



Malden Parochial Church of England Primary School
Headteacher: Mrs Lucy McMullan
Chair of Governors: Mrs Patricia Brown

11 September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

THE SCHOOL FUND

On behalf of the Governors we are delighted to welcome you and your child back for a new school year. As ever, our aim is to provide the best possible education for our children.

In order to support this aim, we ask parents to contribute by making a voluntary annual payment to the Governor's School Fund. For the current year, we have moved away from a fixed suggested donation and now suggest a range of £60 to £120 per child per year. We hope that many parents will be able to pay more than they have previously to recognise the increasing cost burden the school is facing.

Further information on the Governor's School Fund, its purpose and use of the monies raised is provided in the Q&A on the following page.

It must be emphasised that there is no obligation for parents to pay into the Fund. However, we hope you recognise the importance of the Fund and urge you to support the school in this way if you can. We realise that some may be able to give more than the suggested donation whilst others may offer something less and we are grateful for any donation received, however big or small. If you are already paying into the Fund, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support.

What do I need to do?

If you are able to contribute and have not already done so, we would ask that you pay by electronic bank transfer or standing order, which can be annual, quarterly or monthly. We would prefer not to receive cheques if possible. You will need to instruct your bank directly to make the payment using the details below:

- Account name: Malden Parochial Governors' Maintenance Account
- Account number: 00553913
- Sort code 20-84-17:
- Reference: please insert your eldest child's surname plus as much of their forename and class number as will fit (e.g. Bloggs Joe Year 3) as the reference.

To make your contribution go further, if you pay UK tax, we can claim Gift Aid from HMRC, which adds 25% to your donation. Please complete the attached form (also available on the school website) and return it by email to Treasurer@mps.rbksch.org, taking care to provide all the information requested and tick the appropriate box(es). Unfortunately, we cannot claim with incomplete forms. Forms sent by email do not need a signature so please just type your full name in this field.

On behalf of the whole Governing Body, I would like to thank you in advance for your financial contribution which is greatly appreciated and needed by the whole school.

Yours sincerely,

The Resources Committee of the Governing Body.

Q&A

What is the Governors' School Fund?

Malden Parochial is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School. This means that we are not fully funded by the Government. In particular, our school buildings are owned by the Church (through the Diocese of Southwark). The maintenance and upkeep of these buildings is funded by the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education (SDBE) via a maintenance scheme into which the governors of all SDBE schools contribute a sum of money each year, calculated as an amount per pupil. This scheme is like an insurance policy and gives us access to funds to pay for bigger projects that we otherwise could not afford to undertake and, like other church schools, our contribution is funded via the Governors' School Fund. Additionally, the school has an obligation to pay at least 10% of the cost of any improvement works which is funded by the Governor's School Fund. If funds allow after meeting these obligations, the Governors' School Fund may support the school by directly funding smaller buildings & maintenance projects or providing funds to meet other items of expenditure at the discretion of the governors.

Why do you ask parents and carers to contribute to the fund?

Consistent with other Voluntary Aided Schools, the Governors' sole source of income from which to finance these essential costs is parental contributions. We therefore rely on these to help ensure we can provide the best learning environment possible for our children. We understand that there are many demands on family budgets and contributions are voluntary. However, your generosity is imperative for us to continue to deliver the best education and opportunities that we can. Sadly only around half of parents contribute currently – if all parents contributed the suggested £60 - £120 per year, we could raise an additional £8k to £16k which could hugely benefit our school.

If we don't raise enough funds via parental contributions, the costs need to be paid out of the main school budget which is already extremely stretched. This would mean less money available to purchase things like classroom resources and other items which benefit our children's education. The vast majority of our school funding is spent on essential items like teacher salaries and energy costs which have risen faster than the level of government funding received due to high levels of inflation combined with pressures on school funding. Funding is therefore now a critical issue for all schools and we rely heavily on parental contributions and other donations to stay afloat.

I already contribute regularly through PTA donations. Why should I pay into this fund as well?

The Governors' School Fund is completely independent of the PTA and its primary purpose is to fund the maintenance and upkeep of the school buildings. The PTA makes other valuable contributions of items that the school requests and supports the school budget more generally.

Why has the suggested donation increased to a range of £60 to £120 per child per year?

Our suggested donation was set at £60 per child per year for many years. High levels of inflation in recent years means that our costs have risen significantly and therefore we now need to raise more funds than ever. In particular, the per child contribution to the SDBE scheme, which is paid out of the fund, increased by c.16% last year and is expected to rise by a further c.15% over the next two years. At the same time, we recognise the financial pressure that many households are under at the present time and therefore wanted to make clear that we are grateful for any donation of any size. That said, we do hope that many of our parents will opt to pay a higher amount than they have done previously.

What has the Governors' School Fund paid for recently?

Over the past five years, the Governor's School Fund has paid out a total of over £43,000 to support the school. This is in addition to our mandatory contribution to the SDBE scheme each year, through which we have also been granted significant funds for major works.

Items funded either directly by the Governor's School Fund or indirectly via the SDBE maintenance fund over recent years include:

- The refurbishment of an unused classroom to create a dedicated Art / DT space.
- A major project to improve the school's waterworks.
- Electrical remediation works.
- Redecoration of the school hall and provision of lighting and audio equipment.
- Supporting the school with some of the costs which arise due to the Covid pandemic in 2020 / 21.
- A contribution to the running costs of the school in light of increased energy costs.

Why do I need to complete a Gift Aid declaration?

The Governors Maintenance Fund has charitable status and so a Gift Aid Declaration allows us to claim 25p from the Government for every £1 you donate. This is 'free' money for the school which also goes into the Governors' School Fund to support the school. We therefore encourage every contributor who is a UK taxpayer to complete a Gift Aid Declaration form allowing us to reclaim this money. Although we refer throughout this letter to 'parents and carers', contributions can be made on behalf of the child by anybody, so if you are not a UK taxpayer perhaps a grandparent or other person could make the contributions instead.

Who can I contact if I have any questions?

Our Treasurer, Mrs Clare Miller, administers the Fund on behalf of the Governors, and is happy to answer questions and try to resolve any queries you may have regarding the fund, payments you have made or your Gift Aid declaration. Any enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence. She can be contacted by e-mail at Treasurer@mps.rbksch.org. You can also direct questions to the Resources Committee of the Board of Governors by contacting the school office who will put you in touch with the relevant governor.