

GOVERNOR NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017

NATIONAL SCHOOL FUNDING CRISIS

I am writing at the same time as many other schools across the country, to let you know of our concerns about the funding crisis that already exists in many schools and which will worsen in future. Concerns are shared across most of the country and in all types and phases of school. These financial pressures are just starting to be documented in the media.

I also want to reassure you that at Chorleywood Primary School, while we are seeing the effects of the funding squeeze already, we are currently financially solvent. Although, if funding continues to be squeezed into the future we may need to reprioritise how we spend our budgets. This is very concerning for us as we do not want to be forced to make decisions that could compromise our pupil outcomes.

WHAT FUNDING CRISIS?

There is a wealth of recent evidence produced not just by schools but also by the National Audit Office¹ (NAO), the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), the Education Policy Institute, f40 (the organisation representing the lowest-funded local authorities), the National Governors' Association, and all the main teachers' professional associations

The consistent message is that schools face an average reduction in their budgets of 8-10% by 2020, described as the biggest real-terms cut in education spending in a generation. This will have significant impact on the resourcing of staff and the curriculum.

Government say education funding is protected in real terms

Funding is not protected, and bodies such as the NAO confirm this. We feel that the Government should be the champions of education but Ministers seem to be in denial about the realities of school funding and its impact on children.

Many schools are also suffering from the multi-billion pound shortfall in money for school buildings which means that their premises are deteriorating and ultimately will cost more to repair than if an adequate amount was invested each year. At Chorleywood Primary we are fortunate that our building has been well managed over the years and while not perfect has no major capital investment required at this time.

The harsh reality is that not only are our budgets being squeezed, but we are also having to take on even more expenditure as the services that we have previously accessed are either being cut, charged for, or are failing to operate properly, as their budgets are also under severe pressure – this applies to social care, mental health and school improvement services, to name just three.

RECRUITMENT CRISIS

There is a national crisis in teacher recruitment, you may have heard the many adverts encouraging people to train to be a teacher. While we have had a fairly stable staff base compared to some schools in Hertfordshire, when we have tried to recruit it is very hard to find teaching staff of the outstanding quality that we seek for our school. Therefore there is a real need for better national policies and proper investment in teacher training for our children's futures.





NATIONAL FUNDING FORMULA

Having delayed its introduction by a year, the Government is bringing in the long-awaited National Funding Formula in 2018/19. We welcome a fairer allocation of funding. However, it includes no new money, meaning there are winners and losers which when you put this in the context that all schools are facing financial pressures which if not addressed will eventually adversely impact each and every child in the education system, the changes are not addressing the underlying issues.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

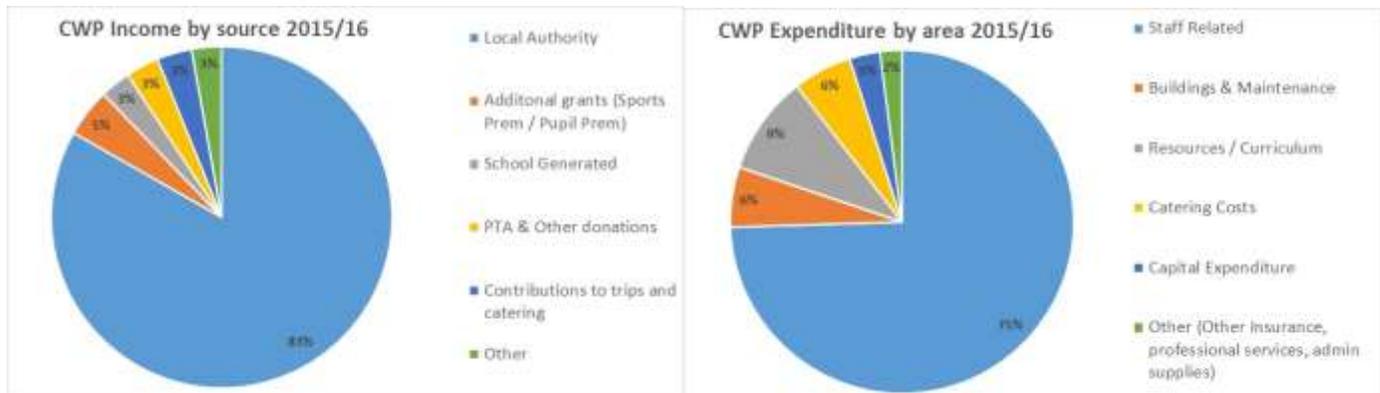
We will continue to run our school as efficiently as we can, and will do our absolute best to protect our children from the harsh realities of the funding landscape now and in the near future. We, along with many schools, will lobby the Government and challenge them wherever their policies seem to be counter to the needs not only of our children but all children nationally.

If you share our concerns, we invite you to give your opinion to strengthen our voice by writing to your MP and asking them to take up the crisis in school funding with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Secretary of State for Education on your behalf. Our local MP is David Gauke www.davidgauke.com/contact

How are we funded at Chorleywood Primary and what are we doing about these issues?

At Chorleywood Primary we are already working more closely with other local schools in the area in looking at ways that we can work more collaboratively, effectively, and efficiently. As mentioned earlier we are fortunate that at present we are not in any financial difficulty, we have no major capital projects outstanding and our buildings are in good repair.

How does our funding look?



“Money is not the only ingredient to provide an outstanding education, but it certainly helps!”

We also want to recognise, as we do regularly, how important the money generated by the PTA is and how we hugely value the way it supports the school to provide a well-rounded educational experience and to ensure the children can, at this time, have the “nice to haves”.

Finally, we are very proud of what we have and continue to achieve in our school at a time of significant change to the curriculum, assessment, to technology and to the world around us. We are relentless in our commitment to provide the best possible education for your children.

We thank you all for your continued support and understanding over the coming months and years with the decisions and priorities we will be making on behalf of our children in order to ensure they continue to receive an outstanding education.

Mrs Simone Tyson, Chair of Governors