St Michael's CE Primary School
Governors' Maintenance Fund

When you first decided to send your child to St. Michael's, you were probably aware that it is a VA school – but what exactly is a VA school?

According to gov.uk: ***Voluntary-Aided schools***

- *Voluntary-Aided (VA) schools are maintained schools and often, but not always, have a religious character. These schools are eligible for capital funding by grant from the department for education.*
- *VA schools are paid on a similar basis to other categories of school, but the governing body must usually pay at least 10% of the costs of capital work.*
- *Responsibility for work to VA school premises is shared between the school's governing body and the local authority (LA). The LA has responsibility for the playing fields and the governing body are liable for all other capital expenditure.*

As a VA school, 10% of any development costs need to come from the school's governing body. This doesn't mean that the governors dig deep into their personal piggy banks to retrieve tens of thousands of pounds in loose change. What it does mean is that the governors are responsible for collecting and managing a central fund (known as the Governors' Maintenance Fund) that is independent of the school's income and other fund-raising. The Fund provides for 10% of the school's upkeep and improvement and any remainder is spent for the benefit of the school in consultation with the Headteacher.

The Governors' Fund comes mainly from donations from parents. When parents accept a place at St Michael's, they are making a commitment to support the school in this way. If previous parents had not paid into the Maintenance Fund, then our children would not have such great facilities now.

The governors appreciate that there are many financial demands on families these days and make every effort to keep the contribution as low as is realistically possible. Payments can be made via instalments.

- The expected contribution for a family with one child in the school should be no less than £40 each year.
- Where parents have two or more children in the school, the expectation is that they will contribute not less than £80 each year.
- Parents are encouraged to give more if they can, and many do this.
- The governors are grateful to all parents for their support. If any parents feel that they cannot contribute £40, the governors will be pleased to accept whatever contribution families are able to make.

The Governors' Fund also pays the school's contribution to the London Diocesan Board for Schools.

The school uses an online system for all payments (including for the Maintenance Fund and for school trips etc.) called ParentPay and you will receive your login details for this system soon after your child has started at the school.

In the meantime, a Gift Aid form for tax payers is included on the back of this letter – this allows the Governors to claim 25p gift aid for every £1 donated, at no cost to yourself. This form can be returned to the school office at any time.

Thank you very much for your support.