

Welcome to Our School

**Friends of St Margaret's
C of E Primary School
Durham**

New Starters Information Pack



FRIENDS OF ST. MARGARET'S

Registered Charity No: 1031792

Parentkind
Member Association

Welcome to St Margaret's C of E Primary School, Durham.

This information has been put together by the **Friends of St Margaret's School Durham (FOSM)** especially for you, as a new family joining our school community. Starting school is an exciting time for the whole family. Studies show that there's a direct link between parental involvement and how well children do, so why not get involved from the start! This booklet provides you with information about the **Friends of St Margaret's Durham** and lets you know how you can join in.

Why do we have a PTA?

We are fortunate at our school to have a **Friends PTA** that's an integral part of the school community. Over the years we have raised **thousands of pounds**, which has been spent on **equipment and resources to enhance our children's educational experience and the school's facilities.**

Our association is about much more than simply fundraising. **Friends of St Margaret's Durham** 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's fun too - just ask any of the Committee members or volunteers.

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 the **Friends of St Margaret's Durham** when their child joins our school.

Role of the Committee

Our Committee consists of **Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Engagement Officer, Communications Officer and the Head Teacher as our Patron.**

To find out more about us head to the St Margaret's school website where we have an info page under the Community tab.

The Committee meet on a regular basis with smaller working groups meeting as necessary when we are planning larger events.

The Committee also hold open PTA members meetings, all parents, carers and grandparents are automatically members and any member can come along, find out what the association are planning, share ideas and get involved.

Volunteers

We welcome any help from parents, teachers and friends, and have a growing list of volunteers who commit some of their time to helping the association. Every little helps, so just one hour of assisting at an event or wrapping lucky dip prizes or folding raffle tickets (just a few examples) would be invaluable. If you would like to join us please speak to a committee member, come along to our next meeting, look on the Friends page on the school website or email us – fosmdurham@outlook.com

Class Representatives

Our class reps play a very important role, providing a link between individual classes and parents, and the Friends PTA committee. The support from class reps is vital when it comes to organising our main events, from selling tickets to organising rotas of help. We really could not manage without them. You can volunteer for this by speaking to a committee member.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our Annual General Meeting is held in **September** and provides an excellent opportunity for all parents to come along and hear in more detail about our work, the events we have run, the funds we have raised and how the money has been spent. It is also when we elect our new committee members.

Support from Parentkind

Our **Friends PTA** is a member of Parentkind, which is a national charity and membership organisation providing support and guidance to over 13,500 parent associations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Membership includes comprehensive insurance cover by Zurich Insurance plc for all our association run events and gives access to support and advice on running the association plus fundraising ideas and good practice hints and tips.

Parentkind also provide resources for Parents, if you would like to sign up to their Parent e-Bulletin please visit <https://www.parentkind.org.uk/Signup>

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:

School Discos, Christmas Cards designed by your child, Non-Uniform Days and the Summer Fair.

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.

The Friends have also partnered with a few companies who will raise FREE donations for the **Friends of St Margaret's** at no extra cost to yourself. Signing up is quick and simple to do online or click the following links.



How we spend the money we raise

The Friends PTA committee are responsible for deciding how our PTA funds are spent. Usually the School Leadership Team provide a 'wish list' of items that the school would like us to consider funding.

We also invite input from parents too, so if you have an idea of something that would benefit all the students in the school, please do share it with the Committee. We can discuss it at a meeting and feedback.

Funds are typically 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. Funds are not generally spent on improving the fabric of the school building, as this is the responsibility of the school. Our Constitution commits the association to spending money on things that will benefit the children directly.

Some of the items we have donated to the school recently are listed below

Bug Club Reading Subscription, Now Press Play Virtual Reality System, Hundreds of Pounds Worth of Books, News for Kids Subscriptions, Theatre Performances in School, Play Equipment in the Field and Bike & Scooter Parking.

How we keep you up to date

Our **newsletter** is sent home via email by school, this includes information on upcoming events and dates plus details of any help we are looking for at events. Following an event, we always write to let you know how much was raised, and when we reach our target, we tell you what the money will be spent on.

We also use the **noticeboard** situated opposite the **Infant Yard Gate** where you'll find all our posters and news.

Our **Webpage** is on the main School Website

<https://www.st-margarets.durham.sch.uk/community/friends-of-st-margarets/>

If you have access to **Facebook**, please join our **Friends of Durham St Margaret's C of E Primary School page**. For security and safety this is a private forum so if you would like to join please send a private message to the page's admin team.

If you would like to join our **Friends Volunteers WhatsApp Group** please let either a committee member or class representative know or email us at fosmdurham@outlook.com

We look forward to welcoming you to our school!