

22nd September 2022

Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust

...everyone in our Trust.



Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope you are well and that your child has enjoyed the return to school. Despite the sad passing of The Queen, and the period of national mourning, it has been fantastic to see full classrooms once again.

As you will know, the rise in cost of living and energy prices is having an impact on households and business across the country. This is unfortunately true for schools as well. I wanted to therefore write to you to outline the financial challenges facing schools at this time, and how that may impact the usual day-to-day operations in schools.

The first of these issues is the rise in energy prices, something which I completely appreciate are an issue for many of our families. While the government has announced a six-month guarantee of support for schools with their bills, they have not yet offered any details on that, and the longer-term picture is still to be confirmed.

As a result, we are taking many practical steps to monitor and decrease our energy consumption and will continue to explore how we can cut this down as much as possible to help ease this financial situation, as we do not want to be in a position where we need to reduce heating, for example.

Secondly, while the government announced a series of well-deserved pay rises for teachers and teaching assistants over the Summer, these are unfunded. While we will of course deliver these, as we entirely agree that our staff deserve fair pay, the lack of government funding does mean that school finances will be further stretched.

These twin challenges, combined with the need to fully support students as we continue to recover from the pandemic, mean that we are having to think carefully about the extended services we can offer as a trust and family of schools. For example, there may be a reduction in the number of school trips and visits we can offer students.

While we remain hopeful that a longer-term solution may be offered by the government, and confident that we can take steps as a family of schools to soften the financial impact of these issues, I thought it was important to make you aware of the challenges facing not just our schools but schools around Devon and the rest of the country.

More so, we entirely appreciate that the next few months are likely to be difficult for many families. Despite the challenges we are facing as a trust, our primary objective is always the health, safety and happiness of our students and staff, and as a result, we remain completely on hand to support anyone facing financial hardship.

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dartmoormat.org.uk

As the past few years have shown, our trust is built on a strong community, and we will always seek to continue and support this. We can signpost to a variety of support available in your local area e.g. food banks and support with school uniform and trips so do get in touch with your school and we will do the best we can to help.

Should you have any questions, then please do contact either myself, or your school's senior leadership team.

Kind regards



Dan Morrow
Trust Leader & CEO

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