

Fundraising beyond the school gate; utilising your PTA

Jane Galbraith
Membership Development Manager, NCPTA



Seminar aims

- an introduction to NCPTA
- tips on maximising a PTA's fundraising capabilities specifically applying for external funding
- getting the PTA started; the confidence to apply
- successful PTA case studies



NCPTA

The NCPTA is a registered charity and membership organisation providing support, advice and guidance to over 13,500 Parent Teacher Associations in England, Northern Ireland and Wales.



Membership in the South East

- South East: over 2,200 members
- Kent & Medway: 475



Why have a PTA?

- brings together parents and teachers
- provides support for the school
- encourage parental engagement; breaks down perceived barriers
- vital link with the local community
- raise school's profile
- raise money and make a difference
- it's fun



Swalecliffe Community Primary School, Whitstable

Mrs T Mitchell, Headteacher:

"I joined Swalecliffe School in January 2010 as an experienced Headteacher from another local authority. On meeting the Parent and Friends Association I couldn't have been more impressed with their dedication, professionalism and passion for working together with the wider school community to provide fantastic opportunities for the pupils and their families."



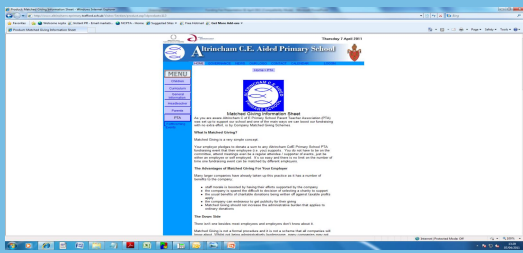
Fundraising outside the school gate

Schools can encourage PTAs to consider other sources of income to supplement event-based fundraising

- donations, sponsorship and *gift aid*
- company matched and payroll giving – *Altrincham C of E Primary School*
- non-event fundraisers e.g. recycling schemes – *Trash for Cash*
- Today's focus.....applying for external grants



Good practice!



St Thomas School, Ilkeston, Derbyshire Trash for Cash



Your situation – how the NCPTA can help:

- school's PTA is not registered as a charity
- school's PTA is registered as a charity, but has no experience of writing an external funding application
- my school does not have a PTA



PTA is not a registered charity

- model constitution – approved by Charity Commission for England and Wales
- gives fast track charity registration – 10 days
- clear guidance on adopting a constitution, charity registration process, role of trustee, criminal record checks, annual returns
- benefits of charitable status



No experience of applying for external funding

- free guidance including bespoke workshops
- detailed NCPTA guidance sheet
- free access to www.trustfunding.org.uk (DSC database of over 4,000 charitable trusts)
- advice on sources of useful information (national and local)
- examples and sharing of good practice
- local support



School does not have a PTA

- free Start Up pack and local support
- explanation of committee roles and responsibilities
- benefits: £10 million public liability insurance, model constitution and charity registration
- general meeting – guidance on first AGM
- support if registering under the £5,000 threshold
- local support through year one and beyond



Utilising the PTA

- it's a changing environment
- schools and local authorities faced with budget cuts and reduction in services
- PTAs – an untapped resource?
- encourage parents to look beyond traditional fundraising activities
- opportunity to work in conjunction with the school and local community



Encouraging the PTA to apply

- trusts exist to award donations (DSC quote £3.1 billion, from 4,300 trusts)
- an excellent way to supplement existing PTA fundraising efforts
- time v benefit
- opportunity to utilise and increase parents' skills
- media coverage – good for the school
- the feel-good factor
- not always able to ask the parents
- opportunity to work collaboratively and or engage more with the local community



Barriers

- lack of knowledge / experience
- confidence to try
- identifying the right person(s)
- perception that it's too complicated.....
-and/or time consuming
- fear of failure
- lack of support
- assuming the PTA is not eligible
- thinking it may impact on other fundraisers



Getting the PTA started

Essential to work with the school to identify and understand the project and know:

- why the project is required – evidence of need e.g. the difficulties, why do they exist, what needs to change to overcome the difficulties?
- how the project will be delivered
- the difference it will make to the beneficiaries e.g. pupils, parents, local community



Finding potential funders

- trust directories, local and national (DSC; CAF;)
- www.charity-commission.gov.uk
- www.grantfinder.co.uk
- www.grants4schools.info - free 28 day trial
- www.trustfunding.org.uk - free for members
- local authority: www.kent.gov.uk / www.medway.gov.uk
- Council for Voluntary Services
- on-line funding updates e.g. KCC Inside Track
- your own school community - governors, parents



Awards for All

- Makes grants between £300 and £10,000 for projects that help improve the local community and the lives of people most in need?
- Funding is for voluntary or community organisations
- Applicants must have a UK-based bank or building society account in the name of the organisation that requires at least two people (who are unrelated and do not live at the same address) to sign cheques or make a withdrawal
- The application must be submitted at least three months before the project; it must be completed within one year
- The application must explain the need for the project and the changes that will happen because of it
- If the PTA can answer yes to all these questions then Awards for All may be the right programme for you.
- Ask BIG



Examples of projects that Awards for All have funded in the South East

Southbourne Junior School: £9,700 awarded to introduce an after school club that will engage the whole community in dance mats games and competitions. The project will improve the health and fitness of the pupils and community.

Petworth CofE Primary School: £5,365 awarded to fund playground markings for KS1, to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

Tiltingbourne Junior School: £7,795 awarded to create a community garden, giving pupils and the wider community access to a facility where they can grow their own produce and be more aware of healthy food.



Understanding the funders criteria

Before putting pen to paper – understand the trust's application criteria and guidelines

- eligibility
 - location / geography
 - timings
 - maximum grant available
 - means of approach e.g. online application / letter
- If trust allows, PTA can contact them to determine project eligibility



Fail to prepare, prepare to fail!

Reasons why applications may fail*

- applications submitted without fully understanding funder's criteria
 - taking a quantity not quality approach
 - lack of clear guidance from the funder
 - unclear or missing information from the applicant
 - lack of experience of researching and approaching funders
 - lack of constructive feedback so you can learn by your mistakes
- * Directory of Social Change research (2010)



The application key points for PTAs

- double-check eligibility criteria before applying
- allow plenty of time to prepare the bid
- if an application form is provided – use it, follow the instructions
- be clear about the need for the project and the evidence to support this
- be concise but complete (what, why, how, who, when, where and how much)
- accurate costings with a breakdown; be specific about the amount of funding you are requesting
- do not leave anything to funder's interpretation



Key points continued

- make reference to funds being sourced from other funders for the same project
- if relevant, include details of the PTA's fundraising track record and monies they are contributing
- remember to enclose any back up material and references, if appropriate
- give a timescale for the project
- provide the trust with at least two contacts who are familiar with both the project and the application
- double check everything – second reader
- trusts probably won't support anything that should be funded through statutory means



Tips for getting the application noticed

- good / innovative project name
- identify with potential funder - write in a way that will resonate with the funder's interest
- strong opening paragraph
- use headings and a logical structure (following funder's guidelines at all times)
- avoid jargon and always explain acronyms e.g. PTA (Parent Teacher Association)
- get to the point - make it quick and easy for the reader to understand
- use active, positive language as opposed to passive words



Using active, positive language

ACTIVE LANGUAGE

- ✓ This project will...
- ✓ We expect to...
- ✓ We know there is a need for this project because...

PASSIVE LANGUAGE

- This project aims to...
- We hope to...
- We think that the project is needed because....



Building a relationship with the funder

- the importance of saying 'thank you' – in writing (whether successful or not)
- update on outcome – reporting guidelines
- keeping in touch
- media activity
- knowing the guidelines/timescale for re-applying
- reference to previous grant in next application
- feedback on unsuccessful applications
- it will pay off



NCPTA can help

- model constitution
- fast track charity registration
- NCPTA information sheets
- free access to www.trustfunding.org.uk
- www.ncpta.org.uk – links to other resources
- Regional Adviser – local support, bespoke workshops



Kings Copse Primary School Community Sensory Garden



**Corbet's Tey Primary School
Swimming pool refurbishment**



**NCPTA
supporting PTAs for 55 years**

- fundraising advice and legal guidance
- free local events for PTA volunteers
- comprehensive insurance cover for all PTA events
- www.ncpta.org.uk - for instant access to a range of online resources
- NCPTA information sheets – over 60 titles
- termly member publications and updates
- Suppliers' Directory
- annual awards scheme
- model constitution & charity registration
- free access; DSC trusts database worth £200 p.a



Your local NCPTA contact

Caroline Gaskin
NCPTA Regional Adviser, South East
t: 01959 525802
e: caroline.gaskin@ncpta.org.uk
Plus our national Advice Line
01732 375460
www.ncpta.org.uk

