



Parents Association Policies and Procedures

Introduction

Welcome to our school. This document has been compiled by the Parents Association to detail the policies and procedures for its trustees and members of the association. It gives an explanation of the Parents Association and the safety and procedural policies, which are required by the Charity Commission.

If you have any questions please contact one of the trustees or the active members of the association by email at parentsofrpa@yahoo.com, or contact the school.

Why do we have a Parents Association?

We are fortunate at the school to have a Parents Association (PA) that is, and will hopefully continue to be, an integral part of the school community. In the short time that the PA has been active we have raised thousands of pounds, which has been spent on equipment and resources to enhance the children's learning and their experience at the school, as well as the school's facilities.

Our PA is about much more than just fundraising though. We exist to provide closer links between home and school, and it is a way of bringing staff, parents and volunteers together to support the school and work towards a common goal.

All parents/guardians in the school community are encouraged to get involved where they can, and all families are automatically members of the PA when their child(ren) joins Rushden Primary Academy.

The PA is conscious of the diversity in the school and the ethos of the school, and we try to be conscious of this when planning our events, and so not all events are run as fundraisers. The PA has offered, and hopes to offer more, extra learning opportunities for the students, and to provide fun too!

Charitable status

The law requires organisations such as the PA to be registered with the Charity Commission if their yearly income exceeds £5,000. Thanks to our hard work, your support, and a generous grant from Tesco Bags for Help, last year we exceeded this threshold, and as the school continues to grow, we anticipate this will continue.

Our charity registration number is 1181689.

As a charity we must abide by the Charity Commission rules and regulations, and we are bound by our governing document, our Constitution.

Our constitution sets out the rules about how we operate as a PA, and how we conduct ourselves financially. If you would like to see a copy of our Constitution please contact a member of the committee (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer), or email us at parentsofpra@yahoo.com.

Being a registered charity enables us to:

- Receive charitable grants from local and national companies
- Apply to grant making charitable trusts-most charitable trusts will only give grants to formally recognised charities.

In the future we may also be able to receive donations through payroll giving and company matched giving schemes and apply for Gift Aid.

Role of the committee

Our PA committee consists of four officers; Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, all of whom are trustees. We also have several active members who form a dedicated team who lead events.

We meet on a regular basis, usually once every term, with dedicated meetings for larger events, specifically the summer fete. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend our open meetings.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is held in January, and provides all parents/guardians at the school an opportunity to hear about the work that has taken place over the year.

Support from Parentkind (formerly PTA UK)

Our PA is a member of Parentkind, a national Charity and membership organisation for Parent Associations/Parent Teacher Associations. We pay an annual membership fee, which gives us comprehensive insurance cover for all of our events and activities, as well as lots of other membership benefits such as advice and support.

How we raise funds

Like many PAs we raise funds primarily through the events that we run, including our summer fete, film nights, discos, shops.

We try to respond to ideas and requests from the children and their parents/guardians for new events to hold or ways of fundraising, and as a result last year we were able to make a sizeable donation of food to a local food bank thanks to a suggestion from a parent.

In 2018 we received money from the Tesco Bags of Help scheme to help pay towards the cost of the school stage, and in the future we will apply for other grants where possible, particularly if we are raising money for large/expensive items.

We hope also to be able to establish links with a company for matched giving.

We depend on donations from parents to help with our fundraising efforts, particularly in terms of their time and effort and items donated for events, such as raffle prizes.

Links with local businesses

In the last couple of years we have started to develop links within the local community, and we have been supported by local residents and businesses, for which we are extremely grateful. Over time we hope to strengthen these links. Many local businesses and residents have been very generous with providing donations for our fundraising, in particular the summer fete.

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.

We don't currently have anyone involved in the PA who can offer this, but we would welcome anyone who can. There are several benefits to both ourselves and the company involves:

- Employees' morale is boosted by having their efforts supported by their employer
- The company benefits from having their charitable donations written off against taxable profits
- The company can endeavour to get publicity for the giving.
- Our PA benefits from receiving up to double what we have raised at an event.
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If you think that your employer has a matched giving scheme already in operation please talk to one the PA officers.

Gift Aid

If you are a UK taxpayer we are able to claim 25p in every pound that you donate to the parents association for events that are sponsorship only. We don't currently offer sponsorship events, but may choose to do so in the future.

How we spend the funds we raise

Following an event all funds are banked as soon as is reasonably practicable. The decision how to spend the funds we raised are made by the trustees of the committee at committee meetings.

When making a decision about what we will spend our funds on, the committee of trustees will consult with the school, in particular the Head teacher and other senior members of the staff, about what they would like us to consider funding, as well as requesting ideas from parents/members. Decisions will be made with the valuable input from the active members of the association.

Funds may be spent on items requested by the school or by parents and pupils, and other times it may be spent on subsidising school trips or other educational and/or fun experiences

We will always endeavour to spend our funds in ways that will benefit the pupils across all areas of the school environment, the curriculum and their overall development.

The money we raise will usually be spent fairly quickly, so you can be sure that the pupils at RPA will feel the benefit as soon as possible, but there may be occasions where longer periods of fundraising are required

How we will communicate with you

- Letters for all events will be sent home with your child(ren). Where possible a copy will also be emailed to you, for example in case where no reply is needed. Included in our letters will be a request for your assistance, in particular at large events.
- Events will be advertised on our two notice boards, situated on either side on the school.
- Events will be advertised on Classlist, a secure, private social media platform, specifically designed for schools. We encourage all Parents/Carers to register with Classlist. You can email the PA on parentsofrpa@yahoo.co.uk with your email address or go to the Classlist website and register. Once we have approved your request you can communicate with other parents who are registered on Classlist, individually, by class or even the whole school. In the future we hope to be able to offer the ability to pay for events on Classlist via PayPal.

How you can get involved

There are lots of way you can get involved and support your child(ren) through the PA.

Offering to help before or during events is so valuable, whether you can only help once a year or on a regular basis. There are often jobs that don't require you to be in the school and that you can do from home, e.g. wrapping gifts. We would not be able to do what we do without the valuable work that is done behind the scenes. You can help by letting us know if you have any contacts or skills that we could use, everything is potentially valuable to us.

If you would like to become more involved you can volunteer to be a Committee member or active member. Or you can simply support the AGM and give us ideas for fundraising events. You can also ask questions or voice your opinions.

And finally, we are always extremely grateful to receive donations, as previously mentioned.

A message from the Head of School

A message from the PA Committee

Appendices

Appendix 1: School rules and Guidelines for behaviour at PA events

Appendix 2: Health and Safety policy-events held on school grounds

Appendix 3: First Aid policy

Appendix 4: Fire safety policy

Appendix 5: Digital safety policy

Appendix 6: Bullying and harassment policy

Appendix 7: Whistleblowing policy

Appendix 8: Complaints policy

Appendix 9: Safeguarding policy

Appendix 10: Code of practice

All policies to be read in conjunction with the schools policies.

January 2019

Appendix 1: School rules and Guidelines for behaviour at PA events

Children will:

- Keep hands, feet and objects to themselves.
- Show respect for all adults and other pupils by their words and actions, and listen carefully to directions when given.
- Respect school and personal property.
- Refrain from name calling, using inappropriate language or teasing others.
- Not engage in activities that may intentionally or unintentionally injure others.

Adult responsibilities

- It is the right and responsibility of active PA members attending a PA event to verbally correct, or report to the event co-ordinator, any misbehaviour by any pupil or parent that occurs at that specific event.
- Parents/Carers attending PA organised events on school property with their children are expected to assume responsibility for their child(ren)'s and their own behaviour and safety
- At PA events those representing the PA will assume this responsibility. At family events organised by the PA, for example the summer fete or Macmillan coffee afternoon, no child will be permitted to attend unaccompanied. If a Parent/Carer is unable to attend then they will be expected to designate an adult who will assume responsibility for the child(ren)'s behaviour and safety.
- Corrective action taken by the adult may range from simple verbal reprimand to suggesting the pupil take timeout to calm down. If the behaviour is significant then the emergency contact named on event return slips will be contacted and they will be expected to collect the child from the event as soon as possible. The child may be excluded from attending future PA events, or a parent/carer may be required to attend with their child.

Significant behaviour includes:

- Wilfully endangering self or others
- Wilfully destroying property
- Wilful disobedience of adults supervising PA events
- Engaging in abusive language or behaviour.

Appendix 2: Health and safety-events held on school grounds

- All PA organised events will have a comprehensive risk assessment, which will be approved by the school prior to the event. The risk assessment will include health and safety, safeguarding, supervision levels and first aid arrangements.
- The trim trail is considered an area of increased risk and should be monitored when in use. At PA events it will be considered out of bounds and therefore any child using it will do so at their own risk. At family events when the child(ren) is accompanied by their parent/carer the adult will be responsible for their health and safety when using the trim trail.
- External providers at PA events, e.g. DJs, will be expected to provide evidence of their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and their own risk assessments. Regardless of the DBS check they are not to be left on their own in the school at any time and must be accompanied by a PA member who has a DBS check.
- At the start of PA events a short briefing will be held to ensure that all PA members or helpers understand their roles and responsibilities, including safeguarding, health and safety and first aid availability. The first aid box will be available at all events. Details of the safeguarding lead at the school will be required for each event in case of a safeguarding issue arising, such as a parent/carer failing to collect their child.
- The Parents of RPA PA does not hold events off school grounds.
- Parents/carers will be required to provide details of an emergency contact, who can be contacted by a member of the PA in the event of an issue or emergency. Their emergency contact is expected to have their phone available to them during a school event so that they can always be contacted.
- The PA will have a designated phone number that we will use to contact emergency contacts on when required, and we ask that parents/carers save the number into their contacts. The phone will be in use during events only and is available for parents to contact a member of the PA if necessary, for example if they will be late to collect their child(ren). The phone number is **07508 459193**.

Appendix 3: First Aid

- The PA has its' own first aid trained members.
- The PA will endeavour to have a first aid trained member at all their events. There will be times that this will not be possible and on these occasions the event will be organised to take place when there are school staff available who are first aid trained. The staff at the After-School Club (ASC) will be available if necessary from the end of school until 17.50.
- The PA has its' own First Aid kit, which will be accessible at all PA events. Regular stock checks will be taken, and the first aid kit will be replenished whenever necessary.

Appendix 4: Fire safety

- In the event of a fire a member of the PA will be responsible for setting off the alarm. Most of our events occur in the school hall, in which there are two fire exits. Children will be escorted from the hall by their nearest exit and will congregate in the school playground as per the school policy. A member of the PA will be responsible for ensuring that the contact list for the children is taken out and the parents of the children will be contacted to collect their child when it is safe to do so.

Appendix 5: Digital safety

- Photos may be taken at events at the school of events organised by the PA. The photos will not include any faces or recognisable details of individual children without the express permission of the parent/guardian. These photos may be posted on Classlist to show parents what the children have been doing at the event, and how much fun they have.
- Classlist is a private social media platform, designed for schools to be able to communicate with parents/carers. Everyone who registers on Classlist must be a parent/carer of a child at the school, and anyone found not to be will be removed by an Administrator. Classlist provides the PA with a platform to advertise their events and communicate with the school community individually, by class/year or the school as a whole. By signing up to Classlist parents/carers have agreed to receive these communications, and if at any point they change their minds they can leave the platform. Every parent is notified of the behaviour expected from them on Classlist. Classlist has several Administrators who are members of the PA, and if any post is found to be offensive in any way the post will be removed. If a parent/carer posts offensive comments on Classlist they may be removed from Classlist at any time. The Administrators of the site will make the decision as need arises.
- Parents/Carers are asked not to post details of any child on Classlist.
- Classlist is a useful tool for the PA and we hope to reach more members of the school community as they sign up. Parents have found it useful to check information or dates. Those who are registered on Classlist will be the first to find out about PA events, so we encourage parents to register.
- In the course of its' business the PA have access to information about children and the parents/carers, in particular on reply slips that are returned for events. The PA uses this information to compile lists of children at the events we hold, to ensure easy access to the information we need should an emergency arise, and to ensure that we are aware of any allergies. The lists that are compiled will be destroyed once the event has finished, and therefore parents/carers will be required to provide the information at each event.
- The members of the PA communicate between themselves regularly, by email and WhatsApp in particular. We will not communicate details of your child(ren) in any other form of electronic communication.

Appendix 6: Bullying and Harassment

- No action that is considered to be bullying or harassment will be tolerated at any time. This is applicable to the children, members of the PA, and helpers who attend events or school staff.
- Bullying or harassment means any unwanted behaviour that makes somebody feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated or offended. This may not be obvious to others, and may happen without others awareness. It may occur face-to-face, by letter, email or by phone. It may include spreading malicious rumours, unfair treatment, picking on somebody or name calling. This list is not exhaustive.
- Any child found to be engaging in this behaviour will be dealt with by means of our policy for standards of behaviour (Appendix 1).
- Any member of the PA who feels like they are being subjected to bullying or harassment should report it to one or all the trustees. The trustees will decide whether the offender should continue in their role in the PA and may be asked to leave following enquiries. If the offender is one of the trustees, the victim should report it to the other trustees who will make the decision. If the offenders are all the trustees the victim should approach a senior member of the school staff who will deal with it within their guidelines.
- Any member who feels they are being subjected to bullying and/or harassment by a school staff member may wish to inform the trustees of the PA but should approach a senior member of the school staff to report it and it should be dealt with according to the school's policy.

Appendix 7: Whistleblowing

- Whistleblowing is the reporting of misconduct, illegal acts or a failure to act within the PA/charity.
- The trustees of the charity Parents of RPA encourage any member or helper or member of the school community to raise concerns of any serious misconduct within the charity.
- In the first instance report any concerns of the above nature to the trustees. Depending on the nature of the report relevant action will be taken, for example if abuse or other illegal activity is suspected to police will be approached.
- If the trustees are involved in the alleged behaviour report it to a senior member of the school staff who will act according to their own policy.
- In addition, if a person is not satisfied with how the issue is dealt with, they can approach the following regulators:

The Fundraising regulator

The police if the issue concerns illegal activity

As a registered charity a person can complain to the Charity Commission if, for example, the charity is not doing what it claims to do, losing lots of money, harming people, being used for personal profit or gain or involved in illegal activity.

Appendix 8: Complaints

- This is a procedure for if there is a complaint against the Parents of RPA.
- Rushden Primary Academy has its' own complaints procedure-please refer to the school.
- The Parents of RPA defines a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about the PA's action or inaction, or about the standard of a service provided. A complaint can be written or verbal.
- A complaint is not
 1. A request for service (such as the PA not holding enough events)
 2. A request for information or an explanation of PA policy (such as why the PA charges a certain amount for events).

Making a complaint about the PA

- If you feel that the PA has failed to meet its' requirements and you want to complain, in the first instance you should contact the Chair or Vice-Chair of the PA.
- If the complaint received is in respect of the Chair or Vice-Chair, the complaint should be referred to the Secretary or Treasurer. If it is about all of the trustees (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) it should be reported to the Head of School.
- The PA would expect the vast majority of complaints you have about the service from the PA will be resolved at the first point of contact. We encourage parents/carers to contact the PA with any problems and give the PA the opportunity to put it right as soon as possible.
- If after you have contacted the Chair or Vice Chair you are still not satisfied or the issue has not been resolved, then you have the right to raise the matter with the school. You can do this by contacting the school office and asking to speak to the Head of School or the Family Support Worker, Debs Francis. You may be asked to put your concerns in writing.

Appendix 9: Safeguarding

- **The health and safety of the pupils in the school is of paramount importance.** Parents send their children to the school every day with the expectation that the school will provide a safe and secure environment in which their children will flourish. In order to do this a wide range of measures and policies are put in place by Rushden Primary Academy school, which are available on the schools' website. The PA support and abide by the schools' policies, and these policies are to be read in conjunction with the schools' policies and guidelines.
- The Rushden Primary Academy Safeguarding Policy is reviewed and updated every year, and is approved by Greenwood trust, the schools' governing body.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) for Rushden Primary Academy is Liza Davies, and the Deputy DSL are Debs Francis and Helen Mallett.
- Rushden Primary Academy will ensure that the PA prioritise child safeguarding at every event that we organise. We will complete a risk assessment for every event, which will be reviewed and approved by the school. The risk assessment will consider the safeguarding of the pupils.
- All members of the PA that visit the school during the working day will adopt and follow school policies for signing in and out at the office, and other safeguarding policies.
- All PA members who have had a DBS check will wear a green visitor badge, and any helper or external provider or other member without a DBS check will wear a red visitor badge, to ensure easy identification by school staff. No member without a DBS check, and no external provider, will be left alone in the school at any time, and will always be accompanied by a PA member who has a DBS check.
- First aid arrangements will be included as part of the risk assessment for all events. Should a child be injured or taken unwell during an event first aid will be administered by an appropriately trained adult. The lead PA member at the event will contact the child's emergency contact if they are unwell and need to be collected. In the event of an emergency a PA member will dial 999 for an ambulance and then the emergency contact will be notified.

Safeguarding and volunteer checks

- The school and the PA has a responsibility to ensure that all volunteers who come into contact with the pupils are suitable.
- Not everybody who comes into contact with children is required to have a DBS check. It depends on how regularly a person comes into contact with the children, and whether that contact is considered regulated activity, for example if a PA/PTA ran a weekly after-school club.
- Because many of the members of the PA are in unsupervised contact with the children at events organised by the PA, the trustees (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and the active members will be DBS checked, to a level stipulated by the school.
- As stated earlier in this document no person who hasn't had a DBS check, nor any external providers, will be left alone with children. They must have a member who has a DBS check with them at all times.
- DBS checks are to be requested through the school office. There is an application form to be completed by the individual and ID checks will be conducted by the school.

Safeguarding is the primary concern at all PA organised events.

Appendix 10: Members Code of Conduct

Introduction

This Code of Conduct binds both committee and non-committee members of the Parents of RPA (Rushden Primary Academy).

These guidelines describe the basic expectations for behaviour and the importance for all members to conduct themselves professionally and ethically, and will run alongside our constitution, which is a legally binding document.

In order for the PTA to function successfully it is essential that all members agree to follow these guidelines while in acting in association with the PA.

The Code

- Any parent or guardian of a pupil attending Rushden Primary Academy and all members of school staff are deemed to be members of the PA, with the vested interest in enhancing the school for all pupils.
- All work done on behalf of the PA is voluntary and is done for no personal gain.
- All members will act in the best interest of the PA and the school.
- All members will be encouraged to make relevant and positive contributions to meetings they attend.
- All members have the right to be heard and must respect each other's opinions.
- All members have the right to communicate together responsibly. Official communications will be made via the email address parentsofrpa@yahoo.com. Communications may also be made informally via WhatsApp/text message where members have agreed to this. Any matters relating to the school, should be directed to the school office.
- Any items emailed through to the PA email address may not be answered immediately. All committee members work on behalf of the PA on a voluntary basis, in their free time and may not be able to address issues straight away. Any query raised will need to be discussed by the committee and if necessary will be added to their next meeting agenda.
- The committee will work to the rules stated in their constitution. As per the constitution, decisions will be made by a majority vote of the elected committee members. The committee may from time to time consult with the wider membership, however the committee's decision is final.

- All members must ensure that any material or discussion of a confidential nature, especially matters concerning individual staff, pupils or parents/guardians, is confined to the meeting, attended only by elected committee members. Names will be blacked out of the meeting minutes, if necessary.
- The committee should be made aware of any conflict of interest and the person involved should withdraw from any discussion pertaining to that subject.
- All members must respect the School and personal property.
- All paperwork and assets relating to the PA are the property of the PA, and not that of the individual. When leaving the PA a member should return any relevant paperwork or assets to the PA Committee.
- Should it be deemed by the committee that any member has disregarded this code or their actions have brought the PA or the school into disrepute, the committee has the right to exclude that member from future involvement. The procedure for removal of a PA member or PA committee member is stated in the constitution.