



# 101 Fundraising Ideas for pre-schools

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**Before** you plan a fundraising event....

- check your insurance
- check whether there are any restrictions on alcohol or anything that could be classed as gambling, e.g. raffles, at your venue.

**Good luck with your fundraising!**

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# Guess what ...

**1. Guess/estimate the number of balloons:** Fill a car with as many inflated balloons as you can. People pay to guess the number of balloons in the car. All you need is: a car, lots of balloons (and a balloon pump!) and a prize!

**2. How many marbles?** Fill a pot with marbles. People pay to guess/estimate how many there are. Winner takes all!

**3. Guess the number of sweets:** Fill a jar with sweets. People pay to guess/estimate how many there are. Nearest correct answer wins.

**4. How heavy is the cake?** Or the pre-school supervisor? Or the giant pumpkin? Get the right answer – win a prize *(but best not to give away your supervisor!)*

**5. Guess teddy's name:** Someone donates a teddy bear. Make a list of names. People pay to choose a name. Hold a secret draw for the winning name and the person who has chosen that name wins the bear.

**6. Guess the doll's birthday:** People pay to select the day they think is the doll's birthday – you could write the names on an old calendar.

Hold a secret draw for the winning date – the person who has chosen the nearest date wins the doll!

... Just a thought ... What will you do if more than one person guesses correctly? An alternative is to make a list of numbers/weights which people put their name against.

# At home

**7. Home sales** reps from a range of companies may be willing to do a fundraiser for your setting, and parents/carers may be willing to host an event in their home.

Search online for information about companies that sell in this way: jewellery, cosmetics, toiletries, books, chocolates, greeting cards, kitchenware etc.

Remember to agree at the outset what percentage of profits from orders will be donated to the pre-school.

Some parties generate a free gift for the host that could be used as a raffle prize on another occasion.

# Sponsored events

Sponsored events are a good way of attracting money from beyond the immediate family. They're fairly simple to organise and are good fun for both children and adults.

Make sure everyone who wants to join in has a sponsor form in plenty of time to get sponsors BEFORE the event.

Set a deadline for receipt of all the sponsor money – otherwise you'll be chasing it for weeks.

8. **Trike ride**
9. **Bounces on a trampoline**
10. **Walk or toddle**
11. **Lego® build**
12. **Sing-along**
13. **Sunflower growing**

And something for the parents/carers ...

14. **Swim**
15. **Diet**
16. **Marathon running or fun runs**
17. **Spring clean of the pre-school building/equipment**

... and here's a good one

**18. Sponsored treasure hunt:** Provide the children with a list of things to find and a sponsor sheet. The children are sponsored for each item they collect. Make a 50 pence or £1.00 coin one of the things they have to find. The treasure is, of course, non-returnable. Your proceeds will be all the sponsor money plus all the coins!

# All the fun of the fête!

Whether you are going to run your own fête, or have a stall at someone else's, there are lots of things you can do to raise money.

**19. Sell refreshments/teas/hot dogs/ice creams etc**

**20. Fire engine:** enquire whether the local fire station would attend, with a fire engine – an extra attraction for the fête.

**21. Or the Police,** with a police car. Approach your local Police Community Support Officer.

**22. Treasure island:** Draw a map and mount it on a piece of board that you can easily stick pins into. Decide where the treasure is going to be hidden and write the location down in a sealed envelope (keep it a secret!). People write their name and phone number on a small sticker attached to a pin, then stick it in the map where they think the treasure is hidden. At the end of the event the person whose pin is nearest to the treasure wins the prize.

**23. Tombola:** This one's an old favourite! Ask for donations for prizes e.g. jars of jam, bottles of sauce, bars of soap, small toys etc (remember - if children are going to play you can't have alcohol). Put a cloakroom ticket on each prize (usually one ending with a '5' or a '0') and then put all the counterfoils (for all numbers), folded up, in a bowl. People pay to pick a ticket, if they have one with a '5' or a '0' they win the corresponding prize.

**24. Splat the rat!** Not as easy as it looks! Drop a beanbag rat down a steep chute (like a drainpipe) so that it zooms out of the end and slides along the table or floor. Players have to hit it with a bat or hockey stick before it reaches a marked spot. They win a prize if they splat the rat.

**25. Short straw:** You need lots of plastic drinking straws for this, and a block of wood drilled through with lots of holes which are large enough to put the straws into. Cut some of the straws so they are shorter than the others and put one straw in each hole, making sure that on one side of the wood all the straw ends are at the same level. Players pick a straw – if it is a short one, they get a prize.

**26. Hook a duck:** Who can resist this? There are lots of ways to play: one is to put numbers on the underneath of the plastic ducks and players hook out 3. If the numbers total more than 10 (for example) they win a prize.

**27. Lucky dip:** Everyone's a winner! Fill a large box or barrel with something like paper shreadings and hide lots of small, wrapped prizes in it.

**28. Hoopla:** Not much explanation needed here – you just need some good prizes, some small hoops and a good aim.

**29. Ball through the arch:** Get someone to make a giant marble arch (put a score above each arch). Players roll 3 balls through the arches and you tot up their scores – score more than 40 (for example) and you get a prize. Remember to have someone behind the arches to roll the balls back!

**30. Ball in a bucket:** Similar to previous idea, but players have to throw balls into buckets instead.

**31. Roll a coin towards a toy:** Cover a long table with a piece of plain paper and put an attractive toy at one end of it. Players roll a 10p coin towards the toy. Where the coin stops and topples over, you write the player's name and contact number. At the end of the event, the nearest coin wins the toy.

**32. And for the grown ups ... Roll a coin towards a bottle of wine!**

Remember to make sure you have a small change cash float on each stall. Deduct the float from the takings to find out how much you made!

**33. Face painting:** Ever popular, but often ends up with a long queue. Try using numbered tickets like the supermarket deli counter. Make sure that younger children's parents are happy for faces to be painted.

**34. Nail painting:** Again, check with parents of younger children before starting!

**35. Tattoos:** Wash-off-able tattoos make fun body art. Like face and nail painting though, check with parents!

**36. Pony rides:** Have you got someone with a friendly pony that would be happy to trundle up and down a field? Don't forget hard hats must be worn, and it's a good idea to rope off the runway!

**37. Human fruit machine:** A bit labour intensive as you need 3 people to run the machine, but good fun! Each person has a bin liner containing fruit (or pictures of fruit). When the bell rings each person pulls out a piece of fruit – if they all pull out the same piece the player gets her/his money back, plus a little something extra.



**38. Bouncy castle:** Be careful with these and, as with all events, check with your insurance company before going ahead. Decide beforehand whether people are paying to be able to go on the castle at any time (space permitting) during the fête, or only for one session. Make sure you know the maximum number allowed on at any one time and how you are going to control this. Your staff will be able to do a risk assessment!

**39. Skittles:** Keep the name of the person who scores highest throughout the event. If there's a tie for highest score, have a play-off.

**40. Goal competition:** Recruit a goalie or two, and make a league table to see who gets the most goals past the goalie in 5 minutes.

**41. Water or Wine? (NOT for children!)**

- Ask for donations of bottles of wine
- Fill some empty wine bottles with tap water
- Cover the necks of all the bottles with foil and arrange them randomly on a table
- Charge adults to select a bottle – have they chosen water or wine? Whatever it is they get to keep the bottle!

Is your event inclusive?

Make sure there is ample space for wheelchair users to get to the games you are offering.

Have clear signs explaining what to do and **HOW MUCH IT COSTS.**

# Spectator events

**42. Welly wanging:** Who can throw a welly boot the farthest? Make sure you have a LARGE area cordoned off.

**43. Fashion show:** Is there a local children's wear shop that would like to show off some of its lines? Don't forget to get parents' permission for children who are modelling clothes. Consider permissions for photographs too. Charge an entrance fee.

**44. Pet show:** Charge a small entry fee and have prizes for different categories – who's got the happiest dog?

**45. Children's races:** Obstacle course, dressing up, slow bike ride, egg and spoon, sack race, hopping race, three-legged race ... The list is endless! Make sure the course is free of anything dangerous, charge a small entry fee and have some small prizes or rosettes for the winners.

**46. Fancy hat competition:** You could have a theme or just leave it up to competitors to make the most amazing headgear. Again a small entry fee and a prize for the winner!

What are your wet weather contingency plans?

Some things like welly wanging just can't be done indoors! What could you do instead? Perhaps a tiddlywinks race?!

# Raffles and draws

**47. Raffle:** Sell cloakroom tickets at an event such as a fête. The draw must take place on the day the tickets are sold.

**48. Prize draw:** If you run one of these you must apply for a small lotteries licence from your district/city council. Tickets can be sold any time, anywhere prior to the draw taking place.

**49. 100 Club:** 100 people (or you could make it a 50 club!) pay a sum of money (e.g. £12.00) each year. Every month there is a draw and 3 people win cash prizes (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>).

**50. Bonus ball:** Linked to National Lottery: sell tickets numbered 1-49. The person with the ticket number of the National Lottery bonus ball on a specified date wins a prize.

## **Tips for raffles and draws:**

Think! Who could donate the prizes?

Make sure you keep track of who you have given tickets to sell.

Who has bought each ticket? (name and phone number).

Put ALL the counterfoils for sold tickets in the draw.

# For sale

**51. Book sale:** Collect books that people have finished with and sell them!

**52. Plant sale:** You could ask for donations of cuttings and seedlings from green-fingered parents, or the children could plant lots of seeds and sell the plants.

**53. Nearly new sale:** Collect items to sell – be specific about things you don't want (e.g. electrical items, broken items etc). Make a plan for recycling unsold goods at the end of the sale.

**54.** Another way of running a nearly new sale is to make it a **75:25 sale**: People who wish to sell things register and price items with name or initials. Buyers pay for their purchases at a 'pay station' when they leave, and someone records whose goods have been purchased and takes the money. At the end of the sale, total the amount per seller and pay them their percentage. The sellers must take away their unsold items.

**55. 50:50 auction (or 75:25):** Sellers bring items to the auction. The seller receives 50% (or 75%) of the sale price and your setting receives the other 50% (or 25%). Unsold items must be taken away by the seller.

**56. Table top sale:** You provide the venue and the tables, and people with something to sell 'buy' a table from you. They take all their sale proceeds, but you've got your money for the table anyway!

**57. Car boot sale:** You need a field or a car park for this! Charge sellers for a pitch.

**58. Jumble sale:** Make sure the team of helpers includes people willing to help clear up at the end, and take away the leftovers for recycling etc.

**59. Cake sale:** Perhaps the children could make some to sell, as well as donations from parents/carers.

**60. Gingerbread house:** Get someone to make a gingerbread house (or search online for kits to buy) and decorate it with sweets (à la Hansel and Gretel!). Draw a picture of a house and divide it into numbered 'bricks', people pay to put their name on a brick. Have a draw for the lucky brick number. Winner takes the gingerbread house!

**61. Auction of promises:** Mowing the lawn, cutting the hedge, a homemade Christmas cake, cooking a meal for 6 and doing the washing up, tickets to a show, an evening's babysitting ... Anything can be auctioned. Highest bidder gets it!

Advertising your sale ... Make it clear and remember to say:

WHAT – a Spring Plant Sale

WHEN – day, date and time e.g. Monday 1 April, 2-4pm

WHERE – Sunnyside Pre-school

WHY – for pre-school funds

Is there an entrance fee?

If you are a registered charity, put your Charity Number on your posters.

Give a phone number for enquiries/donations of goods

# Events

**62. Easter egg hunt**

**63. Coffee morning**

**64. Chain meal:** Have pre-dinner drinks at one house, a starter at the next house, main course at the next, dessert at the next, coffee at the next. At least it shares out the washing up!

**65. Barn dance**

**66. Adults' disco**

**67. Family disco**

**68. Barbecue**

**69. Race night:** [www.racenight.me.uk](http://www.racenight.me.uk) explains how these work. See <http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk> for information on the legalities.

**70. Quiz night:** You don't even need to think up the questions. Quizzes for quiz nights are available on the internet – try [www.thequizinquisitor.co.uk](http://www.thequizinquisitor.co.uk)

**71. Bingo night**

**72. Beetle drive**

**73. Duck race** – All you need for this is a stretch of stream and a finishing line somewhere downstream. People pay for a plastic duck with a number on its back. The ducks are all released at the same time, and the first duck over the finishing line is the winner! Make it clear that parents/carers are responsible for their children at all times.

**74. Treasure hunt:** This could be a good family event. Set up a trail of clues around your town or village. People pay to enter and off they go. The person or team who finishes in the shortest time, and correctly solves the most clues is the winner.

### **Was it worth it?**

After the event, reflect on how effective the fundraising was. Did the amount of money raised, or support gained reflect the time and effort spent raising it?

# All join in!

**75. Matchbox challenge:** Entrants pay £1 for an empty matchbox and they have to fill it with as many different things as possible within a set time. The person whose matchbox holds the most is the winner!

**76. Quiz sheets:** Devise a quiz and sell the quiz sheets. Entries have to be returned by a set date, and the person with the most correct answers is the winner.

**77. Collect money in a tube:** Invite families to collect coins in an empty sweet tube – it's amazing how much you can fit in!

**78. Make a 'penny mile':** Invite everyone to collect their coppers, then make a line of 1p and 2p pieces – how far will it stretch? You keep all the money of course!

**79. Cow splats:** An unusual idea for rural groups (cribbed from Nursery World magazine). You need a field and a cow and a simple map of the field. People pay to guess where the cow will make a cow splat! Put the cow in the field and wait and see. Nearest guess wins!

**80. Fancy dress day:** Pay £1.00 and come along to pre-school dressed as whatever you like! You could even choose a theme.

**81. Pyjama day:** Pay to wear your pyjamas for the day!



# Be industrious

**82. Grow some fruit and vegetables:** Eat some at snack time and sell the surplus.

**83. Make a calendar....** using the children's artwork and sell them – everyone's granny needs one!

**84. Make a pre-school tea towel:** children draw their self-portrait, which is transferred onto a tea towel showing all the pre-school children – for parents/carers to buy. Or try mugs or mouse-mats. Search online for companies that produce these for you. NB check minimum quantities.

**85. Produce a book of healthy eating recipes** for your children and sell to parents/friends.

**86. Produce a book of things parents/carers can do with their child at home:** It could include a playdough recipe, making musical instruments, cooking etc.

**87. Make your own pre-school song book:** Include all the children's favourite songs.

# The last 14!

**88. Hire out your premises** (that's if you own them!) for children's parties etc. Check your insurance first.

**89. Buy a brick** (or a window frame or anything else) if you're trying to raise money for a new building. Draw a picture of what the finished building will look like. Price up various items – e.g. doors, windows, bricks, locks etc and get people to sponsor a bit of the new build.

**90. Matched fundraising:** Many companies, banks in particular, run a matched fundraising scheme (with limits). See whether any of your parents/carers work for such an organisation, and if so get them involved in your fundraising efforts and ask them to claim the matched fundraising.

**91. Local celebrities:** Who is famous and lives down your way? See if they will support your fundraising efforts or even give a donation – cash or something to raffle and maybe even something to use.

**92. Christmas concert:** Have a collection for the pre-school after the Christmas concert.

**93. Sweepstake:** This could be on anything; some pre-schools have run one on the date of their next Ofsted inspection.

**94. Photos:** A number of photography companies allow you to keep commission on photos they take of the children.

**95. Strawberries and cream:** Hold a strawberries and cream summer tea party.

**96. Supermarket bag-packing:** Some supermarkets allow you to pack customers' bags at the checkouts for a day/half-day. Customers are invited to make a donation to the pre-school in return.

**97. Run a stall at someone else's event:** Agree first that you can keep your profits.

**98. Jelly deli:** Something to run at the above. You need lots of made-up jelly of different flavours, spoons and paper cups. Charge for a cup and spoon, and let people help themselves to a cupful of jelly.

**99. Watch the pennies:** Get hold of a large bottle or jar and keep it at pre-school. Invite parents/carers to help fill it with pennies (or more!)

**100. Fundraising catalogues:** Search online for these. You need someone with time and energy to organise the circulation of the catalogue, take orders, distribute purchases etc.

**101. Share your profits!** Consider running a fundraising event with half the profit going to another 'good cause'.