

Dear Parents

We, the Principals representing the Controlled Sector, in conjunction with those in the Maintained, Integrated and Irish Medium Sectors, are writing to inform you about the unprecedented financial pressures that have been placed on our school budgets over the past four years. The amount of funding that we are receiving for each child has been reduced by approx. 4% (£70 per child). This amounts to a considerable reduction in funding when you consider the numbers of children attending our schools.

At present, and based on the financial cuts in education, the following are giving us cause for concern as they may be a likely outcome of these cuts;

- More demands placed on parents/staff to pay for costs incurred by the school
- Reduction in teaching staff and support staff
- Charging/Increased charging for before and after school clubs/supervision
- Support for children with additional and special educational needs affected
- Essential maintenance works not being carried out
- Support agencies, such as counselling and educational psychology will see longer waiting lists for referrals and interventions
- Reduced spend on essential curriculum resources – books, stationery etc.
- School swimming programmes/music and art provision/ trips becoming unaffordable
- Maintaining/raising standards and educational provision may become more difficult
- Morale among all sectors of education may reduce significantly
- Added stress and workload on all staff

This is also compounded by the fact that other areas in the UK have significantly better funding for education than Northern Ireland.

Consequently, if funding is not increased, it may impact on our ability to deliver the high quality educational standards that we have become accustomed to and which our children have experienced in the past and have a right to expect.

If the Northern Ireland Assembly fails to invest in our schools, then they are failing our children. We appeal to our politicians to put whatever difficulties they currently have aside and get the Executive up and running again to deal with the current crisis in Education.

As educators, we have always been proud of the high standards that we have been able to deliver in all of our schools in Londonderry throughout the years. However, all of this is being compromised and threatened by the lack of financial and political support that we are being given to run our schools.

As a group of principals we feel that you, the parents, need to be aware of the potential negative impact that these cuts are having on your children's education. We would like all of our parents to get behind our schools and to use whatever influence that you might have to encourage our political representatives to move this situation forward.

We need the amount of money that we receive for each child to be restored, at least, to its original value to assist us in delivering high quality education to our children. Our children deserve nothing but the best and anything less is simply unacceptable.

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Lisnagelvin Primary School

Ashlea Primary and Nursery School

Ebrington Primary School

Ballougry Primary School

Fountain Primary School

Eglinton Primary School

Drumahoe Primary School

Culmore Primary School