



**Stratford Sub Castle
Church of England VC
Primary School**



The FOSS mission statement is:

To add to the enrichment of our children's experiences while at Stratford sub Castle Church of England Primary School and to promote the community spirit of the school.



Join us on Facebook page to see all our latest news and information at *Friends of Stratford-sub-Castle Primary School Page (FOSS)*

Friends of Stratford sub Castle Primary School (FOSS)
Registered charity 1091745

What is FOSS?

Most schools have a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in some form or other for the purpose of encouraging closer links between home and school. These are best known for their fundraising work but here at Stratford sub Castle school it provides a valuable social function as well. Our association is called Friends of Stratford School, or FOSS for short and our fundraising activities give everyone the chance to get together and have fun whilst creating some much-needed extra income for the school that all the pupils can benefit from. All our members are encouraged to get involved in whatever way they can, and helping out with our events, or simply just turning up, is a good way of doing this.

Are FOSS and PTA the same thing?

Almost, the main difference is who can be a member. We used to be a 'PTA' but in 2017 we changed to a 'Friends' type of association instead. We still do exactly the same things as before but membership of the PTA was limited to the teachers and parents / carers of children currently at school. Changing to a 'Friends of...' means other people can also help out with our fundraising activities and still be covered by our public liability insurance.

Who are the FOSS?

You are! You will automatically become a member of FOSS when your child starts Stratford sub Castle school and remain a member until they leave, there is no need to sign up. School employees are also members and now we can extend our welcome to other people who wish to help us such as grand parents' or other family members of our school children, school governors, ex pupils and community volunteers.

How is FOSS run?

FOSS is registered as a charity and the committee members act as trustees with financial responsibility for the conduct of FOSS. The

committee currently consists of a chair person, vice-chair person, treasurer and secretary who each have defined responsibilities and accountabilities. Committee members are elected during the annual general meeting (AGM), which is usually held in the autumn term and is open to anyone who wants to attend.

The names and photos of the committee members are displayed on the FOSS notice board in the main corridor of the school building. Please do come and talk to us so we can share more about what we do.

Each school class should have one or two 'class representatives' who will act as a liaison between the FOSS committee and their child's class, passing information to and fro and sharing feedback and ideas. They will also help co-ordinate and recruit volunteers.

The committee works closely with the head teacher and school support staff and are assisted by other members to plan, organise and run the events. There is normally a core group of volunteers who take an active part in our activities but anyone can offer help at any time and it is always good to have new faces who are wanting to join in.

What happens at FOSS meetings?

FOSS meetings are generally held once every term on a Wednesday evening. These are attended by Mrs Bridson, the committee members, class representatives and anyone else who chooses to come along. The main topic for discussion will be any forthcoming events and who will be involved along with some standing agenda items such as a financial summary. All members of FOSS are encouraged to attend and the meeting minutes are published in the FOSS section of the school website <http://stratford-sub-castle.wilts.sch.uk/parents/pta/> and by email upon request.

How does FOSS organise events?

The events get discussed at the meetings and people can volunteer to help if they want to. Larger events such as the June fayre and Christmas bazaar require weeks of planning and organising and lots of helpers (whose efforts need to be coordinated), but some of the smaller events are managed using a working group of just a few people. Most people who help on a regular basis will find their 'niche' and take on the tasks that they enjoy doing. Ideally, everyone gets to play to their strengths and provide help in a way that suits them.

How is money raised?

We have various ways of fundraising but the largest proportion of income comes from the social events we organise for the children and their families, particularly the Christmas Bazaar and the June fayre.

In recent years we have also been lucky enough to receive a number of one-off donations from teachers and parents doing sponsored sporting events as well as a generous donation from the Stratford Café. FOSS have also received donations from grant funding or matched funding schemes where an employer donates a sum of money to a charity nominated by an employee.

We also sell refreshments at some school events, hold pop up shops and a second hand uniform shop. In addition we run a 100 Club open to all parents and extended family, details of which are sent via a separate letter.

We are always on the lookout for new fundraising ideas. If you have one, please come and tell us about it!

How is money managed and used?

As FOSS is a registered charity we are obliged to maintain accurate financial accounts showing income, expenditure and the current level

of assets. These are verified each year by an external body and the financial summary is published on the charity commission's website.

Funds raised via FOSS are intended to provide additional income for spending on things that fall outside of the school's budget (which is for buildings, teachers, books and pencils etc.)

The financial support that FOSS provides to the school is used for things that make learning more interesting and exciting for the children such as school trips, theatre visits, educational visits, play equipment, computers, swimming lessons and sports equipment.

The FOSS committee and the head teacher decide how to spend the funds and there is generally a big project every year in addition to the regular items that are funded on an annual basis.

Previous funding has been used to build a pond and wildlife area with a boardwalk around it, replacing the play track around the school field and building an outdoor classroom space.

This year's project is to extend the new outdoor classroom area and add some additional parts to the play track. All of these projects cost a lot of money to complete but are very exciting for the whole school as every single child gets to benefit from these improved outdoor areas.

Diary of events

NB: Please note this is the typical diary of events that we hold in a given school year – obviously the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted these but we wanted to give you an idea of how things would be in more 'normal' times. Fingers crossed we can start to enjoy some of these again as soon as it is safe to do so.

The following is a summary of the usual fundraising events that FOSS organise during the school year. There will always be more details

given out nearer the time, so do look out for the regular FOSS newsletter, updates on the Facebook page and in the school letters.

School disco

There are three discos each year, in autumn, spring and summer term. There are two sessions, the early one for children in reception class and year 1 and 2. The second session follows immediately after for children in year groups 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Tickets cost £1 per child and include a free drink. Adults are encouraged to attend and there are tables and chairs set out for people who want to sit and chat. The FOSS sell drinks, crisps, cakes and various glow stick items on the night.

Quiz Night

Adult quiz night has proved to be a popular new fixture on our calendar and is hosted at the Salisbury rugby club in the autumn term.

Nativity play

The FOSS organise refreshments and a raffle on the days when the younger children are performing their nativity play for the grown-ups.

Christmas Bazaar

This takes place at the beginning of December starting at 3pm. The school hall is filled with a festive collection of stalls selling cakes, sweets, seasonal goods, stocking fillers and craft items. The children can visit Santa Claus in his grotto and there are various tombola games for adults, boys and girls as well as the legendary chocolate tombola, where every prize is guaranteed to be... chocolate! The FOSS sell hot dogs, drinks, crisps and cakes from the school kitchen.

Bingo night

We normally host a bingo night in the Spring term which is open to anyone over the age of 18. We have a professional bingo caller, cash

prizes, raffle and a licensed bar. It is a great way to socialise with the other parents over bingo, wine and nibbles.

We are always open to new ideas for our social evenings and would like to get more Dads involved too!

June Fayre

This is the highlight of our summer term and a very popular event with entertainment for all of the family. It takes place in the school field and there is the usual selection of tombola stalls, a cake stall, lucky dip, bottle tombola, bouncy castle, crockery smash and various games. We will have various refreshments on sale and a licensed bar.

Sports Day refreshments

The FOSS sell refreshments while the children are taking part in sports day.

Ice cream pop up shop

The FOSS sell ice lollies at the end of summer term after school. Look out for the dates in the school newsletter.

How can I get involved in FOSS?

There are so many different ways to support the work of FOSS. Please don't be put off volunteering if you have limited time or funds, all offers are gratefully received and even a couple of hours a year will make a difference! If you would like to be involved, just ask one of the committee members, your class representative or the school office. We are always in need of willing helpers!

It's true that some of the roles are more time-consuming or carry more responsibility than others, but most people who get involved say they do it because they find it rewarding. If you can't commit to a regular job, look out for things you can do less frequently or in your own time.

Volunteering with FOSS also provides a great opportunity to learn or develop new skills that can be used in the workplace as well so there are benefits all round.

Equally if you see something that isn't yet being done that you could do, or you have an idea to share please do approach us with your suggestion. We can achieve great things when we work together and pool our skills, ideas and knowledge.

Perhaps most importantly, you can show your support for the school simply by turning up and showing your support at FOSS events. We rely on everybody's generosity and goodwill and every single contribution, no matter how big or small, makes the children's experience at school that bit better!

Here are some ideas of how to help:

- Come to a FOSS meeting and take on a task
- Donate an item for a raffle or tombola prize
- Provide a service e.g. printing, sewing, sign making
- Bake a cake, make some jam or homemade sweets
- Help out with planning, organising and running an event, there are various jobs such as working in the kitchen, setting up, running a stall, tidying up afterwards, lifting and shifting
- Ask your employer or family members to donate something

Finally, you may also wish to ask your employer if they are signed up with the 'Matched Giving' scheme run by the Charities Aid Foundation – if they are they may match any donation, fundraising or volunteering activities!