



2nd October 2019

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 4 Children,

I hope that your child has settled in to their new year group and is enjoying new topics, in particular "I am Warrior". It was great to see so many of you at our Parent Information Meetings a few weeks ago. If you were unable to attend, you will find the slides on our website under the Parents tab. I would also like to inform you that we have recently updated our Curriculum page on our website – do have a read so that you are reminded of what makes our curriculum special here at Barrow Hedges. You will be able to find information about our Curriculum Intent, Implementation and Impact and also a planning overview for the whole of Year 4. We are going to be developing this part of our website over the forthcoming weeks so I will keep you updated on this.

We are very proud of our curriculum and that the children enjoy a wide range of memorable experiences and enrichment activities. The purpose of this letter is to outline more specifically what these are for the whole of the academic year. I also thought it would be useful to remind you of how these activities are funded.

PTA Funded Activities

You will know that we have a very active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) who work hard raising thousands of pounds and this money benefits every child in the school community. This year, money raised by the PTA will be used to fund the following annual events for Barrow Hedges children:

- Pantomime (all children)
- Creativity Week resources, visitors, performances (all children)
- National Sports Week – June
- Tennis lessons (Year 4 and 5)
- SATs breakfast (Year 6)
- Strictly Come Dancing (Year 6 children)

In addition to this, funds raised by the PTA will come directly into school to purchase resources and equipment. For example, new furniture and resources have already been bought for the Year 1 area and we have plans to continue to improve our outdoor space. I know the PTA are busy planning this year's events. Thank you in advance for your support with, and contributions to, the many PTA events that will be held. Hopefully I will see you at the Circus next Wednesday!

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School Trips and Visitors

In addition to the residential visits that you have received separate communications about, the following activities have been organised for **Year 4** children and we ask that parents fund the cost of these. We are very conscious of the fact that this is a sensitive aspect of school life. We do our very best to ensure that such trips and visits into school are not too costly.

For example, we have begun to use public transport for some of our school trips to keep the costs of the trips down and to encourage our children to use sustainable forms of transport. We do, however, consider the age of the children and the appropriateness of arrangements. For Year 4, travel will be via public transport to London. Having completed a review of the school trips and visits we offer, I am able to confirm that the total cost per year group for the year's activities will be no more than £40. More detailed information about the event and confirmation as to the final payment will be provided in individual letters sent out nearer to the activity.

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| Y4 | |
| Wider Opportunities – Violin and Cello | £25 for 30 weeks of the year |
| Roman Workshop | September |
| Science Museum | May |
| Egyptian Workshop | June |

You will be aware of the extreme pressures on school budgets across the country and I am sorry to confirm that this is no less the case for Barrow Hedges. Therefore, included in the £40, is £25 towards the Wider Opportunities Programme where each child in Year 4 learns to play the violin or the cello throughout the academic year. I am sure you are aware of the value we place on music and this is why we are committed to funding the majority of the costs. We hope that you agree that this is a most valuable opportunity for the children. We ask that you contribute via Parent Pay for this.

There are occasions when Barrow Hedges pupils are invited to participate in other exciting events. For example, last year Stanley Park High School gave us the chance to compete in a Mini Olympics. Obviously it is not possible to publicise these in advance. Therefore there may be the possibility of further invitations for your child.

Please remember we value parent helpers in school and on school trips, but we may need to arrange for helpers to have a DBS. Please speak to your child's class teacher, who will then put you in touch with Mrs Pannell in the finance department.

School Fund

Every year we invite each family in school to make a voluntary contribution towards the School Fund over and above the cost of trips provided. The suggested amount is £20 per family. A few parents have asked us if they can contribute more to School Fund and the answer is 'yes, thank you!' This is now set up on Parent Pay. We would be grateful if you would complete and return the Gift Aid Declaration and drop this into the school office upon paying your School Fund. In light of the information above, you may be wondering why we ask for this contribution. The answer is that this fund enables us to enrich the curriculum throughout the year to add interest and excitement to *lessons*. Examples include the purchase of ingredients for Design Technology lessons, materials for Science lessons and specialist media for Art. The fund also pays for some of the transportation used for external sports events and competitions. In short, the aforementioned PTA funded events could be considered as "*optional extras*" ("the icing on the cake") whereas the School Fund resources described here enable us to make lessons more memorable and help us to make them even more engaging and practical. The costs for such resources are beyond the essentials met through our delegated budgets.

The support and generosity shown by families in previous years' School Fund contribution certainly has made a difference so I would like to thank everyone very much and I look forward in anticipation of an excellent response this year too.

Kind regards,



Louise Wood
Headteacher