**12 September 2019**

**Dear Mums, Dads and Carers,**

Its’ been a brilliant start to the school year; children are well settled into their new classes and the atmosphere in school is lovely. Staff have begun the year committed as always to doing all they can for our children, including offering a massive 18 **free**after-school clubs and a heavily subsidised taekwondo one.

**Money!!**

As I am sure you are all aware school budgets are extremely tight across the country and sadly we are not immune to this.  Despite good pupil numbers last year, Charles Darwin was in a very tight position financially as a direct result of our reduced income from the DfE. My absolute priority was, and is always, to retain staff numbers but sadly even after reducing spending on materials and resources we had to “let go” two temporary members of staff and cut the hours of others in order to be able to balance our budget.

FOTSA provide superb financial support to school and I have already shared with them the school’s need for even more assistance this year; I am delighted to say they have written a cheque for £2000 which we have spent on new phonics books for infants. **As we move through the year I ask that you all support FOTSA events as much as possible as it will genuinely make a real difference to the daily lives of our children. I will share with you how all FOTSA contributions are spent. If you are free to help FOTSA with any events, please talk to me; the successful Friday tuck shop would definitely benefit from more helpers.**

**Reading**

We are having a massive push on reading this year; hence the new phonics books. You will shortly get a letter about exciting reading events we are having including a sponsored one so that we can buy yet more books for our children. Again the more support we have with this the more we can do for our children.

**Trips**

We believe learning outside of the classroom is tremendously important; trips motivate and inspire children and contribute immeasurably to their learning**. Payments for visits made in school hours are not compulsory but, if we have insufficient parental contributions, the visits quite simply will not be able to take place. We do not want to cancel trips but with staffing my budget priority, your contributions are essential.** Can we also request prompt payment online when you receive a letter about a school visit, this will help us decide whether we can afford for it to go ahead. The School Charging Policy is on our website.

I don’t like having to talk money but sadly it is the world schools are in at the moment; politician’s “promises” of more to come are not guaranteed and in the meantime my staff and I want to the best that we can for our 364 children. Thank you all for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Adam Croft