



Spring 2017

# The Friends

Raising valuable additional funds

## Volunteers wanted

The Friends meet on the first Monday of every month during term time in the Sixth Form hub and new members and fresh ideas are always welcome, so do please join us. As the name implies, we are very friendly and would love to meet you.

### How you can get involved

Whether you join the committee and help to organise events or come along to support them or take part in our on-going activities through the year there are lots of ways you can help and support your child and us.

### The Giving Machine

All parents, members of staff, Friends and their relatives can register with the Giving Machine at [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk). So whether you are shopping online for a new summer holiday wardrobe or early Christmas presents, please consider registering and nominating "The Friends of Charles Darwin School" as your charity (Reg. Charity No: 8063684). If you choose to donate while internet shopping there is no cost to you but retailers pay us a percentage of your purchases. This has raised valuable funds so do please consider joining.

### Annual Christmas raffle

Early each December, every child is sent home with a book of five tickets for the raffle which is drawn on the last night of the school production and if all parents purchased **just one ticket** we would raise an impressive amount. We hope to see you at a meeting but please support us in whatever way you can.



Thank you to everyone who brought in donations for the Phil the Bag collection after half term. We collected an impressive 530kg which means we are now expecting a cheque for £185.50 to be split equally between the Friends and the School Council.

## With a little help from our Friends

*Charles Darwin School is extremely fortunate to have the support of the Friends, a committed and active organisation which works hard to raise important additional funds for the school, particularly now when school budgets across the country are under considerable pressure. We will work hard to ensure that these budget cuts have the least impact on teaching possible. The excellent work of the Friends means we can provide equipment that we would simply not be able to afford otherwise.*

*The Friends are present at all parents' evenings and performances of the school production and attend community events, such as the Biggin Hill Festival raising the profile of the school. I am very grateful for their hard work and support.*

**Mr Chotai, Headteacher**



Local MP Joe Johnson visiting the Friends' stall at the Biggin Hill Festival

## Help decide where the money goes

Following every fundraising event the money is banked straight away but the decisions on how to spend the money take longer and are made at our Friends' meetings.

We are well-supported by members of staff who bring a "wish list" to the meeting of items both large and small that the school would like the Friends to consider funding. Sometimes students or staff make requests such as the scales and chopping boards which the Friends recently provided in Food Technology. At other times it will be for resources to improve a particular area of the curriculum or school environment. The Friends help to fund the "extras" that are not covered by the school's budget, thus helping to make our children's learning experiences the best they can be.

Friends' funds are not generally spent on improving the fabric of the school buildings as this is the responsibility of the Governing Body. Our constitution commits the Friends to spending money on things that will directly benefit students in all year groups across all areas of the school and curriculum. Many of the resources purchased have a direct link to the School Improvement Plan. The money we raise is usually spent promptly: that way, you can be sure that in supporting the Friends, your own child/children will feel the benefit, along with everybody else.

Our current project to raise £10,000 towards the canopies for the outside dining area is on-going. The canopies provide students with space to relax at lunch or break time as well as shelter from both rain and sun. The banner at the front of the school is updated regularly and shows the progress towards this goal and we are now halfway there. During this period have also donated £350 to repairing the kiln in the art workshop. Why not come to our next meeting and help to decide on future projects.

**Gillian Simons, Chair of the Friends**

## Friends 50/50 Club

Our 50/50 club, now in its third year, is proving a successful way of both raising funds and giving something back to our supporters.

It costs £1 a month and each month one person wins half of the total fund and the other half is donated to the school. We currently have 113 members, which means that every month one lucky member receives £56.50 and so does the school. Over the course of the year, the school receives £672.

Each member has a unique number and every new member who joins increases both the available prize money and the donation to the school. The more members, the bigger the prize becomes.

There are over 1200 students in the school. If each family joined the 50/50 club one lucky member could win £600 every month and we would raise £7200 a year. It's just £1 a month and much better odds than the lottery.

See the application form sent out with this newsletter to join.

You can join part way through the year, so no need to wait until September.

## Recent projects

The Friends aim to support as wide a range of projects as possible to reach all students.

Recent projects include funding

- a new table tennis table,
- repairs to the grand piano in the main hall
- repairs to the kiln.

If you want to suggest areas where Friends' funding could have an impact please let us have your ideas.

Thank you.



## Forthcoming meetings and fundraising events

20 March

Year 7/8 football tournament



Each year group has entered five teams and the goalkeepers will be drawn from the teaching staff. The first match will kick off on the 3G pitch

at 3:30pm and the tournament will end by 6:00pm. Members of the winning team in each year group will each receive a winners' medal. We look forward to an exciting and enjoyable event for all participants. Spectators welcome.

24 March—over 18s only

Race Night, 7:00pm in the Hub

The ever-popular Race Night is back! Get your teams together for Friday 31 March at 7:00pm. Tickets are available on the night for £2.50 or in advance for £2.00 each.

Race sponsorship is also available – why not sponsor a race and pick the names of all six runners? This is a bring-your-own drinks and nibbles event. Alongside the races the Friends will also be holding a raffle. To request a form to book places please e-mail [friends@cdarwin.com](mailto:friends@cdarwin.com).



31 March—minimum donation £1

Non-uniform day and

Easter Eggstravaganza

Non-uniform days are always popular. In particular the Friends has promised funds for a much-needed additional table tennis table.

At break-time the Friends will be selling Easter eggs in the foyer near Student Services. There will also be a suggestion box so that students can present their ideas for equipment for any subject or anything else that they would like the Friends to fund-raise for. All suggestions welcome.

## Forthcoming meetings

8 May 2017, 5 June 2017 and

3 July 2017 at 7:00pm in the Sixth Form Hub including 50/50 club draw

*"The Friends consists of a dedicated and hardworking group comprising parents, relatives and Charles Darwin School staff who are all committed to raising as much money as possible each year to support the school and enrich each and every students' time here.*

*We aim to provide support for as wide a range of subjects and interests as we can, whilst also contributing to the social life of the school community. Last year this included running a stall at the Queen's 90th birthday street party [below] and serving Year 11 prom mocktails [above]."*

