



14th September 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

It has been a historic but very sad week for our country. The loss of Queen Elizabeth has affected even the most reluctant royalists, both at home and abroad. Her example of public service and dedication to her duties over so many years earned her respect from all corners of our society. On Monday 19th schools will join the rest of the country and benefit from a Bank Holiday to give the opportunity for people to pay their respects on the day of our late Queen's funeral. For our children and young people this should be one of those days that sticks in their memory, a day in which they become part of history.

It has been great to see children across our schools both starting back and arriving for the first time. A special welcome to children and their families joining us. We are very proud of the unique nature of each school and the fantastic community of schools that make Red Kite Learning Trust. We know that together we are stronger and more able to achieve our mission to 'Nurture ambition, deliver excellence and enrich children's lives'. We are our Trust, every child, parent, carer, teacher, support colleague, governor and leader is a part of this successful, vibrant and growing 'family' of schools. If you have not already seen our recent [Annual Report](#), please do take a look.

We celebrated great results for our older children this summer with very strong results at GCSE and A Level/BTEC in our secondary and all-through schools. With all the disruption of COVID this is a tremendous achievement, and we should be very proud of these young people who have shown such resilience and focus despite everything they have faced. Many thanks are also due to our school staff, teachers and support colleagues, who have worked so hard over the last two years to ensure our children did not lose out educationally as a result of the pandemic.

We now look forward to the future and growing together as a Trust, developing opportunities for closer collaboration between schools which leads to additional opportunities for our young people. We plan to strengthen the curriculum in each of our schools by doing more together as a group of schools to meet our shared ambition to enrich the lives of every child.

Sadly, we now face a huge financial challenge that is shared with all schools in England. I know that we are all affected by the cost-of-living crisis. The recently announced energy cap is welcome but will certainly not be a solution to the other cost rises we all face in our home lives. I have been talking this week to some of our school leaders about the plans they are putting in place to help families to get through this winter. Our schools face fuel bills that have risen over 300% over the last year and could still go higher, schools are not protected in the same way as individuals. In addition, recent national pay-rises for teachers and support colleagues were significantly higher than budgeted. The Government has not provided any additional money for these increases, and we were only told after our budgets were submitted to the DFE. We are working hard to alert our MP's to these challenges and how serious they are – please add your voice if you can by writing to or emailing your local MP.

Red Kite Learning Trust Arthurs Avenue, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 0DZ
☎ 01423 574410 ✉ info@rklt.co.uk 📱 @rklt www.rklt.co.uk



Learning Trust Alliance Teacher Training Teaching School Hub

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To give you a little context, the additional unfunded post-budget element of the national pay awards amounts to over £1.2m for our Trust, which is the equivalent of £150 per child that will have to be found by cuts in other areas of each school's budget.

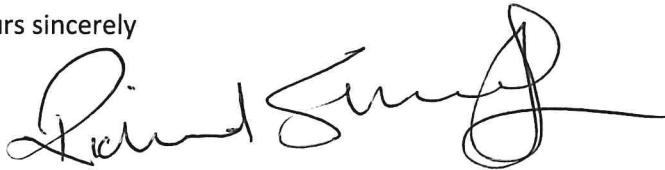
The rising costs of everything from pay to food to cleaning will mean some tough choices in the months ahead. We are working with school leaders to identify cost savings across all areas of expenditure before our 'rainy day' money runs out. We will try everything we can to avoid the cuts having a negative impact on our children. After enduring over 2 years of COVID it is particularly hard to see opportunities for our children being threatened again, this time by a lack of cash for schools.

Of course, we remain optimistic and hope that the new Government will give schools the cash they need to pay for the salaries and energy bills. We are however also realistic; we need to prepare for the worst so we can continue to serve you and your children the best we can. Please be aware that your child's school may have to make changes quite rapidly in the weeks to come in order to meet the budget challenges. Your support will be greatly appreciated as we all try to cope with these incredibly challenging times. We are involving Local Governing Bodies in discussions over school budgets and parent representatives on those local boards will ensure we continue to see our budget crisis in the context of the impact of inflation on all parts of our lives.

There is no doubt that working together as a Trust each school is in a much better position to ride out this financial storm. Together we are stronger.

Very best wishes.

Yours sincerely



Richard Sheriff
CEO – Red Kite Learning Trust

