



*The Governing Body of
St Dunstan's, Cheam, C of E Primary School
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Diocese of Southwark

Chair of Governing Body:
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Dear Parents / Carers,

Back in June, I wrote to you all explaining some of the challenges that we face as a school, especially with the budget. If you are new to the school, the letter described the financial difficulties we, along with most schools, are facing at the moment. I also highlighted that some of the children's fondest memories of school are the extra-curricular activities such as Science Week and school trips. These enable the children to build on their classroom learning and actually interact and enhance their learning and understanding through different mediums.

These trips have always been funded by parental contributions, which become more and more important as budgets get squeezed. In June I pointed out that if there were insufficient voluntary contributions to cover the cost of an event, then the school would have to make the difficult decision not to proceed with the event for that year.

It has been brought to the Governing Body's attention that during the last term, despite reminders being sent out for payment of trips, a significant number of families had not paid the requested contribution prior to the trip. Therefore, to enable those events to proceed, the remainder of the funding was paid from the school's revenue budget. It was only down to the continued persistence of the teachers and office staff calling and sending out reminders after the event, that we managed to recover the majority of the cost of trips. After discussing the issue, the Governing Body has agreed that this situation is not sustainable.

As highlighted earlier, we are now operating within very tight cashflows and budget which does not include subsidising trips, nor is it considered an efficient use of staff's time after the trip has taken place. Therefore, we do require certainty that we will recover the cost of the trip prior to it happening. Going forward, in order to assist you, all trip letters will be sent out a minimum of 4 weeks prior to the event so that you will receive enough notice. If sufficient contributions have not been received two weeks prior to the event, unless by prior arrangement with the school, it has been agreed by the Governing Body that the school will have no option but to cancel the event. We appreciate that this makes for difficult reading. However, the Governing Body must consider the negative impact on the whole school if its reduced resources are used to subsidise those who do not contribute to these extra school activities.

As stated in all trip letters, we appreciate that some families have difficulty in making a contribution. If this is the case, then please have a private conversation with either the School Business Manager, Mrs Bakrania or Ms Corby, as a separate fund is available for the small percentage of families to whom this applies. If you are eligible for Pupil Premium but have not applied for it, please contact the School Business Manager as this may benefit your child in the future.

I do hope that you understand the pressures and the difficult decisions we face as a school under the current financial conditions.

As ever, I am grateful for all the support parents give to our school.

On behalf of the Governing Body

Martin Swain
Chair of Governors

