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Holy Trinity School – Ongoing Provision and Funding of Co-Curricular Activities

Dear Parents,

Further to our correspondence to parents and carers on 14th May 2024 I write to you on behalf of the board to outline a strategic approach to funding of Co-Curricular Activities.

Background

The Governors have now completed the review of school operating costs, focussing on extra and co-curricular programs which form the basis of the educational model that the school prides itself on.

As you are aware, the school (in line with many other state-maintained schools) has faced financial challenges which have been well managed by Mrs Griffith and her team. As well as the restructuring of staffing provided within the school a broader review of the finances including the provision of extra-curricular programmes has been undertaken.

We recognise and are grateful for the hugely supportive parent body who had been surprised by the presentation of a financial deficit. Many have asked how they can help fund school activities and whilst direct funding of operational costs is not feasible, we do believe that we are able to benefit from the generosity of the community – financially and operationally.

Today the school provides a broad range of extra-curricular programs that sit outside of the curriculum including on-site activities such as Science and Maths days and theatre visits as well as off-site school trips and sports such as swimming. We hope that many of you accept that these activities enrich the children's education and journey at Holy Trinity school.

We have been fortunate to be able to provide these for a number of years often at a financial loss to the school; but times have changed, and we are seeking to put the school on a sounder financial footing to enable current and future generations of Holy Trinity children to benefit from continued breadth of education.

Headline Conclusions of the Review

- Funding for extra / co-curricular programs sit outside of central government per pupil allocation and therefore costs need to be met by other means; namely parental /PTA donations, volunteers giving their time or other third-party sponsorship arrangements.
- Parental contributions are entirely voluntary; though if the school cannot raise the money for an event, then it will run at a loss to the school.

    - The school recognises that at times, families may not have the means to pay for additional activities and our commitment to ensuring all pupils can benefit from activities remains unchanged.

    - However, some events only achieve 50% of the voluntary contribution required. Other events (mainly the more expensive school trips) will have 100% funding.
    - In the past the school has been able to run the activities regardless of whether they achieve the funding, however this is no longer sustainable. The school wishes to avoid the need to cancel events or programs if there is insufficient support.

- Whilst we have experienced cost inflation across the board, especially related to travel, charges to parents and carers have not been increased for some time. For example, the Reception trip to Rushall Farm has been held at £25 for a number of years.
- The current process of paying for each event in isolation causes administrative burden for both parents/carers and the school alike.
- The net result of the review is that for the current financial year, the extra-curricular programs result in a loss to the school's budget of c.£4k per annum which is largely as a result of non-take up of voluntary contributions. The school is grateful to the Church and other sources of funding to help meet the costs but the level of financial loss remains unsustainable especially as overall budgets continue to come under pressure and costs continue to rise.

Changes from September 2024

Following the review, the school will be making the following changes to the extra-curricular funding method which will aim to (i) simplify the administration process, (ii) increase the funding participation rate of those families that are able to contribute and (iii) reduce the funding loss on extra-curricular activities provided.

At the beginning of each term, each parent will be asked to sign a medical and emergency contact details form on ParentPay that will cover activities for that term.

- Parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution that represents 1/3 of the requested contribution to extra-curricular activities for the year. This charge seeks to cover costs of the program for the whole academic year. The cost for each year group is as follows:

Year	Termly Charge	Annual Charge
Reception	£20	£60
Year 1	£30	£90
Year 2	£30	£90
Year 3	£30	£90
Year 4	£30	£90
Year 5	£35	£105
Year 6	£35	£105

- There will also be the option to make an additional voluntary contribution for those that feel they are able. This will help support the entire school community and ensure that all programs can go ahead on a break-even basis.
- Please note that the above annual charges EXCLUDE swimming in years 3 and 4 (it is a national curriculum requirement to provide swimming for at least one year; Holy Trinity supports the concept of two years of swimming) and also EXCLUDES the residential trips in Years 4, 5 and 6. These items will be covered through separate correspondence and charges.

These changes will be visible in ParentPay where you will be able to see the new medical consent form, the termly voluntary contribution, the opportunity to make further funding to the termly budget as well as the new IT fund (see below). We hope that the change in model and a request for support from our Holy Trinity community will ensure that the school is able to continue to deliver the programs that our children so enjoy and benefit from

Further Funding Initiatives

Our review has also included the need to upgrade outdated IT hardware that our children are using. All tablets and desktop computers currently in use are extremely old; latest software updates including increased security measures mean that much of the hardware is slowly grinding to a halt. Thanks to a generous parental donation, teachers are benefitting from the use of a new iPads from this September. It should be noted that such expenditure also sits outside government funding for pupils.

The Governors are therefore seeking to launch an IT investment fund to upgrade the technology needed. We will communicate further on this in the coming weeks but would be grateful to speak to any parents, corporate sponsors or other wider community groups who would be able to assist us in raising these additional funds.

As has always been the case, if any family is concerned about the financial contributions requested, please contact Mrs Poulter in the school office in confidence.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Tim Fettes

Chair of Governors
On behalf of Board of Governors