

Whytemead Primary School
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Friday 22nd March 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing today to sadly inform you of the real risk of upcoming trips and workshops being cancelled due to a short fall in funding.

When arranging educational visits and activities the school considers the cost and tries to cover as much of these as possible through the school budget, but as you may be aware, school budgets are decreasing in real terms currently, meaning that the budget is stretched further and further year on year. Simply put, the school does not have the financial resources to supplement all trips.

In order to fund our educational trips, we ask parents and carers for a voluntary contribution, however, recently not enough have indicated that they would be willing to make this contribution. If this trend continues then we will have no other choice but to consider cancelling them.

Please find below the key points of charging for school activities and asking for voluntary contributions:

In guidance written by the Department for Education 'Charging for school activities' (October 2014), it sets out that a school cannot 'charge' parents for any element of the National Curriculum, this includes materials for learning or educational activities. However, governing bodies and local authorities can ask parents for 'voluntary contributions' for the benefit of the school or any school activities. In essence, this means that any activities that are costly can be subsidised by reasonable contributions by parents to enhance the experience of pupils at the school.

Of course, a voluntary contribution is by definition... voluntary. The school cannot demand this payment, however if there is not enough contributed then sadly activities may not be possible to fund. The school also makes allowance for those who simply cannot afford to contribute and uses some of its Pupil Premium funding to support those who are unable to pay with an additional contribution. The school advises those parents who feel they cannot contribute to discuss this on an individual basis with the Head teacher. These discussions take place with the utmost discretion and children are in no way singled out or made aware if their parents cannot or will not contribute. No child will ever be excluded from an activity under this guidance due to lack of parental contribution.

I am sure you will agree it would be a great disappointment if we had to cancel any of our school trips or activities. I hope it does not come to this.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs Mavin, Acting Head teacher

