Russell House

Russell House Parents Association

A guide for new families

Russell House Parents' Association, Russell House School, Station Road, Otford, Kent, TN14 5QU.
Registered charity No 1105471.

Russell House Parents Association

Introduction
The Russell House Parents' Association (RHPA) has compiled this booklet especially for you, a new family joining our school community. We appreciate that it can be strange and a little nerve-wracking starting at a new school and there are always so many questions to ask. This booklet aims to provide you with some information about the Parents' Association and how it can be a part of your school life.

Why do we have a RHPA?
We are fortunate at our school to have a Parents' Association that has been an integral part of the school community for many years. The RHPA has raised thousands of pounds, all spent on equipment and resources to enhance our children's educational experience and the school's facilities.

However, our Parents' Association is about much more than simply fundraising. The RHPA exists to provide closer links between home and school and is an excellent way to bring staff, parents and friends together socially in support of the school, all working towards a common goal. All parents and members of the school community are encouraged to get involved, even if they only have a small amount of time available.

Who's who
All families are automatically members of the Russell House Parents' Association when their child joins our school.

RHPA has a committee consisting of four Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and at least 10 ordinary committee members – the Form Reps. There is at least one rep per form and their role includes welcoming new families; keeping parents informed of relevant information; organising coffee mornings and mums' nights out and acting as a liaison between the form and the form teacher if required.

The Committee meet on a regular basis, usually once per term, with smaller working groups meeting as necessary when we are planning larger events. Communications from the committee to the whole school are distributed via the RHS parent email system and more usually via your form rep.

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 PA and how we conduct ourselves, a copy is available on the website.

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RHPA Events
We oversee several events during the school year. Some are fundraising events and some are just for fun:

Annual General Meeting (AGM)
Our Annual General Meeting is held at the beginning of the academic year in October, and provides an opportunity for all parents to come along and hear in more detail about the work of the RHPA, the events we 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 and Form Representatives.

Mother's & Father's Day Stalls
We host stalls during the school day, the week before these events, for the children to purchase gifts for their parents.

Easter Egg Hunt
The Easter bunny is summoned to the grounds of the school the week before the Easter break. All the children participate in an Easter themed challenge and are rewarded with a chocolate egg for their efforts!

Summer Fair
This annual event is a favourite with all the children – 3 hours of fundraising fun usually including inflatables, hopefully sunshine and always a lot of laughter!

Termly Social Evenings
Quiz Nights, Race Evenings and Bingo are regular events in the school year. All raise valuable funds for the PA and include supper and a bar. These events are a great opportunity for parents to get together, meet new friends and catch up with old ones.

Summer Ball
Once every 2 years we host a Summer (or Spring) Ball. This is the main fundraising event for the PA. It is a wonderful evening of entertainment and a chance for parents to get dressed up and have fun.

RHPA Uniform Store
A group of volunteers run a second hand uniform store, enabling parents to recycle uniform as their child grows. There is also a PA store that sells school branded bags, hats and some other items of uniform. A full list of the items available is on the school website, along with details of how to order.

Getting involved
There are lots of ways you can help and support your child through the RHPA.

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 cannot come into school. There

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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.

If you would like to be more involved you can volunteer to be a Form Representative or a Committee Member. Or you can simply support the AGM and give us your ideas for fundraising events. This is also the time to ask questions or voice your opinion.

You can help by letting us know if you have any contacts or skills we could use, everything is potentially valuable to us.

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

Subs

In 2014 we introduced the idea of centralised subs to RHPA. The subs are collected annually and can be added to your child's fees. The money is used to purchase anything that covers all the children in the school – previously this had been taken from the fundraising balance but this was not deemed to be appropriate – this will include presents from Santa and the eggs from the Easter Bunny.

The subs also cover the end of year gifts purchased from the PA for the staff at the school. In the past form reps had purchased gifts for the form teachers on behalf of their form, using funds collected per form. This format was determined to be redundant in 2014 as the structure at Russell House changed to include more subject teachers – the result of which meant several significant members of the Russell House team being overlooked in the process. In the new subs environment we purchase gifts on behalf of all parents for all of the teaching staff.

At the end of this document you will find a subs form – please complete this and leave it with the school secretary in the school office to subscribe to this service.

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read our booklet. We hope you now know a little more about **your** Parents Association. 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 the RHPA Committee

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RHPA SUBS FORM

The school has kindly agreed to allow the "add it to the bill" facility to be extended to the collection of subs. Parents can opt in to this facility, for the full time that their child is at Russell House, by signing this form. One form must be completed for each child at the school.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact russellhousePA@gmail.com

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Subs Opt in

I consent to my annual PA subs (£15 per child per annum) being added to my child's school bill. I understand that this form will be treated as continuing consent for the duration of their time at Russell House and that to withdraw this consent I can contact russellhousePA@gmail.com at any time. I also consent to any reasonable increases, subject to approval by the PA Committee.

Child's Name _____ Current Form _____

Signature _____

Signed by _____ Date _____

*please note any additional termly gifts are subject to individual parents' discretion.