

Friday 19th September 2025

Dear Parents & Carers of St Joan of Arc

The School Building Fund

I hope this letter finds you well. I wanted to take a moment to share with you some important information regarding the upkeep and improvement of our school grounds and buildings.

As you may know, St. Joan of Arc, like all faith schools, is a Voluntary Aided (VA) school. This means that while we do receive some funding from the Department of Education, we are required by the government to contribute 10% of these costs through additional funds.

In recent years, we have been mindful of the financial pressures many families face, and as a result, we have been reluctant to ask for additional financial support. Instead, we've been incredibly fortunate to have the unwavering support of our Parents' Association, who have done so much to foster a sense of community and raise funds for our school. Your generosity in supporting the PA has made a real difference in enhancing the educational experience for our children, and we are so grateful for that.

However, due to years of tightening central funding on school budgets, the Governors now feel it is necessary to reintroduce voluntary contributions to the school's building fund. We do so reluctantly, but with the understanding that these funds will enable us to make essential improvements to our facilities.

While we are fortunate that our school grounds are in good condition, thanks in no small part to the hard work of Mr. Campana, we have had to delay some improvements due to other pressing priorities. We now feel it is time to proactively enhance our school environment for the benefit of all children. With additional contributions, we hope to make changes such as replacing carpets in classrooms, installing air conditioning in areas with poor ventilation, repainting communal spaces, and improving the children's toilets.

We understand that there are many demands on your time and resources, and we ask only that you consider contributing to the building fund if you are able to do so. Even a small contribution can make a meaningful difference in providing our children with a safe, comfortable, and welcoming environment in which to learn and grow.

Every pound you give will be thoughtfully spent on selected improvements, and as always, we remain deeply grateful for your support. The suggested contribution is £60 per child or £100 for families with two or more children at the school, but any amount you feel comfortable giving will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity and for being such an important part of our St. Joan of Arc family.

Yours sincerely

Miss. C. Campbell
Headteacher

What is the building fund?

Voluntary-aided (VA) schools are local-authority-maintained schools and often, but not always, have a religious character. These schools are eligible for capital funding grants. VA schools are paid on a similar basis to other categories of school, but the governing body must usually pay at least 10% of the costs of capital work. Responsibility for work to VA school premises is shared between the school's governing body and the local authority (LA).

How is it different to the PA?

Parents Association fundraising efforts have been used to help pay for many of the elements that enhance the learning offer we provide for the children. Recent uses of Parents' Association funds include new library corners and books for classrooms, equipping the nurture room, funding school trips, providing updated learning technology and the outdoor classroom space. Going further back, historical Parent Association funding paid for the Astro-turf area, the climbing frames and tree houses that our children still benefit from. PA funding has also allowed us to employ a specialist music teacher and art therapist.

Is this a new initiative?

Historically, the school has asked for contributions from the parent body for the building fund. In recent years, with the Parents Association raising funds for specific projects having greater prominence, we have not asked for contributions to the school building fund. Nearly all voluntary-aided schools ask all families to contribute a fixed- amount annually.

What will the money be spent on?

Improvements that the school would like to make in the near future include updating the carpets in some classrooms, repainting corridors, adding air conditioning to some of our smaller classrooms that can become unbearably hot in the summer and refurbishing the children's toilets. Over time, we would like to complete the planned building works behind the two halls to create an extra-curricular teaching space. These works will all be done over time but more funds within the building fund will allow them to be completed sooner so that more children can benefit from them. As well as these initiatives, the fund will allow us to address areas of the school subject to general wear and tear in a timelier manner.

Why the suggested contribution?

We know that different families face different financial pressures so we wanted to suggest a voluntary contribution amount that we felt most of our families may be able to afford. £60 divided across 52 weeks would average out as a contribution of £1:15 per week which is hopefully manageable for most families. For families with more than 1 child we hope that a contribution of £100 for the whole family will seem achievable.

What if I want to give but feel like I can't pay the full amount?

It would be incredible if all our families were able to make the suggested donation, but we also appreciate that these are challenging financial times. Any contribution you can make will be much appreciated. If you wished to make a larger donation it would be very gratefully received too.

How do I pay?

Please use the following details, quoting your child's name as a reference:

Sort Code: 16-01-09

Account Number: 14983032

Account Name: WD St Joan of Arc High