

Dear Parents

Wednesday 1st February 2017

Funding for Schools

As you may be aware from articles in the press and on national news, the government is currently consulting on a new National Funding Formula for schools. The principle of the formula is that school funding will be determined at national rather than at local level and that there will be some attempt to address a historical imbalance by redistributing funding from the most generously funded schools to relatively poorly funded schools. This is a principle that we have supported.

Rugby High School is one of the most poorly funded schools in the country. The reasons for this are that Warwickshire has historically received a much lower level of education funding than other authorities so it has less funding to distribute. The school has relatively few students classified as coming from a deprived background and (because we are academically selective) no students with low prior attainment. Schools receive additional funding for educating students with these characteristics.

The bad news about the current proposal is that some of the most poorly funded schools in the country, including our school, are due to have their already low levels of funding cut still further in 2019. We are facing a cut of 2.5% in the income that we receive for 11-16 students. Unlike Lawrence Sheriff School, we receive no additional funding from Rugby School that we can use to cushion this blow.

This proposed cut in funding is going to have a very significant impact on our ability to continue to be able to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. Some subjects may have to disappear from the curriculum in KS3 and KS4 altogether because we simply will not be able to afford to run them. Class sizes are likely to increase at KS4 and students are likely to have less choice about the subjects that they study.

The school will lose under the current proposals because for political reasons the government is reluctant to take much funding away from London and other inner cities to redistribute it to poorly funded authorities like Warwickshire. Additionally, the Secretary of State has decided to fix the top slice (the amount taken from basic per pupil funding to give additional funding for deprivation and low prior attainment and to fund the work of the local authority) at 27.5%. In the past Warwickshire has recognised that the top slice needs to be kept as low as possible so that schools like Rugby High School with relatively low numbers of students who attract additional funding can provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

You may have read in the papers a suggestion that grammar schools should ask parents for significant voluntary contributions in order to fund the curriculum. This is not something that we see as an option. We know that, whilst a few families are in a position to make this kind of contribution, many families have to think very carefully about their spending and are not able to do this. We also believe that schools wherever they are located and irrespective of the social backgrounds and educational history of the students that they teach should receive sufficient income raised from taxation to enable them to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. You can read more about the possible impact of the current proposals on Rugby High School by clicking on this link.

We are campaigning for a realistic, basic level of funding for all secondary school pupils. We support the National Association of School Business Managers' suggestion that this should be

fixed at £4,800 per student. You can help us to preserve the curriculum and maintain the high standards that students at Rugby High School achieve by doing one or more of the following:

- writing to your local Member of Parliament and asking him or her to raise this issue in parliament and with their political connections. You can read the letter that I have written to Mark Pawsey by looking on the school's website (<http://www.rugbyhighschool.co.uk>) **under the parents tab and sub heading school funding.**
- writing to the Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening.
- responding to the government's consultation on the National Funding Formula by clicking on this link <https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/>. You can read the school's response to the proposals by looking on the school's website (<http://www.rugbyhighschool.co.uk>) **under the parents section and sub heading school funding.**

A small tweak to the current proposals to ensure that the level of basic per pupil funding is enough to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all students would make a huge difference to what we can provide for students who attend this school in the future. Any support that you feel able to give the school in lobbying on this issue is much appreciated.

With best wishes

Charlotte Marten
Headteacher