

19 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As you will now be very aware, the government has made the decision that all schools should close to most pupils for an as yet unspecified period of time.

We recognise that for some of our parents and carers this will add additional financial burden on top of any direct or indirect effects of the recent Coronavirus outbreak including for some, the potential loss of income due to a reduction in hours or redundancies.

Current guidance suggests that children entitled to a free school meal will be able to attend school and will receive a school meal. For children entitled to free school meal who are not able to be in school, the government has announced a national voucher scheme for which the details are awaited. As soon as we have more information on this, we will let you know.

If you are in financial distress and would like to apply to the hardship fund, more details will be sent early next week on how to do this. It would be our aim to turn around all applications and make payment within 48 hours, as we know some parents and carers will struggle with the additional costs of having their children at home during this extended closure period.

A number of parents and carers have contacted our schools with an offer to donate money to supplement any funds put aside by DCAT for those parents and carers in the most difficult of financial circumstances. We are enormously heartened by these offers and have set up a Just Giving page to allow those who feel able to donate any amount, no matter how small, to do so.

The Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust has charitable status, and any funds donated through Just Giving will be ring fenced and used only for the hardship fund. For your peace of mind, we will arrange for this hardship fund to be independently audited at our cost.

You can donate using the following link: <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/dcat>

We would like to thank you in advance for any donations and wish everyone well during these difficult and unprecedented times.

Yours faithfully,



Mark Talbot
Chief Executive

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