**The cost of a school year**

We are fully aware of the rise in the cost of living and the price of the school year and what this might mean for our pupils and their families. We are committed to ensuring our pupils have equitable access to the resources that meet their needs and the opportunities that support their holistic development. Our desire is for our school to be a place of safety and support, where all needs are met, and our pupils can have access to the basics that they need for every school day. We want to break away from the stigmas and embarrassment of seeking support, teaching our children to value kindness and feel the pride of being able to contribute and ‘give-back’.

We want our children to be spotlighted for their achievements, not what they don’t have. We want to our children to know their rights and responsibilities and be aware that school can support them if they don’t have the resources they need, whether that be for their lessons, attending PE sessions, kit to go on school trips or costumes for any dressing up days etc.

The Equity champions here in Gelliswick are working with ‘Children in Wales’ (an umbrella organisation for those working with children and families in Wales), on developing a whole school approach to improving the well-being of children and removing some of the barriers to the cost of the school year. Your views (last terms questionnaire) were also taken into consideration when planning the year ahead. Many of you said that uniform is too expensive along with school trips and residential trips. Around half of you said that it is expensive to buy costumes for dressing up days, especially if there is more than one child in the family.

In light of the cost of a school year, we have established our **Gelliswick Lighthouse Hub.** The aim of the Hub is to **“Take what you need, give what you can”**

The Lighthouse Hub provides essential everyday items for pupils and their families such as:

* Uniform
* Shoes
* Coats
* PE kit
* hygiene products (male and female)
* nit lotion
* baby products such as nappies and wipes
* PATCH vouchers
* Medication vouchers
* Bedding
* Blankets and so much more.

The Hub is run by Friends of the school volunteers and the Equity Champions. The Friends of the school come in weekly to sort out any donations or wash and mend recycled uniform. The hub has already provided uniform, shoes, trainers, swimming kits, coats and spare clothes for off-site trips, tights, socks, underwear and dressing up costumes to many families. It is thanks to the generosity of our families, staff, governors and community that we have been able to set up this brilliant resource. A special thank you must go to Tesco Milford Haven, Ascona group, Hakin and Hubberston INVEST local group and COWSHED for supporting The Lighthouse Hub with funding and resources.

**Take what you need:**

If you would like to access anything from our Lighthouse Hub, you can privately message your child’s class teacher on Dojo or contact our FLO, Emma Evans, (EvansE100@hwbcyrmu.net) or Andrea Reynolds (ReynoldsA54@hwbcymru.net ) if you or your child need anything. We will endeavour to be discreet; you can be reassured that anything given out will be in strict confidence. If you are aware of some other needs in the community, please let us know.

**Give what you can:**

 If you’re able to donate any preloved or newly bought items (see our list above), we would be so grateful to receive these and ensure that they go to a family in need.

Our next steps are to ensure that what we supply from the Lighthouse Hub meets the needs of our school community. If you have any ideas on how best we can support these needs, please join our Equity Champions (staff and pupils) for a tea/coffee morning on Wednesday28th September at 10am.