



C/o Chase Side Primary School
Trinity Street
Enfield
EN2 6NS
Telephone: 020 8363 1120
Charity No. 297988
Website: www.focs.me
Email: info@focs.me

Welcome



Our School – 2014

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	2
INTRODUCTION	3
WHY DO WE HAVE FOCS?	3
CHARITABLE STATUS	4
FOCS' HISTORY.....	4
LINKS WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.....	4
ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE.....	5
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM).....	5
SUPPORT FROM PTA-UK	5
HOW WE RAISE MONEY	6
*****COMPANY MATCHED FUNDING*****	7
HOW WE SPEND THE MONEY WE RAISE.....	8
HOW WE GET INFORMATION TO YOU	8
HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED	9
THE FOCS DIFFERENCE	10
PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE	11
CHECKLIST - WE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR HELP	12

Welcome to Chase Side Primary School.

This booklet has been compiled by the “Friends of Chase Side Primary School” (FOCS) especially for you, as a new family joining our school community. We realise it can be strange and a little nerve-wracking starting at a new school and there always seems to be so many questions to ask. This booklet aims to provide you with information about FOCS which forms a major part of school life.

If you have any questions that remain unanswered, please contact one of the committee members, your class teacher or email us at question@focs.me

WHY DO WE HAVE FOCS?

We are fortunate at our school to have a *Friends' Association* that is and has been an integral part of the school community for over 30 years. In its time FOCS has raised tens of thousands of pounds, which has been spent on equipment and resources to enhance our children's education experience and the school's facilities.

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

FOCS 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. The children's discos and fun afternoons are run with the aim of giving the children a good time and the Summer Celebration is a way of thanking families for their continued support for FOCS.

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 and Wales. 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 a *Friends' Association* and how we conduct ourselves. If you would like to see a copy of the constitution, please contact one of the Committee members.

Being a registered charity enables FOCS 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

FOCS' HISTORY

We trace our FOCS history back over thirty years. Many of the people, who were committee members previously, still help us out in a number of ways today. Some of our staff too, who have had children at our school and who are now adults were also part of the Friends' Association. So you can see we are a very close knit community.

LINKS WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

We have, over time, developed strong links with the local community and are always well supported by both residents and businesses, for which we are very grateful. Many of our local shops are very generous providing donations for raffle prizes, and/or sponsorship and some have taken part in our Christmas and summer fairs. We are also extremely grateful to the local businesses who have participated in charity matched funding schemes. This has made a huge difference to our fundraising efforts. Some local businesses even give FOCS unique promotions such as discount vouchers.

ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE

The FOCS committee consists of four Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. We also have a regular attendance from ordinary committee members which combines to make up the full committee. The Committee meet on a monthly basis *usually on the first Wednesday of each month*, 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 FOCS, 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.

A list of current FOCS committee members is at the back of this booklet. Updated lists are sent out each year after the AGM. If you are interested in joining the committee or acting as a class representative or *Friends' Association* volunteer, please do not hesitate to talk to a member of the Committee.

SUPPORT FROM PTA-UK

FOCS is a member of PTA-UK, which is a national charity and membership organisation providing support and guidance for all home school associations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Our association is one of over 13,600 members in current membership of the PTA-UK. We pay an annual membership fee which gives us lots of member benefits including comprehensive insurance cover for all *Friends' Association* run events, support and advice on running the *Friends' Association* plus fundraising ideas and good practice hints and tips. PTA-UK also provides us with the opportunity to meet and communicate with other *Friends' Associations* to discuss and share experiences. We receive guidance to ensure our events are legal and safe. In addition, we have a valuable resource at our fingertips – www.pta.org.uk

Like most *Friends' Associations*, the majority of our funds are raised through the events that we run. Some of our most popular events are:

- *Summer and Christmas Fayres*
- *Quiz nights*
- *Bingo evenings*
- *Competitions*
- *Discos*
- *Summer Celebration*

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

As FOCS is a registered charity, we are able to raise money through company matched funding schemes.

Company matched funding is very simple. Many large companies or businesses pledge to donate to a charity such as ourselves an amount of money relating to the amount that their 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
- FOCS benefits from receiving perhaps double what we have raised at an event

If you think that your (or your spouse's) employer has a matched giving scheme already in operation, or if you would like some more information about charity matched giving or setting up a scheme in your workplace, please talk to one of the FOCS officers, see our website (www.focs.me) or ask in the school office.

THIS REALLY IS A BIG SOURCE OF INCOME, AND IS VIRTUALLY FREE MONEY !!!

HOW WE SPEND THE MONEY WE RAISE

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

Usually, *the head teacher* will have a 'wish list' of items that the school would like FOCS to consider funding.

Sometimes this will be as a result of the children asking for something, like the *Timber Trail*

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

Our Constitution commits FOCS to spending money on things that will benefit *all* 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. Many of the resources purchased have a direct link to the School Improvement Plan.

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 from various events – we hope you will be impressed.

HOW WE GET INFORMATION TO YOU

FOCS send home periodic newsletters which include information on forthcoming events and dates plus requests for assistance, when we are planning large events. Following a *Friends' Association* event, we like to let you know how much was raised, and this is usually sent out in the school newsletter and advertised on our Website (www.focs.me). We also have a group on Facebook !

FOCS letters are also posted on the school notice boards and available from the pigeon holes which are situated just outside the school office

We are currently trying to establish a list of parents' email addresses, so we can contact you this way. Please email us at info@focs.me or join our Facebook group.

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

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

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 can not 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, and have had to cancel or downsize some events due to lack of help in the past.

If you would like to be more involved you can volunteer to be a helper or Committee Member. This need not involve a regular commitment, it can be as often or infrequent as you like. If you like we will add you to our mailing list of willing helpers.

You can help by letting us know if you have any contacts or skills we could use, **everything is potentially valuable to us**. Perhaps you work for an employer who would be willing to make a donation or contribution ?

Just as an example, some of the more obscure yet useful donations include **Packets of bread mix, blank paper and plastic cups**. You never know what may be needed or useful!

There is brief questionnaire at the back of the booklet to fill in and return if you are able to help in any way, **no matter how small**. Don't forget to include an email address if possible.

Thank you for taking the time to read our booklet. We hope you now know a little more about **your FOCS**. On behalf of all the pupils we would like to thank you for your very valuable support which enriches their learning experience and makes their time in school so enjoyable.

From:

Isabelle Stone – Chair, Sarah Rogers – Vice Chair

Andy Hall – Treasurer, Jo Wilson - Secretary

and all the valued regular FOCS Committee members

In 2013/2014, FOCS raised a total of **£13,381.68**. The majority of this came from the Christmas and Summer fayres. Last year FOCS funded:

- a new piano
- new netball kits
- new sports kits
- Visit from the West End theatre company
 - New gazebos and p.a. speakers
 - Table football machine
 - Funding for sports day

This year we will be funding a circus company to visit the school amongst other things, but will mainly be saving up to help have the playgrounds resurfaced.

In the past, FOCS have funded

- the Chill-out zone
- drinking fountains
- the school library
- the timber trail

I'm sure you'll agree that collectively you can see the difference that FOCS makes

September 2014

PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

All families of pupils at our school are members of FOCS. FOCS runs regular fundraising and social events for the whole school community. Our fundraising efforts have enhanced the education and experience of all the children at the school and will continue to do so with your support. We would like to know a little bit about you and the events and activities that interest you. The FOCS Committee would appreciate it if you would take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire:

Name: _____ **Contact telephone no:** _____

Child's name and class: _____ **E-Mail address** _____

- What sort of events would you enjoy attending, e.g. quiz night, ladies night, family disco?

- Please list any skills or talents you have that the Friends' Association might be able to use: e.g. good with computers, painting, carpentry, gardening, baking, financial, marketing, design, business

- Do you work for/own a company that might be prepared to support the Friends' Association by donating a raffle prize or sponsoring a stall at our Christmas or summer fair? If yes, please give details.

- Do you or your spouse work for a company that has a company matched giving scheme for employees, such as a bank or building society? If you don't know, would you be prepared to ask them?

- Would you be interested in supporting the committee to help plan and organise or perhaps just some more information ?

- Is there anything specific you would like FOCS to fund? Please give details:

CHECKLIST – WE WOULD REALLY APPRECIATE YOUR HELP

Please find below a brief checklist of some of the ways you could help FOCS. Don't hesitate to contact any of the Committee if you can answer "yes" to any of the below, or have any questions (info@focs.me). You can telephone or leave a note with the school office. Many thanks on behalf of the FOCS committee and the children of Chase Side Primary.

- Do you work for a company with a matched giving scheme ?
 - Would your employer consider donating a raffle prize ?
- Would your employer want to advertise in our Fayre programmes
- Would your employer want to sponsor our website (www.focs.me) ?
 - Could you help out at one of our events ?
 - Could you join the committee ?
 - Do you have any contacts with local businesses ?
 - Would you like to be a year/class rep ?
 - Do you speak Turkish or other foreign languages ?
 - Are you handy with a camera ?
 - Do you have an evening or two to spare ?
 - Are you good on Facebook or good with websites ?
 - Do you shop/book your holidays on the internet ?

Even if you can't do any of the above, you can still support us by attending our events. Keep an eye on the newsletters or website for more information.

All support is welcome – no matter how much or how little time you are able to give. By indicating on this form your willingness to help you are under no obligation to give more time than you can spare. We will contact you in advance of events to ascertain how you can help on each occasion.