



11th October 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Diocesan School Building Fund – 23/24

As you will be aware, St James' is a Catholic Voluntary Aided school. Our Voluntary Aided status gives us the freedom to provide a unique Catholic education which you have chosen for your child, but also carries certain responsibilities. Like other Local Authority Maintained schools across the country, St James' receives capital funding to cover the cost of the maintenance and development of the school's site and facilities. However, our Voluntary Aided status requires the Diocese to meet 10% of these capital costs itself.

Prior to 2000, the cost of this 10% was met by the Diocese, directly from the regular giving of parishioners at Mass within its parishes. Against the context of falling Mass attendance, in 2000 the Diocesan School Building Fund was established to meet the cost. This fund is supported by voluntary contributions from the parents of our pupils, with a suggested amount of £15 per pupil each year.

The Diocesan fund has supported several projects over recent years, including last year the installation of new LED lighting and ceiling tiles and a new fire alarm system. We are also hoping to benefit this year with the replacement of one of our temporary buildings which has become unusable. These projects would not have been possible without the support of the fund. We do appreciate the squeeze on personal finances at present and understand that not everyone is in a position to pay however the school benefits greatly. It is also important that you are aware that where insufficient contributions are received from parents to meet £15 per pupil, the balance must be paid from the school's own revenue funding – the funding that we receive to meet the day-to-day educational needs of our pupils.

If you would like to make this voluntary contribution, please do so using ParentPay our online payment system. We are unable to accept cash or cheques. If you are having problems accessing your ParentPay account please contact the Finance Office on 0161 482 6903.

If you set up a Direct Debit or Standing Order whilst your child was attending a primary school within the Diocese, please ensure that you cancel this. Although these contributions are all paid to the Diocese, your payment will be allocated to the previous school meaning that St James' will still be charged.

Thank you to all families who have already made a voluntary contribution this year.

Yours faithfully

Mrs M Dooley
School Business Manager