



# PTA fact from fiction

When you support your PTA, you're not just baking a cake, writing a cheque or giving up your time to volunteer. You're buying your child playground equipment to climb on at break time, you're sending them on outings to places they've never been, you're making new friends, building a community, and you're helping to make your child's school that little bit better.

We've heard stories about the fears of getting involved with the PTA so let us help you banish your reservations and reap the rewards for you and your child.

## What is a PTA?

A PTA (also called Friends association, Parents association or other combination) is an open, friendly group of parents (and teachers/ family/ members of the community) working towards a common goal; supporting the education of the children at your school and strengthening the school community.

## Everyone's invited

Now that your child has started at school, you're already a member of the parent association. How involved you choose to become is up to you. If you're passionate about making a difference and want to be involved in running the association, you might want to consider joining the committee. If you have ideas to share and time to volunteer (it doesn't matter how much), head along to the next meeting.

## It's great for the kids (even if they don't realise it)

Studies show there's a direct link between parental involvement at school and a child's attainment; when children see us involved in their school and learning, it encourages them to do their best. Being active

in a parent group not only improves your child's school, it makes you an excellent role model.

## It won't take over your life (unless you want it to!)

There are always plenty of opportunities to volunteer for your PTA. Whether you work full-time, part-time, or you're a stay-at-home parent, any time you can offer will be welcomed. PTAs are involved in a huge range of activities, all with varying time commitments, so how much or how little you choose to get involved really is up to you.

## We all have something to offer

It doesn't matter how many children you have, how old you are, or what your background is; the skills that PTAs need are so diverse that everyone has something to offer. Of course, if you have book-keeping experience you're likely to be ear-marked as a future treasurer, and anyone showing a creative flair might be asked to design a poster for the summer fair – but the most important skills you can bring to your PTA are enthusiasm and a willingness to get stuck in.

## It's good for you

Joining the PTA is a fast way to get to know other parents and staff outside of your child's year group. Feeling part of a community is a very real human need – and more practically, these friendships create a support network. Chances are there will be opportunities for you to learn new skills, and who knows, you may even discover some hidden talents!

