

A MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNING BODY



What is the Governors' Fund?

St Andrew's and St Mark's is a Voluntary Aided School. This means the Southwark Diocese (Church of England) owns the school buildings, and contributes to building costs. The school receives no funding from the Local Authority for the maintenance or refurbishment of any of the school buildings.

Being a Voluntary Aided School also affects the way the school is funded and therefore parents are asked to help. Nobody likes having to ask for money and the Governing Body is only too well aware that there are many pressing needs on family budgets at the moment, but we hope you are proud of your school and would like it to remain outstanding in every way. Parents' generosity is crucial if we are to continue to provide the best education and opportunity for your children. **This is why we need your help now and are requesting a donation of £45 per child.**



Why does the school need a Governors' Fund?

The school is legally obliged to have this fund.

Why do parents need to pay into it?

The Governors' Fund has to pay **10%** towards **all** works carried out on school buildings. There needs to be enough money to ensure necessary improvements to the school can be made as required, or when lucky enough to secure extra funding from other sources. There also needs to be a contingency fund for any unforeseen or emergency maintenance.

The governors also have to pay nearly £4,000 a year into the Diocesan Maintenance Fund. If Voluntary Aided schools do not pay, then there will be insufficient money for the Diocese to invest in schools and the buildings could suffer. Certainly there would be no funding for new projects.



What has the Fund been used for recently? The Diocese has in recent years refurbished the classrooms, built a new boiler house, paid £200,000 to replace the flat roof and enlarged the staffroom. More recently the toilet facilities have been upgraded. The Governors' Fund must pay 10% on all these projects. If the Fund does not have the money, then it must come from the school budget. Parental contributions in community schools fund extras on top of the budget. If we do not receive sufficient contributions, this means money must be taken out of the budget and the money available for the children's education will be reduced.

What things are still needed? We are looking to extend the covered walkway and.... there is always a need for replacement ICT equipment.

Why can't the Council or the Diocese pay for this work? Why do the Governors not look at sources of alternate funding? Because SASM is a Voluntary Aided School the Governing Body is legally liable to make a 10% contribution.

Does the Fund subsidise anything else? No. Voluntary contributions are set aside for school maintenance and improvement.

Does the Fund support any school club? No – clubs are required to be self-financing.

Why do the Governors ask for £45 a year? If every family paid the suggested contribution of £45 a year it would ensure that annual costs are met and a modest sum can be set aside to top up the maintenance budget.

What happens if parents don't pay? The donation from parents is entirely voluntary and we are very grateful to receive *all* donations, however large or small. The Governors hope parents can see that their generosity is crucial if a healthy balance in the Fund is to be maintained.

What if parents can't pay? The Governors are all too aware of current pressures on bank balances. Any donation, however small, is welcomed but if you are unable to pay we understand. All gifts are confidentially handled. Unfortunately, however, if there are not enough contributions the school will be unable to go ahead with many of its plans.



Parents already contribute money through PTA events. The PTA raises funds during the year from various sources, (eg discos, a quiz, a Summer Fête, Christmas Fair etc.) but the Governors' Fund is quite separate. Whilst the PTA can (and often does) make generous contributions for some improvement projects, they are not responsible for key maintenance works. Even if the PTA donates to a project, the Governing Body is still legally liable to make a 10% contribution to funding. Without this, the projects cannot go ahead *even if funding is secured from other sources*.

How many contributions were received last year? Unfortunately contributions were received from just under half of the families in the school and this figure has been steadily declining over time. This is beginning to have a significant impact on the financial support available for the school.

The Governing Body will be very grateful for any contribution, whether larger, smaller or equal to the £45 per year suggested. Please see the accompanying letter about ways to contribute. We are now able to claim back tax from the Government on all gifts from UK taxpayers, increasing the value of your contribution at no cost to yourself – please do also click on or fill in the Gift Aid declaration.



The Governing Body