



Elton Primary School & Nursery

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**BA Hons QTS, MA, NPQH, MA,
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Our Ref: PARL 0562

3rd March 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

You may already be aware, through news coverage or social media, of the budget constraints schools have increasingly been exposed to over the last few years. Unfortunately, now we have to let you know that our school is facing the double blows of significant increases in running costs, especially for staff, coupled with a real terms reduction in budget resulting from the new National School Funding Formula.

The running costs of the school are increasing in line with inflationary pressures, except for staff costs, which have increased more significantly for a number of reasons. These include factors such as additional pension contributions to compensate for historically insufficient Public Sector pension fund provision, increases in National Insurance payments and the new Apprenticeship Levy. The Government are also scrapping the Educational Services Grant, which enabled Local Authorities to provide additional services for children, so schools will now have to fund those services from their own budgets, or do without. The Government have also approved a 1% per year Public Sector cost of living pay rise and school is also participating in the Living Wage protocol, all of which will increase our staffing costs significantly.

At the same time as our costs are increasing, the new National School Funding Formula will be cutting budgets by billions nationally. At Elton, our funding cuts by the end of this parliament will be in excess of £90,000 a year (about £450 per child per year). That is a 10% reduction. Already, for the coming financial year starting in April, our funding will be cut by around £30,000. Across the whole of West Cheshire, only 5 schools will see their budgets increase as a result of the new funding formula, the majority are in the same situation as us.

The Governors and School Leadership team have managed to make significant and necessary budgetary cuts over the last 4 years, but we have reached the point where there are no more major savings to be made; our suppliers are the most cost-effective we can procure, our teaching staff and support workers are the best mix of experience and cost-effectiveness that we can organise and currently ensure your children make the best progress towards their full potential. However, we are now between a rock and a hard place, with our costs increasing and our funding reducing. As it stands, we will have no choice but to consider a) increasing class sizes and merging year groups, in order to reduce teacher numbers, b) closing all or part of the nursery, c) cancelling all enrichment activities, d) approaching parents for additional voluntary top up funding, e) other possible cost-cutting measures not yet discussed.



The Governors, School Leaders and Teaching Staff firmly believe that the education of our children should be a much higher priority for the Government and strongly disagree with the reduction in funding currently being implemented. We do not want to be forced to consider measures we believe will significantly reduce learning outcomes for our children. Both the Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors have responded to a BBC survey in association with the National Association of School Governors, and the Headteacher is active through the National Association of Head Teachers. On Thursday evening, the Chair and Vice-Chair attended the local CW&C branch of the National Governors Association to fact find and discuss how best to deal with the new funding formula. It is our opinion that such a reduction in funding, coupled with increased costs, will be catastrophic for our school and our children. These cuts will be the biggest change in education for a generation, possibly since the end of the Second World War, and not for the better. If you agree with us or need more information, what can you, as parents and carers, do?

Visit <https://positiveschoolleadership.blogspot.co.uk/2017/02/school-budgets-toblerone-effect.html> for more background information on the situation school is facing.

Visit <http://www.schoolcuts.org.uk/> for additional information and to sign the petition. Take a look at the impact on our school by entering your post code, to see the reduction in funding for school as a whole and per pupil.

E-mail your MP, Justin Madders justin.madders.mp@parliament.uk , or write to him, either at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA, or at 23 Whitby Road, Ellesmere Port CH65 8AA, expressing your concern at the reduction in school funding and the impact on your children.

Share your concerns and information on Social Media.

The consultation period for the new National Funding Formula closes on 22nd of March. If you wish to have your say on this, you must act as soon as possible before the 22nd.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this letter, need help in accessing any of the information sources, or have any suggestions, please contact the school office and we will do our best to help. Please do be reassured that the staff, school leadership and governors will continue to work towards delivering the best possible education for your children, whatever funds are made available.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Victoria Carr
Headteacher

Mr Andrew Canham
Chair or Governors

