21 October 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

Each year during the Autumn term I send a letter to you asking for your financial support towards St. Joseph’s school building fund. I attach a copy of the standard letter explaining why, as a VA school we have a school building fund, for all new parents that have joined us during the past academic year.

On behalf of the Governing Board and Senior Leadership Team, I write personally to thank you for your generous support towards our school building fund. I have managed St. Joseph’s building fund on behalf of the Diocese for the past 12 years and the generous contributions made by regular direct debit, cheques or parent pay have increased again this year, for which we are extremely grateful and thank you very much. Every penny given to our school building fund is spent on our school building and resources for the children and we are very proud of the high standard of repair our school building is in.

There is a link on our website for the building fund. Please have a look to see where the money has been spent towards many projects to improve our school to ensure our children have the best environment in which to learn.

The school budget has been static for many years but this year it was significantly reduced.

As a Governing Board, we are committed to provide the highest standard of learning environment. There is much more we want to achieve, but we need to continue to finance additional projects and essential maintenance work. There is a continuing need to refurbish our existing facilities to meet the requirements of current education standards and improve the learning environment of the school for the benefit of the children, staff and you, our parents and carers.

One of the priorities this academic year is to improve the outdoor learning area of the school to reflect the opportunities and resources available to children in school. Much of the playground surface needs to be replaced, more learning resources and play equipment need to be purchased. Currently we are getting quotes and the cost will be significant for this project. Our children deserve the best and this we are mindful of in all that we do at St. Joseph’s.

We are dependent on the generous voluntary contributions and continued support from the families at St. Joseph’s. We thank each and every one of our families who has contributed in the past and continue to contribute on a regular basis.

You can all be proud that your generous contributions have gone a long way to help improve our school environment.

Thank you,

Tina Rowe

Tina Rowe

Chair of Governors.

**School Building Fund**

Most parents decide to send their children to a Catholic school because, they know that their child will be educated in a Catholic environment and that the school will provide an excellent education.

The quality of Catholic schools has also been recognised by the Government and they have granted many of them ‘voluntary aided’ status. What this means is that, although the schools are in the state system, we can retain our traditions and organise the school on the basis of the teachings of the Church. But, in return, we are required by law to raise 10% of the cost of developing and maintaining the school building.

So, as a voluntary aided school, if we need to improve the school, undertake basic repairs or add additional facilities we need to find 10% of the cost ourselves. There is no choice in the matter. If the money is not raised, the work cannot be undertaken. Governors therefore, have to turn to the families at the school for voluntary donations to the School Building Fund to enable us to continue to provide the best possible teaching and learning environment for all the children at St. Joseph’s.

At St. Joseph’s we have been blessed with the catholic primary school facilities that have been developed with the sacrifice, commitment and hard work of past and current families. Through the contribution of families and the generous support of parents to the School Building Fund we have together been able to provide the resources and facilities that the children now benefit from in our school.

As Governors, we are committed to providing a high standard of learning environment and there is still a lot that we would like to achieve, but we do need to continue to finance additional projects and essential maintenance works. There is an ever continuing need to refurbish our existing facilities to meet the requirements of today’s education standards and improve the learning environment of the school for the benefit of all the children, staff and parents.

As such we are dependent on the generous voluntary contributions and continued support from the families at St. Joseph’s and we would like to thank everyone who has contributed in the past and those who have maintained their commitment to contributing to the school building fund, you should be proud that your kind contributions have gone a long way to help improve the learning environment at St. Joseph’s.

The Governors thank you for your continued support.

**Gift Aid**

Most of the parents who contribute to the fund do so under the Gift Aid Scheme. Under this scheme the school can reclaim from the HMRC the basic rate tax you have already paid on your contribution. This increases the value of your contribution at no cost to you - for each £100 that we receive, the school claims back an additional £25! And if you are a higher rate taxpayer, you can claim relief on the difference between the basic rate and the higher rate of tax. The gift aid envelopes can be obtained from the school office.

The Gift Aid declaration form is available on our website.

Further information on Gift Aid from HMRC is available from [www.gov.uk/GiftAid](http://www.gov.uk/GiftAid)

How to contribute:

* Parent Pay
* Direct Debit. Monthly, quarterly or annually
* Cheque, payable to St. Joseph’s Catholic Primary School (Building Fund)
* Cash, or three post dated cheques for each term

Many Schools ask for an amount on an annual basis, but we understand that families have many commitments and would ask that you contribute as much as you can.