

The Grove Primary School

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Headteacher Ms Karen Martin



Friday 29th November 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to give you an update on school funding as proposals being put forward are going to affect all pupils in Cambridgeshire and as a headteacher I want to share how they will affect the pupils in our school as well as to show support for all pupils and schools in Cambridgeshire.

As you know, schools and head teachers have been campaigning for increases to school funding after school budgets had been cut in real terms by 8% since 2010 (according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies) and yet costs are rising year on year.

Schools are just beginning to get initial information about how government announcements are going to affect their budgets from April 2020. It is clear that newspaper-headline funding increases may not flow through to schools because there is also a redistribution going on to raise all schools to a minimum funding level that is still under consultation.

Below are some headline figures.

For The Grove

- Depending on the final outcomes of the funding consultation that is taking place (see below), The Grove will receive somewhere between £4,231 to £4,411 per pupil in 2020-2021
- This compares with the national average of £4,280 per child for primary schools – this is a potential difference of between - £1,470 and + £3,930 **per class** of 30 children.
- We are likely to see costs for services we receive from the local authority increase.
- We are likely to see the funding we receive for children with special educational needs go down.
- The worst scenario would see our budget remaining the same as 19/20 with the best scenario giving us an additional £50,000 in our budget.

The National Picture

- Direct funding for schools is being increased by £2.6 billion pounds overall in 2020-2021, but this is not being distributed evenly between all schools.
- There is going to be a new, minimum level of funding per pupil of £3,750, up from £3,500 – schools already receiving more than this figure are likely to see any increases capped to pay for the increase for lower funded schools. This

means some schools will receive little increase in funding, despite all schools facing ongoing increases in costs.

- Funding for Special Educational Needs (the High Needs Block), which is separate to the general funding for schools, is being increased by £780 million – this is less than the £1.3 billion that the Education Select Committee said was needed.

For Cambridgeshire

- Funding for Cambridgeshire schools for next year is being increased by £16.75 million from April 2020 (based on illustrative figures published by the DfE).
- Average funding per pupil in Cambridgeshire is £4,039, less than the national average of £4,280.
- Many schools will only be brought up to the new minimum level of funding of £3,750 per pupil, which is significantly below the national average of funding.
- Cambridgeshire's High Needs Block, which funds the additional support for children with Special Educational Needs, is currently overspent by £16 million. Cambridgeshire is required to put forward a plan to bring this budget into balance. The only source for the additional funds to do this is the general funding for schools.
- Cambridgeshire's grant from government for the services the local authority provides for schools is being cut by £1.1 million this year – this will result in new costs being passed onto schools, which were previously covered by the local authority.
- Cambridgeshire schools are currently being consulted on the different options for the funding for schools – these options include transferring money out of the general school funding to address the special educational needs deficit. Transferring the largest proposed amount of £6.5 million pounds would mean that:
 - 67% of Cambridgeshire primary schools would see increases below 2%
 - 62% of Cambridgeshire primary schools would see funding increases of less than £5,000 in total
- Transferring a lower amount from the general funding to the High Needs Block will instead see schools facing significant increases in costs for services and reductions in their funding for special educational needs.

Therefore it is unclear, at present, what the school budget will be for 2020/21. We will keep you informed of any changes that you need to be aware of.

Yours sincerely,



Ms Karen Martin
Head Teacher