



31 March 2017

Dear Parents and Carers

### **School Funding Crisis**

I am writing to you on behalf of the staff and Governors of our school and for the first time Headteachers across Hertfordshire have decided to act collectively to raise your awareness of this serious issue.

You will be aware given recent press coverage that all schools are facing a funding crisis. This means larger classes, staffing reductions and significantly reduced opportunities for your child. The secondary schools in Hertfordshire are no exception to this national concern.

We have faced five years of budget reductions. The Government would have you believe that they have protected school funding. The Government tell us that there is more money in the education system than ever before, which is because there are more children in the system. In reality we receive the same amount per 11 – 16 year old student as we have for a number of years, the so called 'flat cash settlement', whilst the costs of running the schools has risen year-on-year. Post 16 funding has been reduced in real terms for a number of years, on average by 12%.

Since 2012 the increase in costs has not been funded. This means that we have seen:

- 5.3% increase in local government employer pension contributions
- 2.3% increase in teachers' pension employer contribution costs
- 3.4% increase in National Insurance contributions from April 2016
- 4% teacher salary increases (1% annually)
- new courses and resources costs as the government have completely changed GCSE and A-Level specifications, with associated costs for staff training

The cuts in the budget alongside the increased costs have resulted in a 35% to 45% per student reduction. In addition, from April this year many schools will have to pay an Apprenticeship Levy of between £15,000 and £18,000 per year.

All schools are affected in different ways and we have been making efficiency savings for some time. Many have increased class sizes, removed courses with low uptake, reduced the amount of support offered to students and reduced training for teachers. The funding we used for extra-curricular and other activities, which enhance the learning experience for our young people has been cut or removed. The next step for us now will be to reduce staffing and cut jobs.

We are at a crisis point and we have reached the point where our outgoings exceed our income. Unfortunately, the proposed National Funding Formula will leave us no better off and after further imminent increased employment costs which means we will be worse off for years to come.

The impact this is having for your children is significant and we are facing a vastly reduced capacity to ensure that all children's needs are met. It is only because of the utter dedication and

commitment of the staff in our schools, who give up their own precious and limited time, that you may not have yet noticed a deterioration in what we are able to provide.

It is because of our serious concerns that we are writing this letter. Firstly we ask that you lobby your MP to express your concerns that our schools have been so poorly funded and that the new proposals will ensure underfunding continues into the future. Secondly, we write so that you may understand that, without improvement in this situation, additional time, resources, support and interventions for your child may no longer be available; we no longer have the resources to deliver many of them.

The welfare of the children is our central concern and every individual staff member in our school will remain utterly dedicated to your children, to ensuring they are happy and they succeed. However, we do need to let you know about the realities that we are facing.

We urge you to write to your MP, write to the government, to the Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening; the Minister for Schools, Nick Gibb; the Prime Minister and the local press. Write to your local County Councillors (contact details below). The Government has put aside millions of pounds for academisation, grammar schools and to support new free schools, so they do have the power to fund education fairly and reasonably.

We need your help because doing nothing and changing nothing will mean a vastly reduced education system for all children, whatever their background or abilities.

Yours sincerely

**Edward Gaynor**  
Headteacher

**Local MP contact details:**

Mike Penning MP [penningm@parliament.uk](mailto:penningm@parliament.uk)

**Your County councillor contact details** are below:

Andrew Williams (Hemel Hempstead East): [andrew.williams@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.williams@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
Terry Douris (Hemel Hempstead North West): [terry.douris@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:terry.douris@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
Anthony McKay (Hemel Hempstead South East): [anthony.mckay@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:anthony.mckay@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
Ron Tindall (Hemel Hempstead St Paul's): [ron.tindall@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ron.tindall@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
Colette Wyatt-Lowe (Hemel Hempstead North East): [colette.wyatt-lowe@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:colette.wyatt-lowe@hertfordshire.gov.uk)  
William Wyatt-Lowe (Hemel Hempstead Town): [william.wyatt-lowe@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:william.wyatt-lowe@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

**You may also want to consider contacting:**

Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening MP [greeningj@parliament.uk](mailto:greeningj@parliament.uk)  
The Minister for Schools, Nick Gibb MP [gibbn@parliament.uk](mailto:gibbn@parliament.uk)  
Prime Minister, Theresa May MP [mayt@parliament.uk](mailto:mayt@parliament.uk)  
Chancellor of the Exchequer, Phillip Hammond MP [hammondp@parliament.uk](mailto:hammondp@parliament.uk)