

Dear Parent/Carers

Mass Headteacher Action - 28th September 2018



Hampshire
Headteachers



I am writing to you to let you know that on Friday 28th September, I will be joining hundreds of other Headteachers from across the country in support of a mass event intended to gain much improved funding for all schools.

All the Headteachers attending the march will have the full support of their Governing Bodies/Trusts as we continue to champion the best possible funding for all our schools. I/we will remain steadfastly determined, relentlessly reasonable and act without any political or union bias. These have been the hallmarks of our campaign work to date.

You will be aware of the challenges that schools up and down the country are facing. A mixture of rising costs and stresses on other support services has meant that for many years we have been asked “to do more with less.”

Under a challenging period of austerity for the Government we understand that there is not a bottomless pit of money. Accordingly, schools have played their part to work even harder and with greater efficiency on behalf of the children and families that we serve.

It is clear to all Headteachers, however, that matters are now reaching a point where the situation is unsustainable. Frequently, we do not have enough money to meet the demands placed on our schools. On the ground, services and resources are cut to the bone and class sizes in many schools are increasing. At times, schools are even having to prop up budgets with monies that should be targeted at those students from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, or those that have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Under the umbrella of the campaign group ‘Worth Less?’ Headteachers have shone a light on the funding difficulties that we are facing. We acknowledge that the Government should be given credit for introducing a new National Funding Formula. Unfortunately, however, the formula itself is not adequately resourced or funded and therefore our budgets remain in an unacceptably poor state.

In July, the Institute for Fiscal Studies echoed what we have been saying for a long time and confirmed that, **in real terms**, school budgets have been slashed by 8% since 2010.

<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/13143>

It is simply not good enough for the Government to state that “more money is spent on schools than ever before”, when independent evidence clearly states that in real terms, this is simply not the case. I must be clear that this has nothing to do with teachers’ pay. Hampshire is very poorly funded for each and every pupil or student. **If you compare the best funded areas of the country, Hampshire schools receive anything up to £3,000 less per pupil!** Just multiply that by how many children are in our school and you can see why we feel so strongly that this is just not fair to the children, students and families in our school community. These sorts of differences affect the number of staff we can employ, the quality of equipment we can buy for your children and the longer term effects are a huge worry to me and other headteacher colleagues and their governing bodies.

Headteachers will gather at Downing Street to insist that the chancellor and his colleagues at the Department for Education use the upcoming autumn statement to invest properly in our schools and your child’s education. Many of the real terms cuts to our budgets should be reversed and urgent investment is required for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities and post-16 budgets.

The support that we have enjoyed from parents and carers has been very welcome and we will continue to update you on all of our forthcoming actions. We are determined to campaign until a much better and fairer settlement is reached in order to support your child/children and the future prosperity of the country as a whole.

Yours faithfully

Nicky Cowcher.

Headteacher