

DSN/NBA

15th June 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

Changes to school funding

You may have seen a number of stories in the press recently around school funding. There have been many worrying headlines and we felt it important to let you know how this may affect both primary and secondary schools within the Maltby Learning Trust moving forwards.

School budgets across the country have been under significant pressure for some time. When increasing costs are taken into account, an average school has experienced an 8% cut in its funding over the last three years and the situation for schools which have a Sixth Form, like Maltby Academy or Sir Thomas Wharton Academy, has often been much worse.

The government has said that it plans to introduce a new national funding formula from 2018-19, in order to address long standing variations in the funding of schools in different parts of the country. However, early consultation shows that the new formula will not bring increased funding into the Rotherham/Maltby locality and students in schools in the Trust will be further disadvantaged. All schools are facing rising costs due to, among other things, increases in the employer National Insurance, pension contributions and the introduction of the new Apprenticeship Levy. These alongside other increases due to inflation, e.g. rising energy costs, will further compound the issues presented to our schools.

Given the financial challenges facing all schools in the Maltby Learning Trust, leaders and governors will have to make some difficult decisions. We cannot guarantee that necessary cuts will not impact on teaching and learning, despite doing our utmost to prevent this. We need to make it clear that individual school budgets have always had a number of checks and balances to ensure best value and there has been an extremely prudent approach adopted by all schools in the Trust to make the most of the money available. However, the position is becoming particularly difficult to manage given the significantly reduced funding directed into education alongside the ever-increasing costs. Schools, Local Authorities and Professional Bodies across the country are lobbying government to let them know just how serious the funding crisis has become.

These changes are coming at a time when schools are dealing with the greatest changes to the curriculum, assessment and examinations over recent times and when the pressure on schools to deliver results has, rightly so, never been higher.

However, it is worth noting that the Trust is starting to gain efficiencies by being able to buy central services as a group of schools. In addition, the leaders are regularly sharing key learning resources and specialist staffing to make limited funding stretch further. Leaders and governors in Maltby Learning Trust are increasingly seeing the opportunities and benefits of working closely together to both share best practice and raise standards of achievement, whilst providing savings through economies of scale.

We, like many other schools and Trusts, are thinking carefully about how we can continue to provide your child with an excellent education in a more sustainable way.

I hope that you will continue to support your local school through this difficult period. Thank you in anticipation of your understanding and support.

Yours faithfully



Mr D.L. Sutton
Executive Principal/Chief Executive Officer