cannot answer questions about this, which is left to the leadership team, which includes the governing body. Any enquiries regarding this should be made directly to the school.

Who is the PTA?

Every parent and staff member automatically becomes a member of the PTA when they join the school. As the PTA is a charity, it must have a committee comprised of elected officers: the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, who carry out specific tasks associated with its running and administration. However, they cannot organise and manage all fundraising activities alone.

Therefore, **all families at the school have a duty to help with fundraising by supporting PTA activities such as the school fair.** We encourage you to find a way to get involved that is practical for you, fun and interesting. The PTA cannot succeed without your participation and contribution!

Why does the PTA need to raise extra funds?

As a voluntary aided school, St Andrew's receives 10% less funding from the State than other schools. Also, real-term government funding is decreasing, which puts an extra strain on school finances. Even if this were not the case, government funding is limited and not always adequate to meet the needs of the pupils and the 150-year-old school building. The funds raised mean that our children have the very best resources and equipment available to them to enhance their learning.

How much does the PTA normally raise per year, and what are some recent examples of how funds have been used?

Annually the funds raised by the PTA are around £10,500, but this can vary from year to year depending on the number of fundraising activities. The financial summary is provided by the Treasurer at the AGM (Annual General Meeting), which is normally held April/May every year, and which everyone can attend.

The only way to make more money is to hold more fundraising activities and for more parents to contribute – obviously there is a limit to this. Match funding (where a company 'matches' the money raised by an employee for a fundraising activity) is provided by many companies: please ask your finance department if they do this and put them in touch with the committee if so.

Recently, funds have been used to buy new laptops and a charging station; new books for the library; tables and seating for classrooms and library; and interactive whiteboards.

Who decides how funds are used, and can I give my input?

Funds are allocated entirely by the headteacher and staff, who have a deep understanding of the school's budget and the children's needs. If you have a suggestion about how funds might be spent, please email the school office.

What are the range of PTA fund raising activities?

The biggest fundraising events are the Summer Fair and the Christmas Fair. Other activities vary from year to year but would normally include: book fairs, cake sales, old clothing collections, Halloween and Easter events, a St George's day event, a new parents' lunch and coffee morning, and a school calendar.

We would love to run more activities, and welcome any suggestions. Please bring your suggestion to the next PTA meeting or email standrewstotteridgepta@outlook.com with your idea. We are only limited in what we can run by time and volunteers – so please do consider before making your suggestion if it is something you would also be able to help with or run yourself.

How can I get involved?

Volunteer. All families are expected to volunteer at least once during the school year. Identify how much time you are willing or able to give, when you would be most available, and let your class representative know. We can find jobs for everyone, even if you only have a morning, evening or a weekend day free. We have a skills document available on the PTA page on the school website which you can fill in so we are aware of when you are free and how you can help.

Identify other parents/carers who you would like to do things with and share your ideas with the PTA committee or the class reps. Get other family members involved; aunts, uncles and grandparents etc are very welcome to join in.

Participate. We encourage you to attend at least one PTA meeting per year, so you can see what's happening and how it all works. PTA meetings normally happen monthly in term time, in the evening so that working parents can attend. If you can't make evenings, there is a chance to Meet the PTA in the playground the first Monday of every month 3.00 – 3.40pm.

Donate. We rely heavily on your donations for fundraising and without your contributions, stalls may not be able to go ahead. Please give as generously as you can. And of course, come along to the events themselves for a fun day out, bringing family and friends.

How does the PTA communicate with the school community?

The school office sends our PTA communications via the Parentpay system (we cannot do it directly ourselves). Class reps to send out information directly to their classes via email or WhatsApp. We also have a Facebook page which we would love you to join:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/standrewstotteridgepta/>.

A final note...

The PTA committee members and class reps are all volunteers, many with multiple young children, jobs and other important and time-consuming commitments, who give up their time and put in a great deal of effort to make the PTA a success. Out of courtesy, we would ask you to always open, read and respond to your class reps' messages, and read PTA communications via ParentPay so that you know what's happening. Communication is a two-way thing! We welcome feedback and suggestions, but also messages of encouragement and support.

Many thanks!