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School Trips

Dear parent/carer,

There is lots of excitement around school this week, due to all classes venturing out on their school trips. It has, however, been brought to my attention that there are some concerns around payments for these.

As a school, we ask for a contribution towards two large-scaled trips per year: The Opera House Pantomime and the end of year Summer Trip. We set this contribution at £15.00, due to the expense of these. In line with DfE guidance, the Education Act 1996 sets out the law on charging for school activities in schools, and this states that: **“Charges may be made for some activities that are known as ‘optional extras’.”** This includes transport. On average, transport costs around £10.00 per pupil, depending on where the trip is to. In addition to transport costs, school entrance fees cost around £10.00-15.00, again depending on where the visit is taking place.

The difference in the amount contributed by parents and the total costs of trips (transport and entrance fees) is completely subsidised by school, not by payments made by any other parent/carer, even if you have paid the full contribution and someone else has not.

As always, if there any problems around paying for trips, we allow parents and carers to pay over time, in small chunks: this can all now be done through ParentPay (please see the school office to set this up, if you haven't already done so). If parents/carers are still facing difficulties to pay towards the trips, all members of staff are here to help further.

DfE guidance also states:

“Nothing in legislation prevents a school governing body or local authority from asking for voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or any school activities.”

“It is important to note that no child should be excluded from an activity simply because his or her parents are unwilling or unable to pay. If insufficient voluntary contributions are raised to fund a visit, or the school cannot fund it from some other source, then it must be cancelled.”

I would like for our trips to continue, as they provide the children with a wide range of invaluable experiences. However, if contributions do not continue, we would not (in most circumstances) be able to continue with these trips, as funding does not cover the full costings.

From September, there will be a new section on ParentPay called, ‘School Trip Saver’. This will allow you to drop any amount of money in, as and when, that can be used towards any school trip, across the year. This may help to spread out the costs over the 38 weeks of school.

I hope the details of this letter have helped to answer some questions, but if not, please come and speak to myself or another member of staff.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Wilson