



*East Morton CE Primary School*  
**Welcome to Your PTA**  
*A Booklet for New Parents*



# Welcome to your PTA

## *A Booklet for New Parents*

### Introduction

A very, very warm welcome to our school.

This booklet has been written by our Friends group especially for you, as a new family within our school community. We realise it can be strange and a little nerve-racking joining a school, and there always seems to be so many questions to ask! This booklet aims to set out all the information you will need about our Friends of Morton group, which is a big part of our school life.

If after having read it (and we apologise for the length, but there is so much to tell you!) you have any questions, please do get in touch with one of the committee members, or ask via your class teacher, or the school office.

### **Why do we have a “Friends of Morton”?**

We are very fortunate at our school to have a Friends group that is, and has been, such an integral part of the school community for many years. In its time Friends of Morton has raised many thousands of pounds, which have been spent on improving **equipment and resources to enhance our children’s education and the facilities in school in general.**

But it is much, much more than just fundraising. Friends of Morton 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. And it’s fun! Just ask any of the Friends Committee or helpers. Obviously as in any organisation, there are times when it is more ‘challenging’, but with the continued support of parents and staff, our Friends group has always succeeded in its efforts.**

All parents and members of the school community can get involved if they want to, even if they only have a small amount of time available, and all parents are **automatically members of the Association “Friends of Morton” when they join our school.**

The Friends group is extremely conscious of the ethos and morals of our school, and we try very hard when organising and planning events to respect this. Not all of our events are run purely as fundraisers. We organise fun events for parents as well

as family events and, of course, events solely for the children, such as the annual school discos.

## Why are we a Registered Charity?

The Charities Act 1993 requires organisations such as ours with an annual income in excess of £1,000 to register with the Charity Commission.

As a Charity we must abide by Charity Commission rules and regulations and we are bound by a Constitution. Our Constitution lays down rules about how we operate as a Friends group and how we conduct ourselves. A full copy is available on request.

Being a Registered Charity gives us many extra benefits:

- **We are able to apply for Gift Aid, which can earn us an extra 28.2p in every pound** donated to the Friends group.
- We can raise funds more easily from grant giving trusts, local businesses etc.
- **We can take advantage of charity 'matched-giving' schemes**

## Role of the Committee

Our Friends Committee consists of 4 Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary). We also have between 3 and 6 other Committee members to make up the full Committee.

The Committee meet on a regular basis, usually once or twice per half term, with smaller working groups meeting as necessary to organise our bigger events.

## Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is held at the beginning of the autumn term, and this is an opportunity for all parents to come along and hear in more detail about events run and funds raised, and how the money has been spent. It is also the occasion when we elect our new Committee.

## Support from NCPTA

*(National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations)*

Our Friends group belongs to NCPTA, which is the national charity that advances education and supports PTAs. We pay an annual membership fee to NCPTA which gives us lots of member benefits: a comprehensive insurance package, support and advice on PTA and fundraising matters, opportunities to meet with other PTAs to discuss and share experiences, regular newsletters and the PTA magazine, a special

banking package to help us make the most of our funds, and an extensive list of PTA information and resources.

NCPTA also has a range of parental information sheets on subjects such as: literacy and numeracy, special educational needs, how to help your child get the most out of their school days, bullying, homework, using the internet and career paths to name but a few. You can access this information via the NCPTA website: [www.ncpta.org.uk](http://www.ncpta.org.uk)

## How we raise money

As in most schools, the majority of our funds are raised through the events that we run. Some of our most popular events are the Secret room at Christmas; Summer **Fun Day and Children's Discos. We have printed tea towels. We've had car** treasure hunts, plant sales, bag2school collections, 2p trails, an auction, beetle drives, numerous competitions for the children, and even produced our own cookery book and calendar.

So you can see, there is always something going on! We always try and respond to **the children's requests for events and it is truly the icing on the cake to see them** having fun at the events or enjoying using a piece of new equipment that the Friends group has donated.

Donations are extremely important. These can be: time, money, items for sale, donations for raffles or offers of services and skills.

As our Friends group is a Registered Charity, we are able to raise money through Gift Aid and Charity Matching Schemes.

## Charity Matched Giving

Charity matching is a very simple practice. 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. We have been helped enormously in the past by 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 Friends 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 matching or setting up a scheme in your workplace, please talk to one of the Friends officers, or ask in the school office.

How we spend the money we raise

Very quickly! Once money is raised from events the funds are banked straight away. It is at our Friends Committee Meetings, that the decisions on how to spend the money are taken.

**Usually, our Head Teacher, Mrs Dale, will have a ‘shopping list’ of items that the school would like to purchase.** Sometimes this will be as a result of the children asking for something, as in the playground equipment (the children helped to choose new play equipment and voted on it through the School Council). At other times it will be for resources to improve a particular area of the curriculum or school environment. **In the main the Friends funds are for the ‘extras’ not provided by the school budget, that make our children’s learning experiences so much more fulfilling and exciting.**

Friends 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 us 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 our school, your and everybody’s child will feel the benefit.**

Of course there are times when we have a big project underway that we need to **save money for. In the past, we have had ‘special projects’ to provide the playground equipment and the Library.** However, whilst saving for these, we have still managed to find funds for smaller items thanks to the generous support of our parents. The PTA do have ongoing commitments every year.

- **We subsidise the year 5 trip to Arnside.**
- **We present a dictionary or thesaurus to year 6 leavers.**

- **We help fund the reading folders for any new pupils in school.**

At the back of this booklet is a list of items donated to the school during the past couple of years and the amounts raised by some of our projects – we think you will be impressed.

How we get information to you

**PTA letters are regularly sent home via the school's email system, giving forthcoming dates for events, as well as updates, and requests for help when we are planning large events.** We also have a regular spot in Morton Mag and a dedicated **Friends of Morton page in the parent area of the school's Learning Platform** where you can information relating to our activities.

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 really is a case of 'many hands make light work'. 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 little 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 unseen 'army of help' that exists in school.**
- You can of course, if you feel able, volunteer to be a Committee Member.
- You can attend 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 – anything is valuable to us. There is a form at the back of the booklet to fill in and return.

Thank you for taking the time to read our brochure. We hope you now know a little more about your Friends of Morton group. On behalf of all the children we would like to thank you for your very valuable support, which enriches their learning experiences and makes their time in school so enjoyable.

The Friends Committee

# Appendix

## Current Committee Members

Suzanne Worsley - Chair	Sally Cowen - Committee Member
Maxine Sains - Vice Chair	Mandy Greenwood - Committee Member
Debbie Rutter - Secretary	Becky Holt - Committee Member
Alison Peaker - Treasurer	Kate Jackson - Committee Member
Becca Ashton - Committee Member	Jackie Kelley - Committee Member

## Examples of donations to the school

### *Regular annual donations:*

- Subsidised Reading Folders for each new pupil
- Subsidy for the Year 5 residential trip to Arnside
- Leaving gift for each Year 6 child

### *Examples of one-off donations made during recent years:*

- £5000 towards the Outdoor Games Area
- £3000 to build the 'trim trail'**
- £7000 to improve the Environmental Garden with paths, an outdoor classroom area and a bird hide
- £3500 to install permanent Stage Lighting in the school hall
- 3 covered seating benches for the playground
- Playground equipment and Playground markings
- Video camera & a Digital SLR camera
- 'Education City' Home Access for each child**
- 10 GPS devices for Outdoor Educational use

## Examples of money raised from recent events

Christmas Fair	£584
Eco-Kids clothes recycling collection	£202
Cake Stall	£126
Quiz Night	£408
Christmas Disco	£330
<b>Santa's Secret Room</b>	£218
Fun Day 2010	*£2,506

(\*includes match funding from Barclays Bank)

# Friends of Morton - Offer of Support

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

## I would like to be involved in “Friends of Morton” as follows:

- Become a member of the committee
- Help at events
- Help on an occasional basis as and when needed
- I work for a firm that does “matched funding”**
- I have useful contacts that may help you
- Come along to one of your meetings to find out more

What events would you like to see us organise?

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Any other useful information

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Please return to the school office or one of the Friends Committee members. Thank you.