

# Sponne School

*A Music & Science Academy*



*Inspiring*  
Achievement

9<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Dear parents

I am sure that you have heard in the news recently about significant amounts of money being set aside for vocational education and to fund new free schools. You will also have heard from the Government about their commitment to protecting school budgets.

However, I am writing to inform you that despite these reassurances our school budget income from the government has been reduced significantly over the past few years culminating in a shortfall of income over expenditure predicted for the next academic year.

One of the main reasons for the shortfall is that over the past 3 years, all schools have had to cope with increases to employer pension contributions, national insurance increases and public sector pay awards (although the latter are minimal) which have been imposed by the government but for which schools have received no additional funding. This has reduced the amount of money available in the budget by between 5 and 10%. In addition, a new funding formula for 2017 and the removal of an educational services grant, that in the past amounted to more than £400k for our school, means that our budget for the next academic year is 3% lower per student than our budget for this year. At the same time we are planning for an increased number of students due to the expansion of Towcester without any additional revenue funding for the plans and are having to bid for capital funding to support the building of the new accommodation that will be necessary.

Whilst we have been prudent in the past and careful in our use of the budget, we are now at the point where the school will have to make more difficult decisions about the provision or funding of enrichment activities whilst trying to protect against reductions that could impact upon the learning of students. More detail about areas affected will be sent home in due course. There is little scope left to make further reductions in many areas so we may ultimately need to increase class sizes or limit the choices within our curriculum at GCSE and A Level. None of these are desirable choices though I know that my staff will do all that they can to continue to support the students in gaining the outstanding outcomes that we have come to expect.

Sponne is a great school and a vital part of our community but we find ourselves as one of the lowest funded secondary schools per student in the county and probably near the bottom across the country. Can I therefore urge you to support the school in writing to our MP, Andrea Leadsom, in the hope that she can bring sufficient pressure to ensure that we are funded appropriately.

Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards

**Iain Massey**  
**Head of Sponne School**

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