

How a PTA can help with your fundraising efforts

Bursars, school business managers, finance managers, head teachers and governors are always looking at ways to increase school income. This guidance, produced by the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations (NCPTA) explains how a school management team, can utilise its PTA¹, working with parents to create an additional fundraising avenue, beyond (and in addition to) traditional event-based fundraisers, and all with the support of NCPTA.

NCPTA is a national charity that provides support, advice and practical resources to over 13,400 member PTAs throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland. With over 50 years' experience NCPTA has a unique insight into PTA activity, and is therefore perfectly placed to help you to make the most of this important relationship. When it comes to raising funds within a challenging economic climate, the concept of the school's stakeholders working together becomes even more important.

Charitable status

Many schools will not be eligible to register as a charity. This means that they are automatically excluded from applying to a large number of trusts and foundations, which are only able to award funds to voluntary organisations that are formally registered.

A simple solution is for a school to utilise its PTA by working together. The NCPTA Member Survey 2009 revealed that 70% of NCPTA members are now registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

PTAs that are not registered, and have an annual income in excess of £5,000² are legally required to do so; PTAs which fall beneath the income threshold can voluntarily register and this will be favourably received by the Commission if the association has adopted NCPTA's model constitution as its Governing document.

Whatever the situation is for you and your school, NCPTA will be able to offer the necessary help and support to drive your fundraising achievement forward.

My school's PTA is not registered as a charity

Registering as a charity is very straightforward for PTAs which are members of NCPTA as they have access to a model constitution which has been approved by the Commission for fast-track charity registration. The NCPTA's model constitution is the most widely used approved Governing document in England and Wales and once adopted without change will be accepted by the Commission for online Charity registration, which can take a little as 10 working days to receive.

NCPTA will support your PTA throughout the whole process through its Regional Adviser for the South East, Caroline Gaskin (01959 525802 / caroline.gaskin@ncpta.org.uk) and its National Advice Line (01732 375460 / info@ncpta.org.uk). Guidance includes:

¹ PTA is a term that is used generically and covers all home-school associations such as Friends, PAs, HSAs and PTFAs

² Charity Act 2006

- how to adopt the model constitution at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting
- the charity registration process
- the role of the trustee
- safeguarding and the requirement to undertake a criminal records check
- accounting and other financial implications
- and the many benefits of registering as a charity including the application of Gift Aid, utilising business links, matched funding and applying to trusts and foundations

My PTA is a registered charity, but has no experience of applying to trusts and foundations

Your school's expertise in this area may be enough for you to guide your PTA. The NCPTA does however offer a lot of help and advice on this subject too. Members will benefit from:

- a detailed Information sheet on raising money from trusts and foundations
- free access (worth over £180) to the Directory of Social Change website www.trustfunding.org.uk which is a database of over 4,000 charitable trusts and guidance on how to identify trusts that may be willing to support your projects
- free bespoke local workshops on raising money through trusts and foundations, which give advice on the whole process from agreeing your project, research and evidence of need and writing an effective bid application
- advice on other sources of useful information both national and local
- access to practical case studies, demonstrating the successes of other PTAs in raising money through trusts and foundations

My school does not have a PTA

Don't worry, NCPTA can help you. We can provide you with a simple Start Up pack to help you to develop your own successful association. There are special membership rates for schools which are trying to establish a PTA, which range from £25 - £40 per year (according to the number of pupils at the school).

Once your school has joined NCPTA, your association will have full subscription linked insurance (up to £10 million public liability cover) and access to the complete benefits portfolio, which includes the NCPTA model constitution and guidance on registering as a charity.

NCPTA membership

NCPTA membership starts from just £56 per year (dependent on the size of the school and method of payment). To find out more about how the NCPTA could help your PTA and, therefore, your school, please contact Caroline Gaskin, Regional Adviser – South East, on 01959 525802 or caroline.gaskin@ncpta.org.uk for a no obligation discussion.

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