



SJF Resources Support Fund - Frequently Asked Questions

What is the SJF Resources Support Fund?

The SJF Resources Support Fund is to help provide additional income for our school from parents and carers, alumni, friends from the community and further afield. This funding stream is directed at core educational school costs. It is distinct from PTFA fundraising, which is directed strictly towards additional enrichment, equipment and specific capital projects.

All funds will go to the St John Fisher School Governor's Fund, registered charity 1178706. Registered address: St. John Fisher RC Primary School, Grand Drive, London, SW20 9NA. As a registered charity, the accounts are independently examined and publicly available via the Charity Commission website.

Why does the school need additional funding from the school community?

Primary schools across the country are facing huge financial difficulties and this is only forecast to get worse.

The most significant challenges are:

- Central government funding for all schools; 15 years with no overall growth in school spending
- Increases in staffing costs: pay increases, increased pension costs, energy and cost of resources
- A reduction in our funding for deprivation;
- Significant underfunding in funding for pupils with special needs.

As a Catholic Voluntary Aided School, we have additional financial responsibilities that other state schools do not. For example, we are required by law to pay for 10% of any school building improvements and related infrastructure. Other state schools would have all of this paid for by the Local Authority.

We work incredibly hard with our Governors, Senior Leadership Team and Administrative Staff to reduce costs where possible, seek additional revenue and make financial efficiencies.

If I don't contribute, will this have any impact on my child's progress at school?

This is a voluntary donation which you can opt in or out of as you wish. We know that not all families can afford to contribute and we assure you that all children are treated equally irrespective of whether or how much their parents contribute. Contributions do however mean the school can secure the necessary resources for learning. Every donation makes a difference.

What will the funds be used for?

Your donation is to the SJF Resource Fund, part of the St. John Fisher School Governor's Fund, registered charity 1178706. For the 2024/25 school year, all money raised through the SJF Resources Support Fund will be directed towards essential learning resources such as classroom materials, books, on-line teaching resources, computers and interactive classroom boards. The school has the discretion to spend funds where they are most needed with oversight from the Governing Body.

How can I make a contribution?

- Via ParentPay
- A one-off payment via your Bank Account
- Monthly standing order via your Bank Account
- Cheque made out to *St John Fisher (RC) Sch Maintenance A/C* to the School Office

How much would I be expected to give?

There is no set limit, but as a starting point, we have set £20 per month per pupil, which equates to £240 per year. Our previous Governor's fund has remained at £180 per pupil per year for 4 years and in light of the current financial deficit and inflation, we have put our request up to £240. We understand that all families have different financial circumstances and therefore we ask for our community to give what they can afford and all contributions will be equally valued.

How do I set up a regular contribution?

To set up regular monthly contributions: you will be able to set this up with your bank or on your banking app as a standing order using the following details:

Beneficiary name: *St John Fisher School Governors' Fund*

The Co-operative Bank

Sort Code: 08-92-99

Account Number: 67399657

Please use the full name and form of your youngest child who attends the school as a reference.

Don't forget if you are a UK tax payer to complete a gift aid form on-line and BOOST your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate. You can access the form on our school website <https://www.st-johnfisher.merton.sch.uk/> Top right hand corner or click <https://forms.gle/mmnyPLLM35ZBf2xV6> (If this link does not take you directly to the form, please copy and paste into your browser).

Can I make a one-off contribution?

Yes, you can make a one-off contribution or as many as you would like to. You will not be tied in and can cancel a regular contribution at any time if your circumstances change.

How do I set up a ParentPay contribution?

All our families should be set up on the ParentPay system but if you need help, please contact the school office. You can make a one off or multiple adhoc contributions by using your regular Parent

Pay account and selecting the item SJF Resources Support Fund. You will be able to set a donation amount between £10 and £1000 maximum per academic year.

How do I pay by cheque or cash?

Please hand cheques made payable to *St John Fisher (RC) Sch Maintenance A/C* into the School Office.

We are not able to accept cash donations.

I am a UK taxpayer – can the school benefit from Gift Aid?

Yes we can! If you pay tax in the UK, please Gift Aid any donation you make. We can claim an extra 25p for each £1 you give, on top of your donation at no extra cost to you. All Gift Aid donations are made to St. John Fisher Primary School Governor's Fund which is a registered charity. If you are a higher-rate tax payer, you can claim additional relief in your tax return.

Gift Aid forms are available from the School Office or by clicking here.

<https://forms.gle/mmnyPLLM35ZBf2xV6>

(If this link does not take you directly to the form, please copy and paste into your browser).

Is it common for schools to operate voluntary funds?

Through our research, unfortunately we have found that voluntary funds are becoming increasingly widespread in state funded schools, as government funding has failed to keep pace with schools' requirements.

Will we get visibility of how much the fund has raised?

Yes, we will have regular updates in the weekly Headlines, around school and on our social media channels.

Do I have to have a pupil at the school to donate or can anyone contribute?

We welcome donations from anybody including parents and carers, alumni, friends from the community and further afield.

Can I donate anonymously?

Your donation is never public. The SJF Resource Fund administrator will be able to see some details of your donation, but this will be kept confidential.

Does this mean the school won't ask for trip donations anymore?

Unfortunately we will still have to ask for trip contributions. The voluntary donations we ask for only go part-way to funding our trips programme. The school currently puts additional funding towards our valuable visitors and trips programme.

Will the school be trying to raise funds in any other way?

The PTFA will continue to fundraise separately through community events and initiatives, but no longer ask for donations on ParentPay. The PTFA fundraising will be directed towards additional enrichment, equipment and specific capital projects.

We will also be working with the PTFA to apply for any relevant grants.

What do your staff think of a new fund being established?

Although we all agree that it is the role of the government to fund state schools and are not entirely comfortable with asking for donations, we are realistic about the fact that this is now common and the new fund will be essential in helping us to create the best possible learning environment for our children.

Who do I contact with further questions about making my contribution?

If you have any further questions, or need help with completing any of the forms, please email finance@st-johnfisher.merton.sch.uk

I really can't afford to donate at this time. Can I help in other ways?

- Get involved with the PTFA and come to all our school fundraising events! See the website calendar and the school newsletter to find out more.
- Could your company offer match funding or other Corporate Support?
- Can you help with our Community Days?

What more can I do?

Write to your MP and take every opportunity to pressure the government to fund its schools properly.