

Understanding the Annual Governors' Appeal

State schools are divided between community schools (Kew Riverside and Darell) and voluntary aided ('VA') schools, which often have a church connection (The Queen's School, Holy Trinity and St. Elizabeth's). VA status is part of the history of being a church school; the school was set up and built by the church in the past, and the church still has a significant role in many aspects of school life. The Southwark Diocese, which covers the Kew parishes, has responsibility for the local Church of England schools. The education in both community and VA schools is paid for by the Government. However, VA schools, through the governing body, are responsible for maintaining and improving their own buildings.

Although the governors are responsible for the buildings, the school receives an annual capital grant from the Government towards building costs. Any project over £2,000 counts as "capital", whether it is improvement or maintenance. For VA school, the grant is only intended to fund 90% of any capital project, with the governors being responsible for sourcing the other 10%.

The school also receives a revenue grant from the Government the purpose of which is to fund the running costs of the school. Whilst the annual revenue budget includes building maintenance and improvements the revenue grant is primarily to cover teacher salaries and learning resources and hence the Governors try to raise money elsewhere to support the 10% contribution required for building works.

Building works can be classified as either improvement or maintenance. In previous years in order to pay our 10% contribution on maintenance projects the Governor's subscribed to the Southwark Diocese maintenance scheme. The Governor's made an annual contribution to the maintenance scheme or central fund (the size of the contribution is determined by the Diocese) and the Southwark Diocese would accordingly pay the Governors required 10% contribution of the total cost of any maintenance works, such as boiler replacement and roof repairs. The annual appeal was therefore necessary in order to raise our contribution to the Diocesan maintenance fund, so that we could claim their contribution towards our maintenance projects. As the name of the scheme suggests, the Diocese will only pay 10% on maintenance works not capital improvements. Hence any money raised through the annual appeal in excess of their annual levy was, and is, retained by the governors to spend on other capital improvements projects that won't qualify under the Diocesan scheme.

In May 2012 the Queen's School was accepted on to the Schools Priority Building Programme with a rebuild being scheduled to start in 2015. In light of this the Governors have adopted an approach of essential maintenance only and hence in December 2012 the Governors took the decision to withdraw from the Diocese' Maintenance Scheme on the basis that it was not financially sensible. In light of this the Governors are now liable for 10% on all building projects whether they are capital or maintenance and hence it is necessary to continue with the Annual Appeal in order to meet this obligation. In addition it has also been agreed with the Diocese that in the event the School Priority Building Programme does not go ahead the school can rejoin the Maintenance Scheme and the annual subscription would be backdated accordingly. A provision has been created in the Governors accounts in order to provide for this eventuality.

Please note that this appeal has no connection with the Parent Staff Association's ('PSA') fundraising, which is aimed at enhancing the school environment. With the PSA's help, the school can consider more ambitious plans than would not otherwise be possible. Whilst the PSA's role is completely separate from that of the governors, we aim to work together, with the view to providing the best possible education for the children.