

13 March 2018
BLW/cab

Dear Parents & Carers

RE: UPDATE ON SCHOOL FUNDING

I am writing to you regarding the current position of the on-going national campaign for sufficient and fair school funding.

You will be aware that since September 2017 there have been several major developments including an additional funding announcement by the previous Secretary of State, the introduction of the National Funding Formula and the introduction of a new Secretary of State, Damian Hinds MP.

There is considerable rhetoric on this topic and all statements should be fact-checked before assuming that the situation for our schools is either completely resolved or at immediate crisis point. Schools have taken some time to absorb the details of these changes and consider the impact on our future position. As far as Heathfield Community College is concerned, we worked hard last year to make significant savings such that as the projected increases were gradually applied we might be able to consider reinvestment into resources, facilities and sustainability.

However, this has been substantially hindered by the potential increases to staffing costs that will apply from April 2018. Much as I would dearly love to enable our fabulous teaching staff and support staff to be better rewarded for the work they do, these increases are currently unfunded. In addition, post-16 funding continues to sit below the level of main school funding and furthermore the pressure on funding for Special Educational Needs provision continues to rise. Therefore, despite the savings we have already made and the acknowledged additions to school funding, as it currently stands it is highly likely that there will need to be further reductions to either staffing or provision in order to maintain a balanced budget by 2020.

Yesterday I wrote, as Chair of the Secondary Headteachers' group along with my equivalent Primary Colleague to invite all the local MPs and the ESCC Lead Member for Education to a joint meeting. The purpose of seeking the meeting is to establish common understanding of the facts of the issues for East Sussex schools and to seek some agreement on actions that will help achieve the outcomes that will make a difference to East Sussex children.

Please be assured we will continue to work as effectively as possible to make the most of our assets, resolutely prioritising teaching, learning and the well-being of students. We are increasingly grateful to parents for (and increasingly reliant on) the voluntary donations that allow us to keep the enriching extra-curricular opportunities available to students.

If you would like to make a donation this can be done through School Gateway. If you experience any problems with making a payment please do not hesitate to contact the Finance Office and they will be able to assist you. We will be looking to further develop and enhance our fundraising opportunities into the future.

Thank you as always for your support, we will continue to keep you updated as appropriate in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Barlow', written in a cursive style.

MS C BARLOW
Headteacher