

BLADINGTON SCHOOL ASSOCIATION



Hello and welcome to Bledington School.

This is a brief introduction to the **Bledington School Association (BSA)**, or as you may have known it when you were at school – the Parent Teachers' Association (PTA).

There are many reasons for choosing a particular school for your child, but one that is often cited is that the school feels like a "happy place". One of the key roles of the BSA is to help the teaching staff to make the school a happy and effective place for your child to start his or her educational journey.

As well as arranging events and activities to bring school and community together, the BSA is a fundraising engine, providing cash for the school to purchase educational equipment that it may not otherwise be able to buy due to budgetary constraints.

Your first question is probably, "OK, so who is the BSA?", and the answer to that is simple - "you!" If you are a parent or carer of a child at Bledington School, then you are automatically a member of the BSA. Hurrah. But joking aside, the BSA can't function without you. Don't under-estimate yourselves, you are very important players. On the other hand, your duties will be far from onerous and you may even find them enjoyable.

The BSA Committee

The BSA Committee is a team of around six BSA members with responsibility for organising fundraising and social activities. Then, through consultation with the Head Teacher and in line with our constitution, the committee agrees how to spend the money raised. Any BSA member is eligible to join the BSA so if you'd like a say in these issues, talk to the Chair.

The committee uses the finest of persuasive skills to get people involved in our events by asking them to do things that range from baking a cake, to car parking, to assisting Santa wrap presents to give out at the BSA Christmas party.

According to our constitution, our purpose is to '*advance the education of the pupils in the school, both by developing effective relationships between the staff, parents and others associated with the school and by engaging in activities or providing facilities or equipment which support the school and advance the education of pupils.*' If you'd like more like this, do take a look at our constitution – you can find it in the BSA section of the Bledington School website (<http://bledington.gloucs.sch.uk/community>). Its terms govern how we work.

Current committee members are also listed on the BSA section of the school website (the teachers also know who we are). Feel free to approach us with any ideas or questions you may have or if you'd like to help. We love hearing from you!

How we raise funds

During the school year, we hold a number of events to raise money. These may vary from year to year, but often include:

- Family film night with popcorn and hot-dogs
- Christmas wreath-making with fizz and canapés.
- After school cake sales
- Spring Fair with stalls, games, BBQ and teas.
- Parking visitors' cars at Bourton-on-the-Water
- Summer BBQ

Most of these involve input from BSA members. We arrange things so that people get a chance to partake as well as assist in the event so there's only a couple of hours "work" involved for everyone.

We also run the "100 Club", a monthly draw a bit like the lottery only with much better chances of winning. Admittedly, the prizes are slightly smaller but in return for a £12 investment, your lucky numbers are in the draw for a whole year.

As a registered charity, we benefit from **Gift Aid**. Many employers also take part in a **Payroll Giving** scheme by matching personal donations of their employees. Information about Payroll Giving and Gift Aid can be found within the BSA section of the school website (<http://bledington.gloucs.sch.uk/community>). If you can assist in this way, or by simply making a donation on a regular or one-off basis, please do – the committee's treasurer can help with set up and transfers.

In terms of easy money, one of the easiest is the aptly named **easyfundraising.org.uk**. You can sign up to this via the internet and then whenever you do any internet shopping at most of the major retailers, you will earn commission for the BSA. It's well worth signing up yourself and also asking granny, granddad and anyone else you can think of to join up, with BSA as beneficiary. It really does save a lot of cake baking!

Another way the BSA earns money also helps you to ensure that the many belongings that go into school find their way home again. From sew-on name tapes to stick-on shoe labels, there's no need for anything to be lost forever to the depths of the lost property box. Take a look at www.easy2name.com, quoting Bledington School OX7. The BSA get 20% of the value of your order.

Not all the events we organise are fundraisers. The school Christmas party and the sports day children's teas for example, are just plain fun.

How we spend our funds

We work with the Head Teacher to come up with a wish list that is in line with the needs of the school and our constitutional terms. Then, with a wave of the BSA magic wand, we turn the wish list into a shopping list. We usually transfer the necessary funds to the school so that we benefit from the arrangements that the school has with educational supply companies.

Over the years, the BSA has paid for lots of things, including:

- New IT equipment - laptops, wi-fi connection, android tablets
- 3 Large sheds to store waterproofs, wellies and other equipment
- Sports Equipment - outdoor table tennis table
- Books, gardening and outdoor play equipment
- Adventure playground equipment
- Coach transport for school trips
- Christmas party - entertainer, Christmas tree, presents

How we communicate

You will receive a newsletter from the BSA every two weeks. You can opt to receive this via email which is great for the planet, not to mention our costs or you can receive it on paper via book-bag post. We also have a section dedicated to the BSA on the school website (<http://bledington.gloucs.sch.uk/community>). There, you will find a calendar of events, current BSA hot topics and copies of the newsletter to replace those that get lost in the book bag post.

Please also request to join up to our closed **Facebook** group, Bledington School Association. Ask anything that you may need to know about school life and you will usually get a quick response - to urgent questions like... "World Book Day Emergency. Has anyone got a tortoise/crocodile/Gruffalo outfit I can borrow?!"

How you can get involved

Needless to say, the more involved people are, the better it is for our funds and for the "happy factor" of the school. Involvement can mean anything from...

- manning stalls/baking cakes/face painting
- joining the committee and meeting every 6 weeks or so to organise events
- giving regularly through a Payroll Giving scheme
- **and the most important - coming along with family and friends to support events!**

Approach anyone on the BSA committee if you'd like to join up or to be involved in another way. Whatever your particular skill or passion, there's likely to be a role for it within the BSA!

Thank you for reading.