Friends of Bathampton School Chair's Report: AGM 2025–2026

It's been another busy year for the Friends, with plenty of fundraising, lots of events, and – most importantly – lots of hard work from the committee, alongside good engagement from the wider school community.

The Friends are here to provide the school with things that wouldn't otherwise be possible, but also to give families opportunities to get involved with school life. This year we've done both, and we think we've struck a good balance between fundraising, supporting the children and bringing people together.

A year of community

One of the things we've particularly enjoyed this year has been seeing the Friends support the wider school community, rather than just focusing on fundraising.

Our Friendly Fridays Stay and Play sessions have given families a relaxed opportunity to come together, particularly those who might not otherwise get much chance to meet.

We've supported the New Parents event too, helping new families settle in and make connections with other parents.

And Make a Difference Day was a great example of what can be achieved when people come together to help the school. Parents, staff and children all got involved in improving the school grounds – and there was a very impressive amount of work done in a relatively short space of time.

These activities are a slightly different side of the Friends. They aren't there purely to generate money, but they do help create a more connected school community, and we'd like to continue that alongside our fundraising work.

Fundraising and events

We've had a good mix of fundraising this year, with some familiar events and a few new ideas.

The Colour Run was probably the standout new event. It was our first attempt, and it went down extremely well, with one pupil describing it as "the best event ever."

It was a great example of trying something different and seeing families get behind it. It was also colourful, energetic and, at times, slightly chaotic – so I think we can safely call it a success!

Alongside that, we've had our usual range of activities throughout the year, all of which have contributed to the funds available to support the school.

What has the fundraising paid for?

This is really the main reason we do the fundraising.

This year, Friends funds have helped support the introduction of the new curriculum across history, science and geography.

We funded a Kapla blocks workshop, giving the children an opportunity to develop their creativity, teamwork and problem-solving skills.

We've contributed towards school trips, helping to keep those experiences accessible to the children.

We funded Sound Clouds for the Reception classroom to improve the acoustics and reduce background noise, helping to create a better environment for learning.

And we've contributed towards repairs to play equipment, helping to keep the outdoor space safe and usable.

So when we talk about fundraising, this is what we mean in practical terms: resources, trips, workshops and improvements that add to what the school can provide.

What we've learnt

We've also learnt a few things this year.

The first is that we probably have more ideas than we have volunteers!

That's not necessarily a bad problem to have, but we've realised that trying to do everything isn't sustainable.

So this year we're planning to run fewer events and concentrate on the ones that work well, both in terms of what they raise and the amount of work involved in putting them on.

We also want volunteering to be manageable. People are busy, and we don't want helping with the Friends to feel like another commitment that's difficult to fit in.

At the same time, we'd love to have more people involved in our Ad Hoc Group. It's a great way to help out without having to commit to the committee – whether that's helping with a particular event, sharing an idea, or simply lending a hand when needed.

So, if you've ever thought, "I'd like to help, but I can't commit to being on the committee", the Ad Hoc Group could be just the thing. Let us know and we'll add you to the list!

Hopefully, by doing fewer things well, we can make it easier for people to get involved when they can.

Thank you

None of this happens through the committee alone.

Every event relies on people giving their time – whether that's helping for an hour, baking, donating prizes, running a stall, setting up, clearing away or simply turning up and supporting the event.

So thank you to everyone who has helped in any way this year.

Thank you to the school staff for working with us and supporting what we do.

Thank you to the parents and carers who have supported our fundraising and community activities.

And a particular thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time. Whether you've been involved throughout the year or helped with one particular event, it all makes a difference.

And finally, thank you to the children, who are generally the most enthusiastic attendees at anything involving cookies, colour or cake.

Looking ahead

Next year we'll be keeping things a little more focused.

We'll continue to raise money for the things that make a genuine difference to the children, while also supporting activities that help families connect with the school.

We'll be realistic about what we can deliver with the volunteers we have. So, fewer events, hopefully fewer frantic last-minute WhatsApp messages, and plenty of opportunities for people to get involved when they can.

Thank you for all your support this year.