

6 November 2020

Dear Parents

School fees 2021

After much deliberation, we have finally finalized the school fees for 2021. Please find attached the new school fee structure for 2021.

For us as a school 2020, was a particularly challenging year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and its huge economic impact. We had a number of learners switching to hybrid learning, some parents requested financial assistance with delayed payments, and some other parents simply not being able to pay their fees at all. We would like to thank each one of you for your loyalty towards Pharos School in this time – whether it was in paying your school fees on time in 2020, helping with our Crowdfunding efforts, making a voluntary donation, or simply having the courage and integrity to organise alternate payment terms – you made it possible. And in this way – you played a part in God’s provision to us as a school during this time.

By the grace and guidance from our Heavenly Father, we will continue to do everything we can to keep school fees affordable and at the same time deliver an excellent Christian Education to your children.

We look forward to 2021, trusting that we will be able to return to “normal” again (albeit a little different!), and to continue to provide a holistic Christian Education to your child.

Herewith, just some detail on the “value-add” that Pharos provide, as part of the inclusive school fees.

- **Tina Cowley Reading centre:**

A fundamental aspect of our product is the reading lessons the children (gr 1 to 7) receive twice a week when they visit our reading centre.

A child that cannot read, or understand what they read, will experience a great deal of difficulty in studying successfully – and increasingly so as the move through high school.

With the TC Reading Centre, we want to ensure that our learners can read up to at least a grade 7 level in Afrikaans and English before they leave for high school, to ensure their continued academic success.

We are proud to share just two examples of the difference TC makes:

- **Learner 1: Dawid Lombaard**

Attended Tina Cowley Reading Centre from gr 4 to gr 7:

Afrikaans: end of 2018 in **grade 5**, he achieved on **grade 7** level: 92 words per minute, 66% for comprehension and 87% for spelling.

English at the end of 2020, he is on **grade 9** level with 195 words per minute, 90% for comprehension and 88% for spelling.

- **Learner 2: Dawid Vermaak**

Attended Tina Cowley Reading Centre from gr 4 to gr 7:

Afrikaans at end of 2018 in **grade 5**, he achieved on **grade 7** level 176 words per minute, 86% for comprehension and 95% for spelling.

English at the end of 2020, he is on **grade 9** level with 195 words per minute, 90% for comprehension and 98% for spelling.

The above is well above the set standard, as well as countrywide standard of reading, which is testimony of the effectiveness and value of this initiative.

The cost of **R500 per month** is included in the school fees per month.

• **Abacus Math:**

An offering to our pre-schoolers (Grade RR and R) to instil a love for mathematics at a very young age and thus break the barrier so many children live with when it comes to mathematics.

The cost of **R460 per month** is included in the school fees.

- **Testimony from Gr RR parent:**

Abacus Maths for Ezekiel has been a fun adventure with numbers. He has been doing it since he was 3 years old and it is not just about counting. It is all about understanding the value of numbers and having fun with it. He has just turned five and is starting to add numbers and it is an incredible foundation for his education.

• **Chess:**

With chess being part of our daily program, we improve analytical skills and memory retention. It is a great confidence builder and teaches patience and persistence.

Included in our monthly fees are income to pay the salary of our chess master, Coach Gavin Persent.

Staff matters:

At the beginning of the covid-19 pandemic, the School management team decided that **Pharos School would not retrench any staff member**, despite the financial impact that Covid-19 had on the school finances.

In order to do this, our staff all accepted a 20% **reduction in salary**, from June to December 2020. This was done amidst and in spite of the additional burden they had to take on – doing online teaching to the whole school during lockdown period, establishing a full-fledged Hybrid homes cool model, and at the same time continue with normal school as well since lockdown levels were relaxed.

I want to commend them for a huge team effort, a positive attitude throughout, for walking the extra mile, still loving what they do, and loving our Pharos children. You have proven yourselves an amazing team!

With all this said, we have an obligation to re-instate our staff salaries, from January 2021, as it was prior to the pandemic.

Sport field and extra classrooms

Unfortunately, the pandemic had a negative effect on our progress with the full establishment of the sport field, as well as commencement of the building of some extra classrooms.

As you are all aware, the financial requirement for this is quite substantial – we will need every help and effort from our parents, to assist with some fundraisers in 2021. If you are willing to help, or have any ideas, please contact me.

School 5-year celebration

In October 2020, 5 years ago, Pharos School was birthed! We had a big celebration in mind, however, covid also derailed all such plans. We still hope to be able to do it early in 2021 – School officially opened in January 2016 – 5 years ago. If you have any great ideas for the 5 year Birthday Bash, please let us know! We trust that this will also serve as a huge fundraiser for the new extra classrooms.

Please be assured that we do not stand unsympathetic towards our families, who have all been affected financially due to the pandemic. Should our learner numbers increase sufficiently for the 2021 school year, we commit ourselves to review the budget, and if possible, we will make every effort to affect a reduction for 2021. **Please spread the news about Pharos School – word of mouth remains one of the strongest marketing tools.**

As we approach the end of 2020, we thank God for His provision in the lives of our Pharos families during this very difficult year, and trust that in 2021 we will excel in being who we are in Christ.

If you have any questions or need more clarity, please contact me so that we can discuss it.

*Regards,
Fanie Vermaak
Principal, PHAROS School*