



Holmfirth
Junior, Infant and Nursery School

12 June 2019

Mrs T Walker MP
Civic Hall
15A New Street
Slaithwaite
Huddersfield
HD7 5AB

Dear Mrs Walker

As the governing board of Holmfirth J I & N School, which is in your constituency, we are writing to you to highlight the funding challenges we are facing and ask that you support an increase in the overall schools' budget.

Despite determined efforts to find savings, we had been forced to come to the conclusion that current levels of funding are unsustainable. The governing board and senior leadership team at this school have been grappling with the funding challenges, leading to a number of tough decisions being made.

In the past five years our teaching staff numbers have been cut from 11.6 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to 8.4 FTE – a cut of 104 teaching hours per week. Classroom Support staff hours have been cut from 243.6 hours per week to 179.75 – a cut of 63.85 hours per week. Finally, Admin staff hours have been cut from 88.75 hours per week to 70.75 – a cut of 18 hours per week. In total we have lost 185.85 staff hours per week.

In 2014/2015 our Learning Resources/ICT Learning Resources budget totalled £55,000 in 2019/2020 our budget for Learning Resources/ICT Learning Resources will be £17,600 – a cut of £37,400.

This means that in 5 years our school has had to implement the following cuts - Teaching staff cut by 26%, Classroom Support staff cut by 26%, Admin Staff cut by 20% and general Learning/ICT Resources cut by 68%. In the financial year 2019/2020 we will not have enough money to buy the basic learning resources for the school year without the support of our PTA and parental donations.

We are expecting a further cut in funding for 2020/2021.

Our school is not alone. Each year the National Governance Association, the representative organisation for school governors and trustees, conducts a large-scale survey in conjunction with *Tes* magazine. In 2018, just half of respondents' schools had a balanced budget and almost a third had an in-year deficit, with the vast majority expecting reserves to run out within two years. Like us, schools were taking drastic measures to stay afloat, including reducing the



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number of teaching and support staff, delaying building maintenance, increasing class sizes and reducing the number of subjects and qualifications available to pupils.

It's clear to see why. The Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) has [calculated](#) that total school spending per pupil has fallen by 8% in real terms between 2009-10 and 2017-18. This is in part due to a 55% cut in local authority spending on services for schools, meaning schools have had to replace them from their own budgets, and cuts of over 20% to sixth-form funding. Funding provided per pupil to primary and secondary schools has also been hit hard over the past few years, falling 4% since 2015. The government tells us that school funding is at record levels but this is a hollow claim – the reality is that pupil numbers and costs are both rising.

While this school works hard to ensure that financial pressures have as little impact on pupils as possible, rising costs and having to do more with the same amount of money means that many tough decisions have been made. Like almost three quarters of governors and trustees across the country, we cannot manage these pressures without damage to pupils' education.

As our MP, we ask that you fight on our behalf for the overall schools' budget to be increased in order to combat the impact rising costs. To that effect, please write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in time for the autumn budget and continue to make your voice heard in the run up to the comprehensive spending review

As this is an issue which affects us all, we will of course keep parents and the wider school community informed about your action in response.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Julian Rose

Julian Rose
Headteacher



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