

SOS UPTON COMMUNITY POOL

Dear Upton Parents,

With the official launch of our fundraising webpage this week at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/SaveUptonPool> we can really kick-start our fundraising campaign for the pool. Please promote this page everywhere you can and watch our DVD on the page, which shows the impact of the pool in the Thanet community. If you know of any busy public establishments - shops, pubs, clubs etc - that would take one of our donation boxes please ask on our behalf and collect one from the school office.

Over the last few weeks since the pool closed, a number of parents have asked similar questions about the pool and swimming, which I've tried to answer below:

What's the money for specifically? £100 000 seems like a lot of money.....

It is a lot of money, although sadly nowhere near enough to build a new pool of a similar standard. Some of the work needed is specific to our type and make of pool, and also has to be carried out by KCC contractors and meet schools H&S standards. Obviously we'll look for the best possible costings to lower the amount needed, but estimated costing based on quotes we already have shows that a new air conditioning unit of the kind required ~ £50 000; required work on the roof and steelworks ~ £20 000; installation of new pipeworks ~ £10 000; new electrical systems ~ £5 000; essential surveys ~ £5000; upgrade of changing rooms and pool liner ~ £10 000. As estimated costs these are subject to change.

What happens if we can't raise the money? Where will pupils swim?

Quite simply, we won't have a pool on site if we can't raise the money required. Swimming is a part of the National Curriculum for PE, as are other types of sport. In England the average pupil at a state school for children aged 7-11 - such as ours - has just 18 hours of swimming across their four years - less than 5 hours a year. In Thanet, the schools who use our pool generally swim in one year group only - three terms worth of swimming for Year 5 pupils only, for example, adds up to around 18 hours. This is due to the costs of booking local pools, hiring coaches each week to transport pupils and the time taken out of lessons for this to happen. At Upton EVERY year group has three terms worth of swimming EVERY year - **four times as much as the national average** - because we don't face the same fees due to our pool on site. We currently ask parents for a small contribution towards swimming lessons simply to cover overheads. If we were to lose the pool, we would be faced with the same situation as these other schools.

Only 55% of children in England can swim 25m leaving for secondary school. **At Upton last year our figure was 99.2%.** We were even able to fund extra lessons for pupils really struggling through use of our Sports Premium. We also have a swim team that have been Thanet Champions for over ten consecutive years and national champions on many occasions.

When do we need this money by?

The end of this academic year - July - will be the point at which the governors will determine whether fundraising has been effective

Do we have fundraisers coming up? How will we know about them?

Aside from the usual school newsletter; Facebook page; Twitter feed; and text messaging system, we have created a mobile fundraising board to go on the playground.

As parents, how can we help?

On the back of this letter, I've listed ten easy ways for parents to help. It's not about parents always giving money, it's about getting the community, and particularly big businesses involved and raising awareness of the campaign

Ten Easy Ways for you to help save the Upton Swimming Pool

- 1) Promote our donations page <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fund/SaveUptonPool> absolutely everywhere. There are thousands of past pupils who have fond memories of the school and many people learned to swim in the pool. Please visit it yourself and see how people are supporting.
- 2) Go onto this website <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/uptonptfa>. When you register, pretty much anything you buy online, from weekly shopping to Amazon orders, means these companies send our appeal money - at no cost to you! It's quite incredible.
- 3) If you know of anywhere we could place our donation boxes - pubs, clubs, busy shops - please approach them on our behalf and collect a donations box from our school office.
- 4) Continue to donate any clothes, textiles etc you have no more use for.
- 5) Support our fund-raising events where you can. For example, we have been selected by Asda community team to be part of the green token scheme in March to the end of May. If you do shop in ASDA - or have the opportunity to pop in - please ensure you get green tokens when you pay at the checkouts to place in the in-store charity box.
- 6) If you want to organise your own fundraisers outside of school, please do! Avid readers of the newsletter will know some of our boys raised almost £100 teaching the public diablo tricks in the holidays, while Maya's sponsored swim this weekend has already raised over £400.
- 7) Contact the school if you have any ideas for funding.
- 8) If you work for or own a business - do they have a community programme that might help our funding? Many that do are linked to their employees getting involved.
- 9) Ask on our behalf. I try to follow up as many possible funding ideas as are humanly possible and Miss Crine does the same with grant funding sources, but it's far easier and more direct coming from parental links.
- 10) Be positive and energetic about the campaign and focus on who will benefit - your children. Our appeal will build and build with your support and all donations, even small, will mount up.

Best wishes to you all, - Mr Walker

SOS Pool Contacts:

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