ARDEN

STATION ROAD KNOWLE SOLIHULL B93 0PT
01564 773 348
WWW.ARDEN.SOLIHULL.SCH.UK

8th March 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians

SCHOOL FUNDING

All the schools in our community are writing home to their parents in order to highlight the funding challenges that we face alongside many of the schools in Solihull and will face in the coming years. You may have seen a number of stories in the media around this issue, and we wanted to inform you about how Arden is affected.

In recent years it has become apparent that current budgets are unsustainable. You may be aware that we have been grappling with the funding challenges for the last three years which have led already to a number of tough decisions being made which have impacted on curriculum choice and class sizes.

Moves to a national funding formula for schools, creating a fairer funding system, will not bring the benefits to our school that we had hoped to see in Solihull which is a low funded local authority.

The School Cuts website, analysing DfE funding data, projects further funding cuts despite the government saying that there are no cuts in funding. Once again at Arden in the year from September 2017 our school budget will decrease by almost £150,000, this added to inflation and the increase in NI and Pension increases which are out of our control is in the order of another £300,000. The forecast is that by 2019/2020 our school will lose a further £311,350 from its budget which equates to a further cut of £252 per pupil and realistically a deficit budget could only be avoided by the loss of some 7 staff. (This data is taken from **schoolcuts.org.uk**).

The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has shown that more than half (55%) of school leaders in a recent survey felt that their deficit would be untenable by 2018/19. Funding pressures are being felt across all phases and in all schools, not just at Arden.

At Arden we have worked hard to ensure that cuts have the least amount of impact on teaching as possible. However, rising costs and a forecast decreasing budget mean that many tough decisions will have to be made. In the future, we cannot guarantee that such cuts will not impact on core teaching, despite doing our upmost to prevent this. Please be assured that we will take the utmost care with budgets, to ensure all the money we have is spent effectively on your children. We promise to let you know in plenty of time if our budget means we'll have to take a significant decision on staffing or activities.

We understand that our local MP Caroline Spelman is very concerned about the impact of the new funding formula on our local schools so if you value the education that your children currently receive please write to her to raise her awareness of the concerns of local parents. There is also an option to email your local MP via the School cuts website.

I would be happy to receive any comments or reaction you may have to this on chairofgovernors@arden.solihull.sch.uk

With my best wishes

Yours sincerely

Geoff Harley-Mason
Chair of Governors

Arden is part of Arden Multi-Academy Trust, a Company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales. No. 7375267. Registered Office: Station Road, Knowle, Solihull B93 0PT