



# Benson Church of England Primary School



## Welcome

From Benson Church of England Primary School's  
Parent-Teacher Association:

*The Friends of Benson School  
(FOBS)*



*June, 2016*

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# Introduction and Contacts



## The Friends of Benson School (FoBS) - Here for You and Your Children

This booklet has been compiled by our Parent-Teacher Association – The Friends of Benson School (FoBS) - 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 you will probably have many questions that you would like to ask. This booklet aims to provide you with information about FoBs, which forms a major part of school life.

If you have any questions that remain unanswered, please contact one of the FoBS committee members, your class teacher or class representative; details below:

### FoBS Committee Members – June, 2016

Role	Name	Email	Phone
Chair	Jo Whittaker	<a href="mailto:Jowhittaker2004@yahoo.co.uk">Jowhittaker2004@yahoo.co.uk</a>	07939 916209
Vice-Chair	Helen Luscombe	<a href="mailto:helen.luscombe@virgin.net">helen.luscombe@virgin.net</a>	07710 824615
Treasurer	Sarah Stuart	<a href="mailto:sarahrstuart@yahoo.co.uk">sarahrstuart@yahoo.co.uk</a>	07974 928409
Secretary	Catherine Winter	<a href="mailto:c-l-winter@hotmail.co.uk">c-l-winter@hotmail.co.uk</a>	07470 038380
Marketing	Helen Lowe	<a href="mailto:helenrubylowe@yahoo.co.uk">helenrubylowe@yahoo.co.uk</a>	07970 736 823
Head Teacher	Helen Crolla	<a href="mailto:office.3181@benson.oxon.sch.uk">office.3181@benson.oxon.sch.uk</a>	01491 202502
School Staff Representatives	Angela Huntley & Jo Tanner	<a href="mailto:office.3181@benson.oxon.sch.uk">office.3181@benson.oxon.sch.uk</a>	01491 202502
Uniform	Ali Kitchener	<a href="mailto:afkitchener@gmail.com">afkitchener@gmail.com</a>	07481 652652
Uniform	Susie Coleman	<a href="mailto:susiedeverill@yahoo.co.uk">susiedeverill@yahoo.co.uk</a>	07786 657285
Comms Support	Tara Mead	<a href="mailto:tara.mead@yahoo.co.uk">tara.mead@yahoo.co.uk</a>	

### Class Teachers and Current Representatives

	2015/16		2016/17
Class	Current Rep	Rep Email	Teacher
Nursery - Willow	Alice Jones-Evans	<a href="mailto:alice@jones-evans.com">alice@jones-evans.com</a>	Mrs Fanstone
Reception - Elm	Jennie Batt	<a href="mailto:jenniebatt@googlemail.com">jenniebatt@googlemail.com</a>	Miss Scragg
Year 1 – Oak	Jo Whittaker	<a href="mailto:Jowhittaker2004@yahoo.co.uk">Jowhittaker2004@yahoo.co.uk</a>	Mrs Tanner
Year 2 - Chestnut	Jen Anderson	<a href="mailto:jenanderson1976@gmail.com">jenanderson1976@gmail.com</a>	Miss Berry
Year 3 - Maple	Helen Lowe	<a href="mailto:helenrubylowe@yahoo.co.uk">helenrubylowe@yahoo.co.uk</a>	Miss Stovold
Year 4/5 - Sycamore	Ali Kitchener	<a href="mailto:afkitchener@gmail.com">afkitchener@gmail.com</a>	Miss Long
Year 5/6 - Hawthorn	Helen Luscombe	<a href="mailto:helen.luscombe@virgin.net">helen.luscombe@virgin.net</a>	Mrs Mottram Mrs Bibby Mrs Stokes

**Please note:** new lists will be circulated, post the AGM in September 2016, for the new school year.

### FoBs Email Address:

You may also contact us via our email address, which will remain constant:  
[fobsbenson@gmail.com](mailto:fobsbenson@gmail.com)

# Our Aim

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## How Does FoBS Support the School Community?

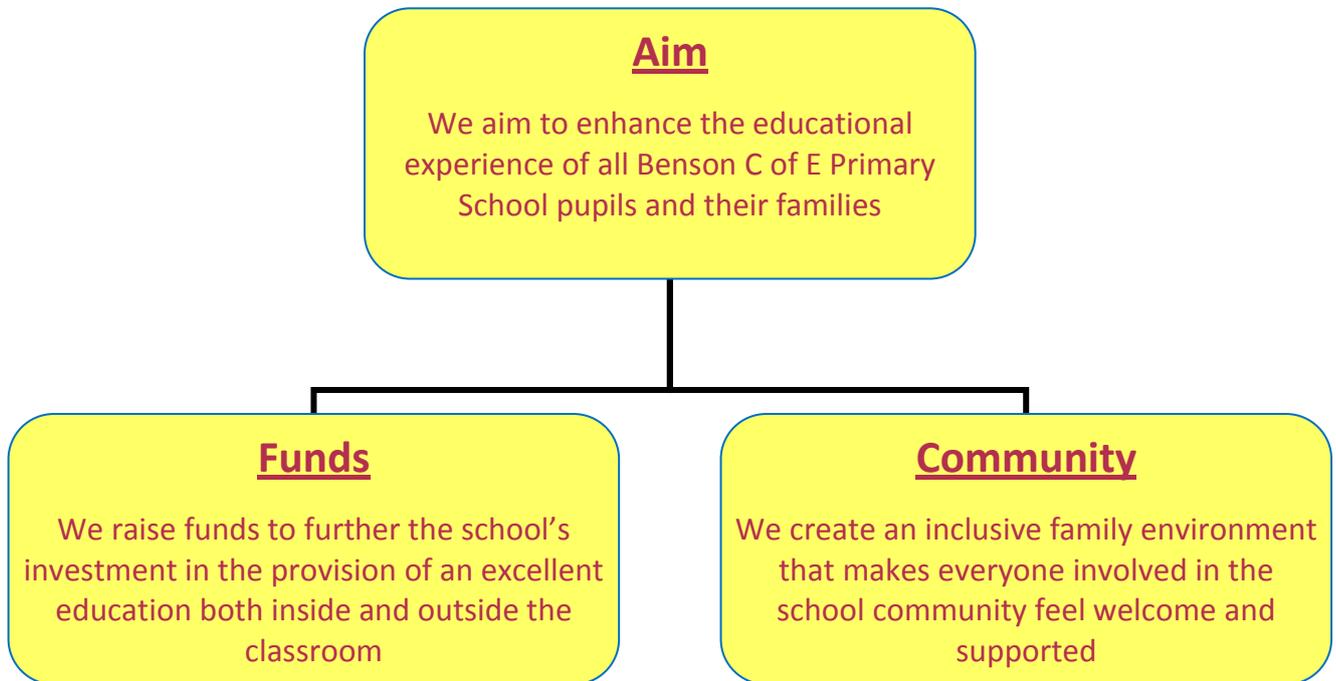
We are fortunate at Benson Church of England Primary School to have a PTA that is an integral part of the school and wider village community. The strong support network has enabled us to raise thousands of pounds that are spent on school facilities, equipment and resources to enhance our children's experiences at school.

FoBS 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 a fun and positive experience because we all care and we enjoy each other's company.

All families are automatically members of FoBS when their child joins the school. No family is required to be involved in the organisation of events; we simply encourage parents and members of the school community to become involved in whatever capacity suits. We understand how busy family life can be, so we aim to make any involvement an enjoyable experience.

FoBS is extremely conscious of the ethos and diversity of our school, and we try very hard when organising and planning events to respect this. Many of our fundraisers are run with the aim of giving the children a good time, and as a way of thanking families for their continued support.

# Mission Statement



## Specifically, we:

1. Support the ethos and objectives of Benson Church of England Primary School by:
  - a. uniting all those involved in the school in the common goal of making a measurable difference to the education and well-being of the children.
2. Provide additional resources to the school across the spectrum of education:
  - a. in support of core-curriculum subjects, e.g. library books, art and sports equipment;
  - b. in support of non-core-curriculum activities, e.g. playground equipment, costumes and equipment for school performances;
  - c. in support of family learning – sessions for parents to attend that cover pertinent topics, such as internet safety, parenting advice and core-subject learning
3. Sustain effective communications between staff, parents and the wider Benson Village community, ensuring that all those involved in the school and its wider community feel welcome, are informed and have the opportunity to share their views. This is achieved through:
  - a. regular inclusive meetings;
  - b. the collection and distribution of information;
  - c. inclusive fun events;
  - d. providing an objective ear to anyone that would like to chat about school life.

# Role of the Committee

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The FoBS Committee consists of four elected officers: Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, all of whom are voted in on an annual basis at the AGM. We also currently have 36 non-officer/ordinary committee members, who select the level of contribution that suits them, for example 'ad-hoc' or 'events only'. You would be very welcome to join this group!

The committee members meet on a regular basis - usually once per school term (of which there are six in the academic year), with smaller working groups meeting as necessary to lead particular initiatives, including events.

## **Class Representatives**

Our class representatives undertake a highly valued role: they provide a link between individual classes, parents and the FoBS committee. The support from class representatives is very much appreciated when it comes to organising events, from selling tickets to organising rotas of help.

## **Annual General Meeting (AGM); and Appointment of Officers and Class Representatives**

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 FoBS, 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 and class representatives. You will receive an invitation to attend the AGM two weeks before it is due to take place. You will have the opportunity to put yourself forward for an officer role. Non-officer roles are determined throughout the year, generally on an event basis, so please do contact us at any time if you wish to be a part of what we are doing, or know someone who may be able to offer support.

## **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 Mission Statement sets out the rules about how we operate as a PTA, 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 us 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

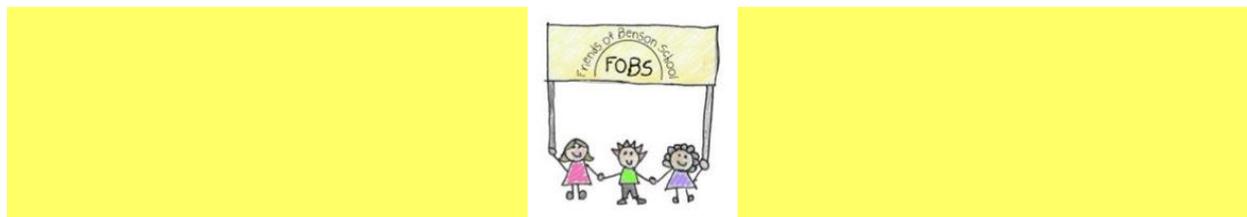
## **Links with the Local Community**

We have, over time, developed strong links with the local community and are always receive wonderful support from both residents and businesses, for which we are very grateful. Many of our local shops are very generous providing donations, in particular for raffle prizes, and some take part in our Christmas and summer fayres. Local groups, such as Scouts and Brownies, give their time generously to help out.

# Information



## Where Can You Find FoBS Information?



We have our own FoBS logo, with yellow band, so communications are easily recognised. All hard-copy letters that we send home are printed on yellow paper.

### FoBS Page on School Website

We have a page dedicated to FoBS on the school website - just click on the 'FoBS' tab on the menu bar to find up-to-date information.

### Letters

Information and dates of meetings and events are communicated via the FoBS section of the fortnightly *school newsletter*, which is available on the school website ([www.bensoncofeprimary.org.uk](http://www.bensoncofeprimary.org.uk)), and is emailed (or provided in hard copy upon request to the school office) to each family. When we issue hard copy, these will be placed in your child's bookbag.

### Noticeboard

We also have a noticeboard by the Early Years garden, which you will pass on your way into school.

### In Person

You may also find us communicating information about forthcoming events in person in the school playground.

### Facebook

We have our own FB page – please feel free to connect with us.  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/245135755580017/>

### The AGM and Committee Meetings

Feel free to come along and hear about what we are doing; we would love to hear your views.

# Our Achievements

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## A Year in View – 2015/2016

We are fortunate to have an extremely committed community of parents, teachers, pupils and local 'friends', who have given their time and energy to create some truly enjoyable events that have generated funds for the school and a whole lot of fun for the families that are part of the school. Just last year, the children bopped, shopped, munched, raced, wrestled (eggs!), displayed their artistic talents, visited Santa ... with parents and siblings able to take an active part (or benefit from a couple of hours of peace in the evening while their children were socialising at school):

### Summer Fayre

The highlight of the FoBS calendar – and what a wonderful community day we had: 900 people basked in the glorious sunshine, enjoying the variety of activities and entertainment, including craft stalls, a BBQ, bar, bouncy castles, vintage style café, hook-a-duck, penalty shoot-out, ice-creams and family games. Local groups, including Scouts, Guides and Brownies came along, manned stalls and helped out; local businesses generously donated an assortment of prizes and goods to help raise funds; and so many parents, staff and members of the FOBS team worked together to make this a very special family event. It proved a huge success both in terms of community and funds raised.

### Christmas Fayre

2015 saw a magnificent addition to our Christmas activities as we teamed up with the Youth Club of Benson to receive over 1000 people from our community at our festive fayre. Visitors bought gifts from local craft traders, visited Santa in a most magical grotto, played games, and even had time for a warming cup of tea and a mince pie. Another resounding success financially for the school and the community.

### Christmas Cards and Mugs

Every year in class, the children design a Christmas scene. Parents receive a proof, and may choose whether to purchase the design, which can be printed on a mug, or in the form of Christmas cards, all in time for the Christmas post. A delightful experience for families, and a good fundraiser.

### Christmas Shop

How well do your children know you? In the lead-up to Christmas, parents generously donated anonymous gifts to a 'Christmas Shop', from which the children then chose what they felt were the perfect little gifts for their parents to open on the big day. Staff and members of the FoBS team were on hand to wrap and add the labels that the children had made in class. This is such a lovely activity, in touch with the spirit of giving at Christmas.

### The Giving Machine

The GivingMachine is a UK registered charity, whose sole aim is to facilitate raising money for UK charitable causes and schools. By shopping on-line via The GivingMachine, you are able to generate a free cash donation which goes directly to FoBS. With big-name stores such as Amazon, Ebay, M&S, NEXT, Tesco, Sainsbury's and John Lewis taking part - plus hundreds more - every time you shop on-line you have a chance to raise money for our school. You are the only person who can see the amount you are generating, FoBS are just able to see a school total. Last year, parents,



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grandparents and friends helped us to raise a significant amount by using the Giving Machine. [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk) . You can use an iOS app or install a widget to your browser to remind you.

### **Chocolate Bingo**

A fun family night for all on a mid January evening. Luck was on the side of some, with one family certainly winning plentiful chocolate! For those seeking something other than chocolate, the bar offered something tempting in the form of drinks and savoury snacks. Tickets sold fast for this event.

### **School Disco**

There was a real buzz amongst the children about this event - they donned their party gear and danced their socks off under the supervision of staff and FoBS volunteers, while parents relaxed for a while at home. Who danced with whom; who had the grooviest moves? - Parents heard all about it afterwards!

### **Film Night**

A popular after-school activity for all children. FoBS showed a popular film – ‘Hotel Transylvania 2’, which the children happily watched with popcorn and a drink in hand.

### **Penny Wars**

Over a period of a week in the summer term, every morning and afternoon large jars, individual to each class, were available at the school gates to collect families’ copper coins. At the end of the week, the class that had collected the most copper coins was allowed to keep their jar of money to buy something for their class. The children had to be careful: for each silver coin put into the jar, the equal value of copper coins was removed! By the end of the week, this had become so competitive - with much sabotaging of others’ jars taking place!

### **Ice-Cream Friday**

Over 100 ice-creams were sold in 30 minutes after school on one of our hotter days of last summer! 6 FoBS members in aprons, armed with scoops, satisfied the ice cream frenzy – clearly popular!

### **Second-hand Uniform**

Uniform is donated back to FoBS when it is outgrown and FoBS sell this back at regular sales during the year. A good fundraiser and an opportunity to grab a bargain.

### **Rags2Riches**

Parents bring in all unwanted, clean clothes and we send them off to be recycled and earn money for the school. Specific Dates are advertised for the collection of clothes.

### **Printer Ink recycling**

Old used printer inkjet cartridges are collected at the office and we send them off for cash back. You can donate cartridges throughout the year.



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### **Yellow Moon**

FOBS get cashback from your craft supply purchases. Add Friends of Benson School as your nominated organisation when purchasing online. [www.yellowmoon.org.uk](http://www.yellowmoon.org.uk)

### **Name Labels**

We know how annoying it is when your child loses something at school. Labelling everything really helps you to be re-united with your child's belongings. Easy2Name provide 20% cashback to FOBS for all orders placed. Just select Benson CofE Primary School OX10 at the checkout.

[www.easy2name.com](http://www.easy2name.com)

We also engaged in beneficial ad-hoc activities, such as the sale of refreshments, raffles and the sale of DVDs of the Christmas Nativity.

### **How We Spend the Money We Raise**

Following a FoBS event, we always write to let you know how much was raised and, once determined, what the money will be spent on. This information is communicated via our newsletters and FoBS page on the school website.

We always endeavour to spend our funds in ways that will benefit all of our children across all areas of the school and curriculum.

# What FoBS Means to Benson School



Since FoBS involves the whole school community, we thought you would like to know what others think of what we do.

## **From Helen Crolla, Headteacher of Benson School:**

“FoBS provide tremendous support to the school. As a group of willing volunteers, their enthusiasm, creativity and dedication to the business of fund raising has enabled children in all years to benefit from extra equipment.”

Significant purchases like interactive whiteboards and sets of reading books have had a positive impact on learning and contributed to the School's improvement priorities. The plan to fundraise for larger projects has enabled the school to consider improvements to the overall learning environment, ensuring that all children have access to high quality provision whilst they are at Benson.”

“There is also the commitment to pursuing grants and funding from other sources, which enables the school to embark on specialist projects. These provide the children with memorable experiences and allow children with talents to shine.”

“As Headteacher, I value the partnership that exists and the child-centred approach promoted by all members of the FoBS team.”

## **From Hazel Nicholson, Chair of Governors, on behalf of the Governing Body of Benson School:**

### **“School Staff and Governors need FoBS!**

The school staff, the governors and FoBS are all essential parts of the team which ensures that the pupils of Benson CofE Primary School have the best education possible. The Head Teacher and the governors have responsibility for the most effective use of the school budget but we are always aware that it is limited and has to be spent on absolute essentials - often this does not allow us to access other resources which would create a richer learning environment for our children.”

“This is when a funding request is made to FoBS and governors are confident that they will respond to it with enthusiasm. They organise a variety of social and fundraising events. These allow parents, governors and staff to get to know one another in a more relaxed setting and they result in the essential funding which has provided numerous curriculum resources for the benefit of children throughout the school.”

“Our school would not be the lively and welcoming learning environment it is without the enthusiasm, commitment and hard work of those involved in FoBS. All of us with responsibility for the school are very grateful to them – please join them.”



### From Parents of Benson School:

- “FoBS has made a huge difference to how quickly my family has settled into the school and the Benson community. Such a friendly, approachable group of parents; so welcoming and supportive. It is evident that they care greatly for all the children of Benson School and their families.”
- “As a working mum FoBS has given me the opportunity to still feel very much involved in school life. I have met a great team of parents and teachers all wanting to contribute, where they can, to raise important funds for our children. FoBS make a big difference and I am very proud to be part of that.”
- “My children have both recently joined the school and have loved every minute. The school is friendly and inclusive and that is echoed in the Parents, especially at the FoBS meetings. It’s a great combination of kids, parents and teachers coming together to make the school a fun and successful place to learn!”
- “I love being a member of the FoBS team, as well as all the fundraising it is a great chance to meet parents from different year groups around the school, understand more about the school and build quicker relationships with the staff. The FoBS team welcome everyone and there is never any pressure of do more than what you want to. Whether it is just coming along to a meeting or maybe doing a small job, you can dip in and out depending on your current work/home load. The Primary years for our children go by in a flash and I will be glad when I look back to think I saw my children in their school environment, made friends, raised money and did my bit.”

### From the Children of Benson School

**Connor, Year 5:** “They help all the children and help us to do more activities by giving us resources for learning and play, such as playground equipment.”

**Jasmine, Year 3:** “FoBS are really hard-working and very kind-hearted. They set up amazing events. My favourite would be ... oh, there are so many – the school disco and the summer fayre, I think!”

**Lucy, Year 3:** “They get more resources for the classroom by raising money for the school. My favourite event is the chocolate bingo as everyone in the family can take part.”

#### **Ben and Evie, Year 6:**

**Ben:** “They raise a lot of money for the school. The fayres attract lots of people from the local area, who see the school and then want to come here. More people in our school is better because you have opportunities to interact with more people socially and in the classroom.”

**Evie:** “Yes, and they are very helpful, raising funds for school trips and school plays.”

**Ben:** “And they help the community by inviting them to school events. They invite the elderly to the Christmas performance and serve them tea and cakes, so they can enjoy other’s company. That’s a really kind thing to do.”

**Hayley, Year 4:** “FoBS make school more fun. The fayres are always fun, and I really like the movies. They buy lots of lovely things to improve the school, such as the plants at the entrance.”

**Lilly, Year 2:** “FoBS is the helping hand for the school and the children!”

#### **Ollie and Oliver, Year 3:**

**Ollie:** “The discos are brilliant – you get prizes!”

**Oliver,** starting to dance: “Yes, I won last year!”

# How You Can Be a Part of What We Do



As a family of Benson Church of England Primary School, you are automatically a member of FoBS and will receive information about our activities. You do not need to actively contribute to any initiatives, but we welcome sincerely any input and support that you may wish to provide at any time during your child's time at the school. We strive for a family atmosphere where everyone is valued and feels a part of their child's education.

## **Your Thoughts and Ideas**

We very much look forward to hearing the views of you and your children, so please do share any ideas or experiences with us. You can contact a member of the committee, or come along to the AGM and discuss them in person. Great ideas have come from families new to the school. We will always answer any questions that you have.

## **Your Time**

If you would like to be involved, you can volunteer to be a Class Representative, a FoBS Committee Member, or FoBs volunteer – at a level that suits you. We all understand the pressure of time, so welcome any level of contribution at any time. We work as a team to support one another, so you should never feel overwhelmed by your involvement; in fact, we have a lot of fun!

## **Contacts and Skills**

We would very much welcome news of people that could support our causes, such as by the contribution of raffle prizes; equally, if you have a specific skill or talent for something that would be useful - such as the fabulous design and carpentry skills (look out for the FoBS ice cream stall) of one of our supporters - we would love to hear from you. A truly valuable asset is enthusiasm for a good cause, so if you like to get stuck in (specific skill or not), we would be very grateful – even if just for an hour or two.

## **Donations**

We are always extremely pleased to receive donations to help our fundraising efforts. We will let you know if we seek any particular items; but do contact us if you have something that you think would be a benefit.

## **Come Along to Events**

With the school community at the heart of what we do, events are only truly worthwhile if you enjoy them.

## **Questionnaire**

There is brief questionnaire at the back of the booklet to fill in and return if you wish to help in any way. Don't forget to include an email address, if possible. Equally, contact us at any time.

## **Use our partner companies to help us raise money**

The Giving Machine, name tags, yellow moon, collect printer ink cartridges and save your jumble for Rags2riches.

# Money Raised & Items Purchased by FoBS for Benson School



<i>Event</i>	<i>Money (Profit) Raised for School, Past Year</i>
Summer Fayre	£4,031
Christmas Fayre	£1,627
Christmas Cards and Mugs	£537
Christmas Shop	£272
The Giving Machine	£287
Nativity Refreshments and DVDs	£400
Chocolate Bingo, incl. Raffle	£367
School Disco, incl. Raffle	£521
Film Nights	£271
Penny Wars	£172
Ice-Cream Friday	£96
Uniform Sales	£147
Rags 2 Riches	£99
Donations	£186
<i>Total</i>	<i>£9,013</i>

<i>Items Purchased, Past Year</i>	
P.E. and Playtime Equipment	Wall-mounted Whiteboards
Reception Class Trip	Easter Eggs for School Easter Lunch
Year 6 Trip	Ice Lollies for Queen's Birthday Picnic
Donation £200 per Class	Ingredients for Yr3 cooking club
Nativity Costumes	Yr1 Storage for Outdoor Resources
Early Years Shed	
Yr 6 PGL	
Yr 4/5 Topic Books	
Magazine Rack	
Magazine Subscriptions	
Yr5/6 Guided Reading Books	
Yr6 SATs Papers	
Okido Magazines	
Projector for Hall	
Life Bus	

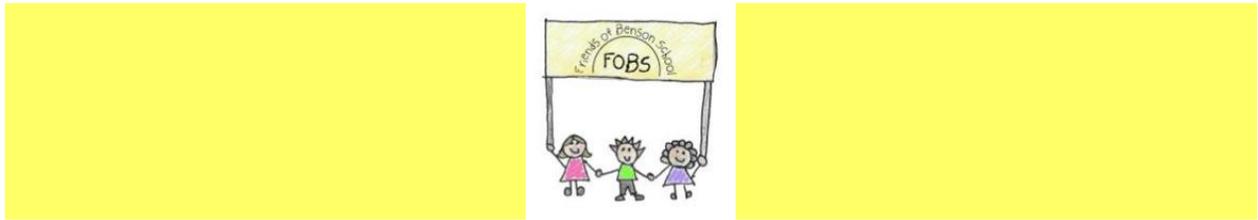
## Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to read our booklet. We hope you now know a little more about your Parent Teacher Association, the Friends of Benson School. On behalf of all the pupils, we would like to thank you for your valuable support that enriches their learning experience and makes their time in school so enjoyable.

**From All the FoBS Committee**



# Parents' Questionnaire



All families of pupils at our school are members of the PTA – The Friends of Benson School (FOBS). FOBS runs regular fundraising and social events for the school and wider village community that enhance the education and experience of all the children at Benson School. We would very much welcome your views to ensure that we continue to meet our aims.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Child's Name and Class:</b>
<b>Contact Email:</b>	<b>Contact Telephone:</b>

What sort of events would your family enjoy attending, for example family events (e.g. summer fayre), parent events (e.g. ladies' night), children's events (e.g. film night). All new ideas welcome – please list.

Please list any skills or talents you have that would be beneficial to FoBs, e.g. good with computers, painting, carpentry, gardening, baking, finances, marketing

Do you work for/ own a company that might be prepared to support FoBS through sponsorship, by donating a raffle prize, or having a stall at a fayre? If yes, please give details.

Would you be interested in supporting the committee to help plan and organise events as a class representative or FoBS volunteer?

Would you like more information about joining the committee?

Is there anything specific you would like FoBS to fund? Please give details.

Please write any additional comments or queries here.

