



St Nicolas CE Primary School

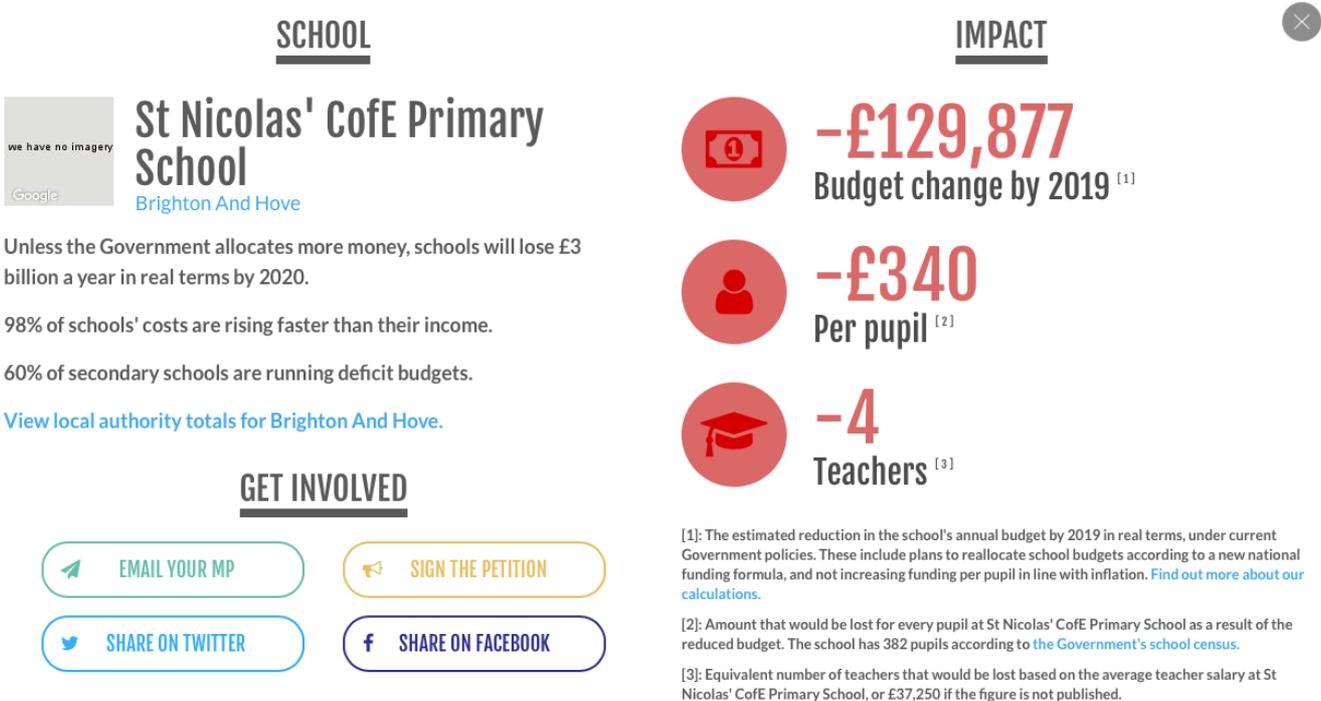
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Thursday 30th March 2017

Budget Cuts for All Schools

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure that you will have seen reports in the news over the past few months about the current crisis in school funding. Recently there was a letter from Headteachers in Brighton & Hove which was published in the local newspapers. If you saw that article you will have noticed that St Nicolas was not listed. This is not because we are not affected by the cuts nor because I do not support the cause highlighted by the letter. The letter was written by my colleagues in the 'National Association of Head Teachers' (NAHT) whereas I am part of the 'NASUWT' union. This is an issue for ALL SCHOOLS and we will be working together to protect the educational opportunities for all of our children.



At St Nicolas we started this financial year with a carry forward of £80,000, partly because we could see the problems ahead and reduced our spending on a range of things. We finish the financial year with no carry forward at all. In other words, as a minimum, we needed to find a further £80,000 of savings when setting the budget for this coming year. The graphic above, from www.schoolcuts.org.uk, shows the estimated loss of funding to St Nicolas by 2019 suggesting we have another £50,000 of 'efficiency savings' to find over the next two years! Though this website is provided by the unions the figures are consistent with what we are experiencing.

'Efficiency savings' really just means fewer people doing more. No matter how much we have tried, the decisions I and my Governors are making at the moment will impact negatively on the quality of education we can provide your children and the workload, contracted hours and jobs of our staff. It is up

to me to ensure that the negative impact is as small as possible. I will be writing to you again after Easter with more details about the decisions we have had to make.

What Can You Do?

I would encourage you to find out more. 'Fair Funding for All Schools' is a national parent led organisation. On their website there is a link to a petition which you can sign and letters to send to your MP and our Secretary of State for Education should you wish to do so. www.fairfundingforallschools.org. I will place a link on our website.

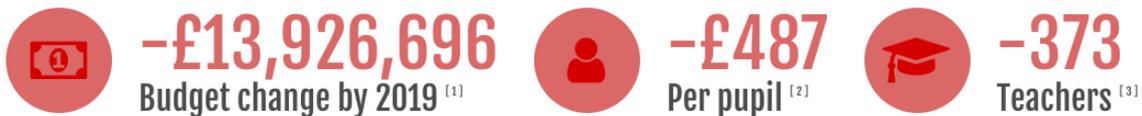
'Save Our Schools - Brighton & Hove' (@SaveSchoolsUK) is a parents group who are organising campaigns and events locally. They have a twitter account and a Facebook page which are worth looking at. Their launch meeting is tonight (Thursday) which I am planning to attend.

We will keep you informed by text and e-mail of events which highlight this issue.

An Issue for All Of Us

This isn't an issue where we should fight for just our own school. It is a national issue. The equivalent of £3 billion is being lost from school budgets during the lifetime of this parliament. In schools across Brighton & Hove the estimated loss is nearly £14m which means every school will be hit hard.

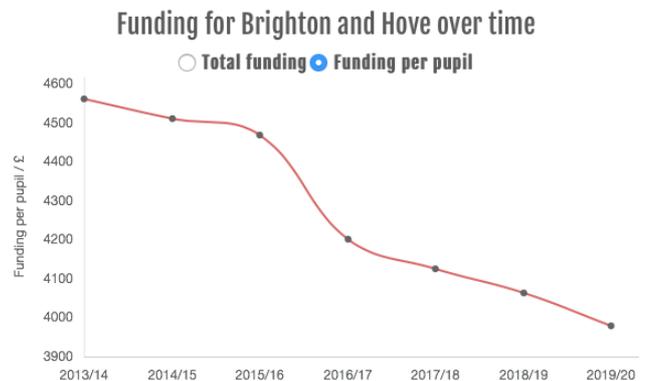
IMPACT ON LOCAL AUTHORITY: BRIGHTON AND HOVE



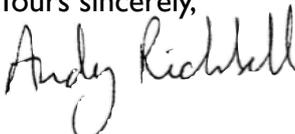
[1]: Total estimated reduction across all schools in Brighton and Hove in real terms by 2020, under current Government policies. These include plans to reallocate school budgets according to a new national funding formula, and not increasing funding per pupil in line with inflation. [Find out more about our calculations.](#)

[2]: Average amount that would be lost for every pupil in Brighton and Hove as a result of the reduced budget. There are 28,848 pupils in Brighton and Hove according to the school census.

[3]: The equivalent number of teachers that would be lost, based on the average teacher's salary of £37,250.



I have included additional information below about the local and national picture. If you can spare the time I would be grateful if you would read it.

Yours sincerely,

Andy Richbell
Headteacher

Additional Information - The National Picture

When the issue of school funding is raised in the media or in Parliament the Government says that they are spending more on education than ever before, which is true. However, there are far more children in schools and there have been huge increases in costs – National Insurance, pension contributions and inflation, which means that, in real terms, all schools have much less money. Services which supported families and schools have been lost or reduced due to massive cuts to council funding - Early Help, social services, CAMHS, specialist SEN advisors and curriculum advisory teachers to name just a few. In many cases schools have taken on the moral responsibility to support their children and families and have even employed or redeployed staff to help them do this - for instance school counselling, family support workers or learning mentors. The reduction of these services and the addition of other statutory responsibilities placed on schools add to the moral and financial burden.

A report published by National Audit Office (NAO) in December 2016 entitled "Financial sustainability of schools" warns that schools will have some tough decisions to make in the years ahead. It confirmed that mainstream schools face:

- An 8% real term reduction in per-pupil funding between 2014/15 and 2019/20 due to increasing cost pressures and inflation.
- Savings of £3 billion, which will be needed by 2019/20 to counteract these cost pressures.

The National Audit Office, Public Accounts Committee and Education Policy Exchange have all published reports and figures which are in line with the ones quoted in my main letter.

Teaching costs

- Teaching costs account for almost half of a school's spending, so it's vital to maximise value for money
- Areas to review might include:
 - percentage contact time for all teachers
 - senior management team
 - pupil / teacher ratio
 - teacher / support staff ratio
 - options for managing supply

From DfE Publication

Additionally, the Department for Education recognises that it needs to tackle the excessive workload of teachers. It recently published guidance which was circulated to all schools.

At the same time it published guidance which suggests reducing costs by:

- Reducing release time for teachers;
- Reducing the leadership team
- Increasing class sizes
- Reducing / limiting the use of supply teachers.

An article I read recently said that schools can and will make savings, but that the difficult spending choices we will be forced to make may not necessarily be in the best interests of their pupils or the school workforce - putting educational outcomes at risk.

This is the reality we are facing.



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A Message from the Governors of St Nicolas School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Although this letter has been written by Mr Richbell we wanted you to know that all of the Governors at St Nicolas have seen and approved it.

We are committed to supporting our school leadership team in minimising the impact of these funding cuts on our children and staff but we will also be joining with Governors from other schools to campaign for fair funding for all schools! We really believe that teachers, Governors and parents working together can make a difference.

We urge you to look at the local campaign group Save Our Schools (SOS) and keep an eye out for events.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Scarratt".

Julie Scarratt
Joint Chair of Governors on behalf of the Full Governing Body.