



From Teacher in Charge of Charities: Mark Johnson

13 September 2023

Dear Parents

### **Abingdon School Biennial Sponsored Walk 2023**

I am writing to inform you that the School's biennial sponsored walk will be taking place on Tuesday 26 September 2023. The whole School, including teachers, will be taking part in the event to raise money through sponsorship for this year's chosen charities: [Thames Valley Air Ambulance](#) and [WaterAid](#).

The walk will comprise a circular route from school taking in sections of the Oxfordshire Greenbelt Way and the Thames Path. The walk is 10 miles for all students as we would like them all to participate in a collective experience. Some members of the cross country club will be invited to run the walk and if your child is involved in this they will be contacted with further details by the group leader. The CCF will also be participating in their CCF uniform and your child should have been contacted by the CCF staff if this is the case.

The proceeds from the walk will be split between two charities:

#### **Thames Valley Air Ambulance (TVAA)**

It costs TVAA £3,900 to send their helicopter on each mission. They are an independent charity and receive no government or national lottery funding, relying solely on donations from generous supporters like you. Please donate today to help keep them flying.

Last year TVAA were called out 3,158 times to help people in need of urgent critical care, that is an average of over 8 times a day! From their base at RAF Benson they can reach anywhere in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire or Oxfordshire in just 15 minutes.

For every £1 raised, 66% goes directly to delivering emergency medical care and preparing for the future. The rest goes on fundraising, finance, administration, governance and regulation. All crucial to keep saving lives.

#### **WaterAid**

WaterAid provides clean water, decent toilets and hygiene knowledge to people who don't yet have access to them. Access to clean water and toilets is a human right and should be a normal part of daily life for everyone, everywhere.

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With their local partners, they work with communities to build low-cost, sustainable solutions that meet their needs. They also work with local and national governments in the countries where they operate, developing solutions to help them provide water, toilets and hygiene to everyone.

They also work on an even bigger scale, too. WaterAid campaigns worldwide, showing governments and key decision-makers that investing in these basic services will have hugely positive impacts.

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On the day of the walk all students will have their normal lessons period 1 and 2 followed by the walk with staggered start intervals, there will be no other formal teaching periods on this day. Students will be supervised by teachers and senior pupils throughout the walk. A picnic lunch will be provided which your child will need to carry during the walk so a backpack will be required. We will not be providing plastic bottled water: as a school we would like to reduce our environmental impact where possible and so ask that your child brings their own reusable water bottle. There will be the opportunity to fill the bottle before departing and some top up points on the route if necessary. Your child may wish to bring additional snacks and there will be a tuck shop on the route - students will need to bring cash for this if they want to buy anything. All students should be back in time for period 8 activities, which will run at the discretion of staff involved and all will certainly be back in time for buses.

Students should wear home-clothes and will need to wear well-fitting shoes or boots that they have worn before, and bring clothing appropriate for the weather (hats/waterproofs as needed). They will also need to carry with them any inhalers, epipens or other daily medication. Suncream is also advised if the weather is as we are currently experiencing.

We encourage online donations where possible as this is easiest for us to manage, please donate via: <https://www.abingdon.org.uk/sponsoredwalk2023> or alternatively your child has been given a paper sponsor form by their tutor. We have challenged each student to aim to raise at least £25 and it would be much appreciated if you could encourage them to collect as much money as possible - perhaps you could take it to your place of work on their behalf? A number of companies will match the sponsorship of the children of employees. The last sponsored walk raised over £26,000, something we would love to better this year.

Many thanks for your support of this event.

Yours faithfully

Mark Johnson

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