



Peace, Love, Service - a Church of England School

Little Thetford C of E Primary School
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Dear Parents/Carers,

We feel this is an appropriate time to update you around the current and future financial position of the school.

Despite recent media coverage suggesting increased funding for schools, the reality is that schools will in fact receive only small increases that in no way will compensate for the huge cuts that have been made over the past 5 years. Statements such as 'Schools have never been better funded' are extremely misleading. Overall funding figures include the building of new schools, and the year on year increase in number of children means that the funding has to be shared across more people and is spread more thinly.

Factors that have impacted on our school's finances:

Decreased lump sum of funding – This is a top line figure of money in every school's budget that was decreased by £40,000 per year in April 2018. This cut has had a significant impact on our school and represents approximately a 10% cut in our funding over the last two years and will impact significantly going forward. The National Education Union has also stated that, although the Prime Minister has promised new money for schools in April next year, 83% of schools will have less money in 2020 than they did in 2015. The following link emphasises reports in the news and making government aware of issues for small schools –

<https://schoolweek.co.uk/funding-formula-threatens-small-schools-with-extinction/>

Salary and Pension Increases – The government has increased staff salaries and pensions over the last two financial years but these increases are only partially funded and for our school we are expected to make up the shortfall from our overall school budget.

Inflationary Increases – For many years school funding has not increased in line with increased costs to take account for inflation, meaning costs such as energy, stationery and other increases have to be absorbed within the limited funding given.

Demographics of the School – Being a small successful school we qualify for little additional funding in areas such as deprivation funding.

Economies of Scale – School are largely funded on a per pupil basis but every school needs certain roles to be filled on top of teaching staff, such as headteacher, caretaker and administration staff and these take a larger percentage of our funding being a small school.

High Needs Block – Cambridgeshire Local Authority are approximately £18 million short within the high needs block of funding meaning they are proposing to take a percentage out of all school's funding to cover this shortfall. This is likely to equate to over £8,000 per year for our school from April 2019.

All of these factors put a large strain on the successful running of a school of our size. Taking these factors into consideration for our future funding, we are currently in a position where we are very unlikely to be able to submit a balanced budget for the next financial year.

What we have done?

Conscious of the ongoing financial difficulties, the school has worked tirelessly over recent years to both cut spending and generate additional funding streams. This has been achieved in the following ways:

Taken on services previously outsourced – The school now covers the management of financial services, property management and catering in house which has saved several thousand pounds.

Additional funding streams – The school now offers wrap around care and charged after school clubs which generate a significant additional funding for the school of around £10,000 per year.

Access to additional grants and funding – The school has been successful in being awarded funding for specific projects to develop the school. For example, the school has received significant funding for our mental health project, development of an outdoor space of Year 1/2, and funding to cover courses and training for staff.

Cut staff hours – We have had no choice but to reduce staff hours wherever possible meaning we now have less support staff than we have had previously.

Energy Savings – The school has had solar panels installed which in the long term will make significant savings in energy costs.

Rigorous monitoring of income and expenditure – The school now considers all expenditure very carefully to ensure it is affordable and is value for money and can no longer subsidise activities and trips which has been the case in the past.

These all have a huge impact on the school and place additional strains on the running of the school on a day to day basis with more needed to be done with less people to share the workload.

How can you help?

Organise a fund raising event – Well organised one off events can raise significant amounts of money. Please let us know if you are able to take the lead in organising such an event.

Make a donation – The school will gratefully receive one off or regular donations which can be made to support the running of the school. A Total Giving page has been set up which means gift aid can be applied to these donations. For example, £20 per month per child would generate an additional £24,000 of funding for the school (£30,000 with gift aid applied). Thank you to those families that have supported the school in this way in the past. The link to Total Giving is <https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/charity/friends-of-little-thetford-school-pta>. **Please note these donations are passed from FOLTS directly to the school.**

Join FOLTS – FOLTS, our PTA, raise significant funds for our school providing opportunities for our children we wouldn't otherwise be able to provide. Please think carefully about either joining or offering to help at the events that are organised.

Use people you know – Do you have any family, friends or business contacts who might be able to help? This could be via charitable donation or supporting specific projects in school.

Become a Volunteer – Offer to support in supporting children in their learning or admin tasks around the school.

Use of Wrap Around Care – Please do use our wrap around care facility when you do require childcare either before or after school rather than other providers or options. This does provide a valuable income stream for which support the day to day running.

While this message may have come as a shock, we feel it is important to be open and transparent about the school's financial situation. We are fully determined to maintain the standard and quality of education we provide but need to be clear that this becoming increasingly difficult to achieve with the financial position we are faced with.

If you have any questions or suggestions please contact Mr Wallace; Mrs Morrison (Chair of Governors) or Mrs Munday (Vice-Chair of Governors) via the school office email address.

Yours sincerely,



Jonny Wallace
Headteacher



Hazel Morrison
Chair of Governors



Kathy Munday
Chair of Property and Finance Committee