



The Friends of the Vineyard School (FoV) fund Letter to Families - December 2023

We would like to thank all those families who have donated funds to the Friends of The Vineyard School fund (FoV fund) over the last year. Many schools ask their families for extra help with financing school plans and The Vineyard would not be the school it is without your help.

This year the FoV fund received a generous donation of £7,500 from the Richmond Parish Lands Charity (RPLC). The donation from the RPLC was used to support our PPG and refugee children to participate in our residential school trip and other trips and activities throughout the school year. This donation covers both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 financial years. We have also received over £8,500 from HMRC in gift-aid repayments, the benefit of using a charity for your parental donations.

We have committed all our parental donations for this year. These have been used to buy iPads and storage for both our IT and music lessons, at a cost of over £20,000. In music, the children enjoy using the iPads to create their own music and, indeed, our music teacher has reported that some children have enjoyed doing this so much that they are independently learning how to play chord progressions for pop, rock and jazz music. The iPads have also been used to teach keyboard skills. We have further supported the development of music in the school with the purchase of a keyboard piano. Elsewhere, funds have been used to develop our handwriting curriculum which was an area of focus last year. Our outdoor spaces benefited from additional benches and our PPG children enjoyed our gardening club. Staff wellbeing is key for the school and all our staff appreciated the donation towards their wellbeing. This donation provides the tea and coffee (with occasional biscuits on INSET days) which keep our staff going!

Any additional spending on the school's plans for next year must come from new donations. We would like to put further resources towards our current areas of focus in the curriculum, namely D&T, RE and writing and in preparing our pupils for life in modern Britain. In addition, some funds are always necessary to update our PE supplies. We intend the FoV fund to support The Vineyard pupils participating in sports tournaments by providing the supply staff cover needed back at school.

We need to maximise our use of the school site and are investigating how our pupils can use the school field for a greater proportion of the year, whether this is by levelling, adding drainage and re-turfing the field, replacing part of it with a multi-use games area, or a mixture of both. This would be an expensive project which we could only fund with the help of outside grants and parental donations. This development will give our pupils even more opportunities to participate in a range of sports and outdoor activities. We are finalising our plans and have started to set aside 10% of FoV income to support this project. Look out for our exciting plans which we hope to share with you soon!

As you may know, the Friends of The Vineyard School was set up as a charity in 1999 to advance the education of the pupils of The Vineyard. Funds raised are deployed to support the objectives outlined in the annual School Development Plan and the strategic objectives of the school as determined by the Board of Governors. We have made it much easier for families to set up payments and claim gift aid so we hope our income will grow significantly in 2024.

We thank all our families for supporting this important fund to benefit all our pupils.

Antony Cook, Chair of Governors
Kat Parr Mackintosh, Co-Chair PTA

James Lane, Chair of Resources Committee
Frances Bracegirdle, Headteacher

The Trustees of Friends of Vineyard