



HAGLEY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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Principal: Mrs S Horan



Archdiocese of Birmingham

14 September 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Over recent years, we have all had to live with tighter budgets. The schools of Worcestershire have certainly been no exception to this. With a very high proportion of our budgets going on wages and salaries, secondary schools have, year on year, had to reduce the range of options, have increased class sizes, have cut back on non-teaching staff and have had fewer resources to support the most vulnerable.

Schools, fortunate enough to have accumulated some reserves, have been able to protect their students to some extent, but these days are coming to an end. In the school year, just begun, most of the county's 34 high schools has been forced to set a deficit budget. The problem is now so acute that the Headteachers/Principals of each of the secondary schools will today be writing letters such as this to every one of their parents. We are doing this because you should know that we are simply unable to continue to provide the service for which Worcestershire secondary schools have become known.

Last year the Department for Education brought in a new system for allocating money between different parts of the country. This scheme, the National Funding Formula, is an attempt to spread the spending on schools more fairly. It is a step in the right direction, but counties such as Worcestershire remain at a disadvantage. It remains true, for example, that a child in the West Midlands conurbation is substantially better funded than one of similar age in Worcestershire. (In the current year the basic unit of funding for each secondary pupil in Worcestershire is £887 less than in Birmingham.) As a result, our best teachers can be enticed to move, our courses provide less choice and our most needy students have less support.

But the problem goes much deeper than this. Not only is 'the national educational cake' still being divided unfairly, in real terms it is getting smaller. Despite headlines announcing an increase in the national allocation for schools, the real value of government funding has been falling. The Institute for Fiscal Studies, which carries out objective research, calculates that the value of funding for the nation's schools will be 4% less this year than it was three years ago and 8% less than it was in 2010. Beyond this are the other increases that many organisations have to meet, in pensions, insurance and all that is involved in running our buildings day by day.

No parent needs reminding that the secondary school years are a precious opportunity. They do not come again. We, therefore, need your support in making this point emphatically to government. Please consider doing this in any way that you choose. We are attaching the draft of a letter should you decide to join those of us making the case to our MP.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Horan
Principal

Elaine Yates
Chair, Hagley Academy Committee

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