

June 14th 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

I always try to keep you in the loop with key things that are happening at St Antony's and I feel I need to keep you updated about how challenging the current school budget situation is at our school.

Before I go on, I'm acutely aware that we are in the middle of a general election campaign and this letter is not meant in any way to show favoritism towards any political party. Essentially, schools like ours are not funded sufficiently in order to continue to meet the growing demands on what schools are expected to do and the rising costs associated with running a school. Hence, whoever is in government after the election, I hope they take seriously the incredibly difficult position schools are in currently in relation to funding and the difficult compromises school leaders are forced to take to ensure they can run schools without running up large deficits.

To give you some context, our budget position has become a lot more challenging for various reasons including:

- Our SEND protection pot funding (distributed by Trafford LA) reduced by nearly half for next year, despite us having one of the largest % of pupils with an EHCP in the whole of Trafford
- Our minimum funding guarantee (distributed by Trafford LA) being reduced significantly for next year
- The much-deserved pay award to non-teaching staff (approx. 7% in each of the last two years) has been completely unfunded by central government
- The grants covering the increased contributions the school has to make to national insurance and pensions of employees has not been sufficient to cover all of the additional costs involved
- The different bands of extra funding for pupils with an EHCP have remain fixed in Trafford for over 10 years, meaning the value of this support for pupils decreases in real terms year on year, meaning schools like ours are not always to do what we might have done in previous years to support these pupils

We will always try to ensure front-line services for pupils are protected as much as possible so that the quality of our offer is not diluted, but in reality, this is becoming more and more difficult in the current climate. This is resulting in some very difficult choices about what we need to have and what we must learn to live without – and I think it is important you are made aware of this.

If you have any further comment or questions on this matter, I'd be very happy to discuss this with you further at our upcoming Parent Forum on Wednesday 10th July.

Your sincerely



Mr A Campbell

Headteacher