

19th May 2017

Dear Parent / Carers

School Funding – A guide for parents

Along with up to 3000 headteacher colleagues across 14 counties I am writing to you in order to raise the issue of school funding and the significant current financial situation that all of our schools are now facing.

During all of our contributions to the discussions about improved funding for each and every child in each and every school, we have been careful not to become involved in a politically biased or partisan way. Headteacher colleagues and I feel that ahead of the forthcoming general election it is crucial that parents, carers and all other interested parties raise the issue of school funding ‘on the doorstep’ with all prospective candidates.

It would be naïve to think that school funding is the only issue affecting everyone’s lives, but school finances are a vital issue that we urge you to raise prior to 8th June.

As professionals we are only interested in securing fair and adequate funding for the children that we educate. This is under threat and has influenced our decision to contact you in a collaborative manner.

The attached provides further information.

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully



Richard Spencer
Principal

On behalf of 14 counties

Brighton	East Sussex	Peterborough	Wokingham
Cambridgeshire	Essex	Suffolk	West Sussex
Cornwall	Hertfordshire	Surrey	
Devon	Norfolk	Thurrock	

Education on the Doorstep

A guide for parents and carers to understand the key issues of fair and improved funding for our schools.

The Issues

- There will be £3 billion a shortfall in schools' budgets in England due to rising employment costs
- In real terms, per pupil funding is decreasing by approximately 8%
- Pupil numbers are also increasing significantly
- Recruiting teachers for specialist subjects such as Maths, English, Science and Computer Science is increasingly difficult
- Some schools have been asking parents for additional financial contributions

The Effects

- Without adequate funding schools can't employ enough high quality teachers.
- Schools need funding to maintain support staff roles for those who work with children with additional needs. In the years ahead there is a great deal of concern that some of our most vulnerable children will not receive the support they need.
- In some schools, class sizes are increasing. This is worrying because children are less likely to get the personal attention they need from a teacher who knows them well.
- Some schools are reducing the number of subjects they teach. This means the curriculum is narrowing and individual talents can't be nurtured in the way of previous generations.
- Some of the extra, wider curriculum experiences may have to be reduced either because the school can't subsidise them or parents may have to contribute a greater amount of money to meet the costs of these opportunities.
- Some schools are struggling with a legacy of poorly maintained buildings and a lack of capital investment, which means that they can be refurbished or rebuilt to maximise students' learning opportunities.

The questions for **ALL** prospective candidates for Members of Parliament

- What are your priorities with regard to the allocation of funding to all schools and each pupil?
- How will you ensure that school budgets are protected in real terms for the duration of the next parliament? Please avoid telling me that more is being spent on schools; we have more children of school age than ever and costs are rising.
- Some schools are looking to create classes of 60-100 children in the school hall because they cannot afford enough teachers. What are you going to do to prevent that?
- Our children should be provided with a broad curriculum, great support and enriching activities. How will you ensure that my child has the educational experience they deserve?
- How will you ensure education for children with Special Educational Needs is adequately resourced? A large funding gap in this area is detracting much needed funds from all schools.

Where can I get more information?

- The following report by the BBC explores school funding issues in more detail:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-39302746>
- The link below provides the results to a comprehensive survey completed by over 700 Heads in primary, secondary and special schools across 14 different counties.
<https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-2DC9HGZB/>
- Parents across the country are getting organised under the Fair Funding for all Schools campaign. This is an independent parent-led organisation which aims to give parents and carers a voice on school funding. You can find more information here
www.fairfundingforallschools.org

