

The Crabtree Academy Trust

Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, Herts. AL5 5PU



Crabtree Infants' School
Headteacher: Mrs Sally Patrick
Tel: 01582 623597
admin@crabtreeinfants.herts.sch.uk

Crabtree Junior School
Headteacher Mr Ian Patrick
Tel: 01582 623501
admin@crabtreejm.herts.sch.uk

13 February 2015

Dear Parents and Carers,

As some of you may remember, we wrote to all parents at the Crabtree Schools in 2013, outlining our plans to launch a Voluntary Contribution (VC) scheme. Our goal is to generate additional income, in order to ease the ever increasing pressure on the schools' budgets, when funding has been reduced and grants for additional items/repairs/capital expenditure are much harder to secure.

We are writing to you now to ask you to consider partaking in this scheme. There is absolutely no obligation to contribute and not doing so will in no way disadvantage your child(ren). We remain keen for the VC scheme to be truly that, *i.e.* voluntary for those that wish to contribute.

As well as voluntary, we wish for contributions to be confidential. With the exception of the School Business Manager, neither staff nor governors will have access to the names of those who sign up to the scheme. The VC scheme will be administered externally by Virgin Giving. We will launch the scheme after half term and will provide a link to the Virgin Giving website via the schools' websites and by direct correspondence. You will find options to set up a monthly/annual Standing Order, or you can make a one-off contribution by debit/credit card. If you are a tax-payer and able to Gift Aid your donation, please tick the appropriate box on the site as this will enable Virgin Giving to claim an additional 25% (at no additional cost to yourself) on the schools' behalf.

The value of your contribution is for you to decide, but if you would like guidance, we suggest £5 to £10 per child, per month. This is, of course, completely voluntary and parents should feel no obligation to make this commitment, but any contribution, however small or large, could make a huge difference to the provision we are able to offer the children.

The wonderful Parents' Association (PA) will continue to stage events including the Summer/Christmas Fairs, Fireworks *etc.* Your continued support of these events is much appreciated. The money the PA raises will be allocated to specific projects, as is currently the case, whilst the VC monies will be used to more generally supplement the wide range of curriculum activities and resources available at Crabtree. We would wish to be more specific but this is not possible until we know how much is received. Instead we will publish annually a summary of the main expenditure items the VC scheme has been used to fund.

The staff and governors are grateful for your support, both practical and financial. If you have any further fundraising ideas or other suggestions, please contact us via the email addresses below.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Chris Rule
Chair of Governors, Crabtree Infants' School
governors@crabtreeinfants.herts.sch.uk

Mr Phil Kendall
Chair of Governors, Crabtree Junior School
governors@crabtreejm.herts.sch.uk

Crabtree Voluntary Contribution (VC) Scheme

Guidelines

1. Crabtree Academy Trust (CAT) is launching a VC scheme to generate additional funds to support and enhance the education of our pupils. It is to be known as The Crabtree Voluntary Contribution scheme or VC.
2. The VC is entirely voluntary and there is no compulsion or favour granted for taking part.
3. The VC scheme does not supersede requests for voluntary donations to cover the cost of specific school trips. Donations will continue to be requested at the time of booking these trips in order to enable them to go ahead.
4. The identity of the donors will only be known to the scheme collecting agency (Virgin Money Giving) and the CAT School Business Manager. The details of donors will not be revealed to other staff or governors.
5. To help preserve anonymity Virgin Money Giving are being used as a collection agency for donations.
6. CAT, through its Headteachers, Directors and Governing Bodies will decide how best to use the funds raised. The funds will be used proportionately across both schools, and where possible for the benefit of both schools.
7. The Parents' Association's social and fundraising activities will continue and are vital for the finances and social cohesion of the Crabtree community. The VC is seen as supplementary fund raising
8. It is entirely up to parents/carers to decide if they wish to make a donation, and if so how much. Some parents have asked for a guideline on donations so governors are suggesting £5 to £10 per month for each child attending Crabtree.
9. Parents/carers can make donations (**after 24th February 2015**) by:
 - a) Going to www.virginmoneygiving.com
 - b) Selecting the 'donate to a charity' box on the right hand side and entering Crabtree Academy Trust
 - c) Choosing either to make a regular monthly donation or a one-off donation
 - d) Completing the details as requested
10. CAT is able to claim an additional 25% of the donation from the government in Gift Aid provided the donor is a UK tax payer. Please note that the Gift Aid money comes from the government and not the donor.
11. Donations are collected by Virgin Money Giving and then transferred to CAT within a fortnight.
12. All donations form part of the annual income received by CAT, recorded in a set of financial accounts which are independently audited on an annual basis.
13. The Headteachers and staff already manage large state-funded budgets with robust control procedures in place. All donations would fall within this same governance structure with the Headteachers being monitored by the governors and directors.
14. Funding is not currently requested for specific items/projects. Without knowledge of likely donation levels it is not possible to "commit" to such items as this would inhibit expenditure on other lower value items/projects should donations fall short of those required for the specific item/project. Instead CAT will publish an annual report giving details of the amount raised by VC and how it was used.
15. For further information about the VC scheme please contact Danielle Taylor (CAT School Business Manager) on sbm@crabtreeinfants.herts.sch.uk or via either school office.
NB. Danielle will be available from 23rd February 2015.