

FRIENDS OF SCHOOL AT WEST TOWN LANE ACADEMY

Our Year in Review 2025-26

Friends of School (FOS) is the PTA for West Town Lane Academy. We are run by a committee of five volunteers, supported by a pool of regular helpers and the wider school community. Our aim is to build strong relationships between staff, parents and everyone connected with the school, and to provide activities and equipment that support the school and enrich pupils' education. This year we also became a **registered charity**.

RAISED

£11,872

from fundraising after event costs

INVESTED IN SCHOOL

£5,452

on 12 trips, visits and items for pupils

OUR FIRST CIRCUS

600

people at a sell-out Happy's Circus

SUMMER FAIR

82

helpers running 27 stalls on the day

A Milestone Year

- **Registered charity status** confirmed in January 2026 (charity number 1216549).
- **Gift Aid** can now be claimed for the first time, after registering with HMRC, including on non-uniform day donations.
- All committee members completed **enhanced DBS checks**, and new policies were put in place with the support of Parentkind.
- **Level two food hygiene training**, with the school's support, to better prepare the committee for safe food provision.
- We are now using **Zeffy and Swiftaid**, cutting payment processing fees and making Gift Aid easy to collect.

Events and Fundraising

- **Happy's Circus** visited for the first time in September: all 600 tickets were sold in advance, and across two financial years it made a profit of around £4,000.
- **Our sporty Summer Fair** in June was our biggest fundraiser. For the first time, sports groups ran themed stalls, and 82 helpers ran 27 stalls on the day.
- **Christmas** brought a prize draw with our largest number of prizes yet, kindly supported by local businesses and, for the first time, by school parents' businesses sponsoring prizes. Our bauble decorating competition, with a prize and runner-up in every year group, made a profit that went straight back into playground games. We also sold hot drinks at the carol event and Fab Bricks keyrings for the first time.
- **Through the year** we held a Mother's Day sale (with pre-sales for the first time), an April quiz with eight teams hosted by Let's Get Quizzical, two non-uniform days and three tuck shops, and provided sweets for the two KS2 discos. Easyfundraising continued to bring in income and we joined the Parents Lottery.

TOP FUNDRAISERS

NET OF EVENT COSTS, 2025-26

Summer Fair		£7,377
Christmas prize draw		£1,748
Tuck shops		£934
Non-uniform days		£815
Easyfundraising		£452
Parents Lottery		£392
Discos		£378
Bauble competition		£300

Plus Happy's Circus: around £4,000 across two financial years, as most tickets were sold before the year began.



Where the Money Went

This year FOS spent **£5,451.99** directly on experiences and equipment for pupils:

TRIPS AND EXPERIENCES

£2,830.00

VR science visit	£1,350.00
Theatre visit	£880.00
Little City	£300.00
Teach Rex	£300.00

CELEBRATIONS AND WELLBEING

£1,147.05

Class Christmas presents	£555.62
Year 6 hoodies	£458.85
Fruity Friday	£132.58

OUTDOORS AND NATURE

£865.91

Allotment	£310.99
Nursery hatching eggs	£285.00
Garden games	£269.92

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

£609.03

Hannah Shaw author visit	£482.40
Rowan Foxwood author visit	£126.63

Supporting School Life

- Helping at **coffee mornings**, including one for new starters, and hosting **two new starter events** in local parks over the summer.
- Fully funding a **Fruity Friday** at no cost to the children, with four FOS volunteers supporting Miss Simmonds and the Healthy Heroes.
- Sourcing **free crocus bulbs** for nursery and school through Councillor Jon Hucker and the Rotary Club of South Bristol, and winning bulbs from Otter Garden Centre for Carrie Spittlehouse and the gardening club.

Looking Ahead to 2026-27

- Adventurous activities:** the school has lost its sports premium funding, so FOS has agreed to fund the summer programme of adventurous activities, at around £6,000.
- Committed projects:** a sensory space (£10,000), a buddy bench (estimate £650), Year 6 hoodies (up to £600) and a mural by South Bristol street artist Farrah Fortnum, who is giving her time for free while we cover the paints.
- A new FOS shed**, which the site team plan to replace at half term. We hope to brand it, add a notice board and seek sponsorship for it.
- A new partnership** with Bristol Finance Advice Centre, to be announced shortly: each time a FOS supporter completes a mortgage application with them, FOS receives a donation.
- With few people able to help plan events, we plan **fewer events** and more focus on passive income. We therefore expect income to be lower, and this will affect what we can purchase for school. We have asked the school to send funding requests early so budgets can be paced.

Committee for 2026-27: Sarah Burchill, Sophie Pring, Louise Stutt, Jenna Norman, Hannah Bond, Hev Steel and Kate Robinson (Chair).