

## Why Schools Need More Funding Now

Stephen Betts (Chief Executive, Learn Sheffield) – Sheffield Telegraph (June 2018)

People must be very confused at the moment about the issue of school funding. On the one hand the government is saying that there is a record level of funding for education, which has been protected from austerity cuts. On the other hand, the news is full of stories which make it obvious that there is a crisis in education funding. When schools are cutting their week to four and a half days to save money or asking parents to contribute to everything from books and pencils to toilet rolls then something doesn't add up!

If we examine the government's claims, then we have to acknowledge that it is factually true that education has had protection and that there is more money being spent than ever before. Education budgets have not been cut in the way that other services have and over the past eight years we have seen 'stand still' budgets until the recent injection of funds that has enabled the government to assert that the funding is at a record level. **So why is there a crisis?**

The first reason is simply the impact of eight years of standstill budgets. We may be grateful that our budgets haven't been cut in cash terms but they certainly have been cut in real terms, perhaps by something of the order of 30% across that period. **Whilst our budgets have been standing still many of the things that schools need to spend money on have continued to rise in cost.**

To compound this, a number of decisions, especially in relation to national insurance, pensions and pay have imposed significant additional costs on schools. This doesn't mean that these decisions were wrong but, when changes are not funded by the government, it means that they have a big impact on the budgets of schools.

*Finally, we have to go back to that protection that education has had from austerity cuts. The reason schools have felt grateful that it wasn't worse for us is that it has been worse for many of our partners, who have seen their budgets devastated by cuts. The services provided by these partners, including Sheffield City Council (who have had 50% of their budget cut), have dramatically reduced or disappeared. The impact of this on school budgets is that they now fund a number of activities that previously cost less or were free to access.*

Related to this we also need to recognise that the demand upon schools has also continued to rise. Difficult times for communities increases the demand upon schools, as the level and range of support needs for children and young people increase alongside those of their families. We are in the perverse situation where schools consider losing pastoral staff to balance their budgets at a time when they are most needed.

There is a lesson for education to learn from our health colleagues here. Health has been much more effective at making their case for more funding by clearly demonstrating the gap between rising demands and costs and their budgets. Schools are in exactly the same position and, like hospitals, need more funding now.

In the case of schools, we are now several years into this process. Efficiencies were made some time ago and we have had a series of real terms budget cuts that have trimmed provision significantly in most schools. The reason for the degree of concern right now is that the only places left to go in order to make further reductions are places that school leaders don't want to contemplate.

In the last week I have spoken to a secondary leader who is having to consider which aspect of their provision to remove entirely - should they narrow their curriculum by removing subjects or remove their entire pastoral support team?



A primary headteacher told me that they have costed moving to a four-and-a-half-day week, the removal of all of their teaching assistant team and also merging some classes to enable them to manage with less teachers. Would the parents and carers prefer to see their children unsupported, in classes of forty-plus children or pick them up at lunchtime each Friday? Meanwhile, special school leaders are struggling to meet their rising demands in the face of continued underfunding of the high needs funding block.

No wonder the morale of school leaders is falling when faced with overseeing the dismantling of provision they have dedicated their professional lives to developing. No surprise that communities are worried about the impact of cuts on the life chances of their children and young people.

**In Sheffield we have the added dimension that our share of the funding is unfair. The National Funding Formula was supposed to reverse years of unequal funding and places like Sheffield, as the core city with the lowest per pupil funding, should be feeling the benefit of this. It cannot be right that an average sized primary school in Sheffield will receive £260,000 more (£822,000 more for an average sized Secondary) if its pupils were funded at the rate they are in Manchester.**

There is, as you might expect, a lot of work going on to try to better understand why the new funding formula isn't delivering on this promise. It is becoming clear that the issue for Sheffield might not be the formula itself but rather the factors that are applied to it in order to maintain stability in the system. The impact of a gains cap, a funding floor, area-cost adjustments and the like effectively slows the rate at which Sheffield's funding increases to the level that it should be. These factors may seem technical but at the moment the difference between what we would get for every child under a fair national funding formula and what we actually get seems to be at least £155 per pupil, which equates to more than £12m per year across the city (more if we also take account of the shortfall in high needs funding).

This wish for stability is right in principle – we wouldn't want to see fair funding for Sheffield schools come alongside schools shutting in other places. However, if it takes years for the correction to take place then I shudder to think what will have happened to the education of our current children and young people in the meantime. If it simply takes too many years for the changes needed to be implemented then this is unfair to Sheffield's children in schools now, who will pay the price for the government's need to maintain stability.

Sheffield's education community should feel very proud of the collaborative way that it is approaching this challenge, when the opportunities for division are so strong. It has been very heartening to see all types of schools, the city council, trade unions, the local press and our members of parliament all speaking with one voice on this issue. Over the weeks ahead, as we approach the end of this school year and then start a new one in September, there will be further opportunities for everyone in our city to support this campaign. The government needs to find additional funding for education and it needs to use some of that additional funding to target areas which are not receiving a fair share currently. As a next step, I would encourage everyone in our city to sign the online petition below, to support 'Fair Funding for Sheffield Schools'

### *Petition*

**Please support us** by signing and then sharing our petition. Let people know about how unfair the system is on Sheffield schools! Clearly all schools are underfunded, but Sheffield is the worst funded of all UK cities! This means that your children get less, which is wrong! Sheffield children matter as much as children elsewhere!

- *we have the same standards to reach as schools in better funded areas*
- *OFSTED judges us in the same way as schools in better funded areas*
- *we are ranked in league tables against schools in better funded areas*

Please follow this link and help us spread the word so Sheffield children and our schools get a fair a deal!

<https://www.change.org/p/fair-fund-for-sheffield-schools>



### ★ Citizen of the Week

★ This week's recipient is **Maya** in **Y6** who understands why it is important to be forgiving in line with our 'Statement to Live By' this week. Maya is a very polite and respectful member of our community. She has a strong sense of justice – of what is right and wrong - and she does not like things to be unfair for anyone. Maya will always speak up if she has a worry, and in doing this not only is she enabling us to help her, but she is also setting a great example to others. Congratulations Maya, you are a star, and we are all very proud of you!

### Term 6 Smiley Scores

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>St Andrew's House</b><br><br><span style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: white;">371</span> | <b>St David's House</b><br><br><span style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: orange;">434</span> | <b>St Patrick's House</b><br><br><span style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: green;">438</span> | <b>St George's House</b><br><br><span style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: white;">358</span> |
|--|--|--|--|

### Safeguarding Issues

#### Photographing Pupils

I was contacted this week by someone concerned that a parent/carer had filmed one of the early morning 'Wake Up Shake up' sessions this week. Though there is absolutely no reason to jump to conclusions regarding the person's motives, I would like to remind you that some of our pupils are not allowed to be filmed or photographed for one reason and another. Images and films shared and/or uploaded to social media could unintentionally render some of our pupils vulnerable.

#### Playground Climbing Equipment

Children are not allowed on the playground climbing equipment unless there is a member of staff close by to supervise them. **This includes before and after school.** Please DO NOT let your children use the equipment. If we are able to arrange for a member of staff to supervise the equipment at either end of the day, just as we do at break-times then we will.

Please support us with both of these safeguarding issues. Thank you for your cooperation.

### Golden Children

- FS2** **William** for doing some great pieces of writing this week! Well done superstar!
- Y1** **Mateusz** for working so hard on his reading in order to develop greater fluency!
- Y2** **Phoenix** for doing some great reading and for developing greater fluency! What a star!
- Y3** **Jacob N** for having a fantastic attitude towards his work. He is such a positive role-model and has a great attitude! Well done Jacob!
- Y4** **Jia** for having a brilliant transition day and for helping Mr MacInnes and making him feel so welcome!
- Y5** **Rafal** and **Aleks** making good progress in his maths and using some excellent explanations in reasoning lessons. Well done boys, please work hard and maintain this good work ethic!
- Y6** **Finley** and **Ruby** for working incredibly hard all year and for making wonderful progress because of their sterling efforts!

### Writing Champions

|            |           |           |           |           |           |           |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>FS2</b> | <b>Y1</b> | <b>Y2</b> | <b>Y3</b> | <b>Y4</b> | <b>Y5</b> | <b>Y6</b> |
| Noah       | Owen      | Maya      | Jason     | Freya     | Jack O    | Ellie     |



### Moving Up Day

Last Wednesday was our annual 'Moving Up Day' when all the children were given the opportunity to spend a day with their new teachers in their new classrooms. This includes the young people who are transferring to All Saints and Notre Dame Catholic High Schools in September. I would like to thank all my colleagues for supporting our pupils, and particularly the new children transferring into Years 3 and 4 next September. I would also like to thank our friends from Notre Dame and All Saints Catholic High Schools for looking after our Y6 leavers so well this week.

### Our Lady of Lourdes Summer Fayre

Thanks to everybody who supported the parish summer fayre last Saturday. Our links with Our Lady of Lourdes are so important and events like these are wonderful opportunities for bringing our communities together.

| Attendance this week  |     |                                     |                                  |
|-----------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>       | Y2  | 100%                                | Bobby Bear will visit next week  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>       | FS2 | 99.3%                               | Brenda Bear will visit next week |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>       | Y4  | 98.1%                               | Elvis Owl will visit next week   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>       | Y5  | 98.1%                               | Elvis Owl will visit next week   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>       | Y6  | 97.8%                               |                                  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup>       | Y3  | 96.4%                               |                                  |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>       | Y1  | 96.0%                               |                                  |
| <b>Target = 97.5%</b> |     | <b>Average Attendance = 98.0%</b> ↑ |                                  |



| Get Set, GO!    |     |                        |  |
|-----------------|-----|------------------------|--|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Y4  | 98%                    |  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Y1  | 96%                    |  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | Y6  | 95%                    |  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> | FS2 | 90%                    |  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> | Y2  | 90%                    |  |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> | Y3  | 89%                    |  |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> | Y5  | 73%                    |  |
|                 |     | <b>Average = 90%</b> ↓ |  |

### School Library

- **Mondays** and **Tuesdays** KS2 (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) 12.45pm to 1.15pm
- **Wednesdays** FS2 (Reception) 12.30pm to 12.50pm
- **Thursdays** and **Fridays** KS1 (Years 1 and 2) 12.30pm to 12.50pm

### Catholic Life of the School

#### *Weekly Liturgy of the Word*

Our next liturgy will be on **Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018** and will be led by the young people of **Y4** and we invite the family and friends of our Y4 children to join us in the School Hall just after 9.00am. Thank you.

#### *FS2 Graduation & Liturgy of the Word*

On **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018** our liturgy will be led by the young people of **FS2** who will also go through a simple graduation ceremony to mark the end of their first year as part of our special SJF family. We invite the family and friends of our FS2 children to join us in the School Hall just after 9.00am. Thank you.

#### *Celebration Assembly*

There will be no Celebration Assembly next Friday (13<sup>th</sup> July) because of the curriculum exhibition, nor the week after that because of the end of year Mass. Our next Celebration Assembly will be in the new school year.

### Achievements outside of School

- **Ellie** in **Y1** made her Rainbow promise recently, and everyone is very proud of her! Well don superstar!

Please do not forget to send in good news to share regarding your children's achievements

### Term Dates & Holidays

The term dates and holidays are now available for both next year (2018/19) and the year after (2019/20).

### Curriculum Exhibition

Our final Curriculum Exhibition takes place next Friday (13<sup>th</sup> July) from 8.45am – 10.00am in the School Hall. All welcome!

### Parent & Carer Support

If you would like an appointment to meet our MAST Support Worker, please speak to Mrs Pickering, someone in the School Office or email ([enquiries@st-johnfisher.org](mailto:enquiries@st-johnfisher.org)). Our MAST worker is there to support all parents and carers; to listen first and to offer helpful advice on a wide range of matters. She can also signpost you to other services and liaise with my team here at SJF so that together we can ensure that you feel supported.



## Sports Day 2018

Last Friday (29<sup>th</sup> June 2018) the whole school came together to take part in our special and annual 'School Games' Sports Day! The children were fantastic, throwing themselves at everything and really got involved. In doing so every child demonstrated our learning values, sharing determination, passion, respect, self-belief, teamwork and honesty.

We would like to thank all the parent volunteers for all their help and support to make the day so special and such a success! We would like to give a special mention to those parents/carers who participated in an event. Thank you for setting a great example!

The children who won awards for passion, determination, honesty, respect, self-belief and teamwork were: Emily, Amelie, Summer, Calum, Max and Christian. Congratulations children, we are all very proud of you!



The winning team for the whole of the School Games Sports Event was Panama, who scored a whopping 541 points. Well done! Pictured above are our winners with Mrs Prestidge and Mrs Beatson from the PTFA. In the afternoon we had the competitions. WELL DONE TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK PART WE ARE SO PROUD OF YOU!





I would like to thank Mrs Broadhead for coordinating the event, Mr Cross and all my other colleagues for supporting her, helping the children and for working so hard to make it such a memorable occasion for our children and their families! Thanks also for the fantastic support we received from all our families and friends too!

**SJF Uniform Orders for 2018/19**

Whilst the final day for school uniform orders being delivered to school has passed, uniform orders can still be placed online and delivered to your home address.

So that you are guaranteed to receive your orders before the first day back next September, 'School Trends' recommend that orders are made **before 12<sup>th</sup> August 2018**.

Please note that all children must wear proper black school shoes. All black trainers are not acceptable. Thank you for your support.

**School Trends**



**Summer Holiday Club**

Work starts on the Y6 classroom, cloakroom and the School Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> July and will continue until 31<sup>st</sup> August. As a consequence it will not be possible to have a holiday club on the school premises this summer. Thank you.

**PTFA Friday Fayre**

What a fantastic event today's Friday Fayre has been! It was amazing! There were stalls, inflatables, the Y5 Enterprise Challenge, football, 'supersoaker' area, music displays – so much to see and do! It was also an opportunity to relax at the end of a long week and catch up with friends. The atmosphere was amazing and the hard work of the PTFA and all the volunteers who came together to support them was just incredible!

Events like this do not just happen. They require the drive and determination of people who care so passionately about our community – our children and families – that they just have to get involved and offer their services to make a difference.

Events like this also rely on people turning up, and to all those who made the effort to turn out in order to support our magnificent PTFA, I also say a huge thank you! Today was all about community. It was about everyone joining together because we all care deeply about St John Fisher School. I am so grateful to the PTFA and everyone who supported us today. I am so proud to be part of such a special community. Thank you all!







### **SJF International Week 2018**

The children have been investigating different areas of the world this week. Please check out the class pages in the Class Zone for pictures. More will be published in the newsletter next week.

### **Statement to Live By**

Next week our 'Statement to Live By' will be **"I try to accept the forgiveness of others"**

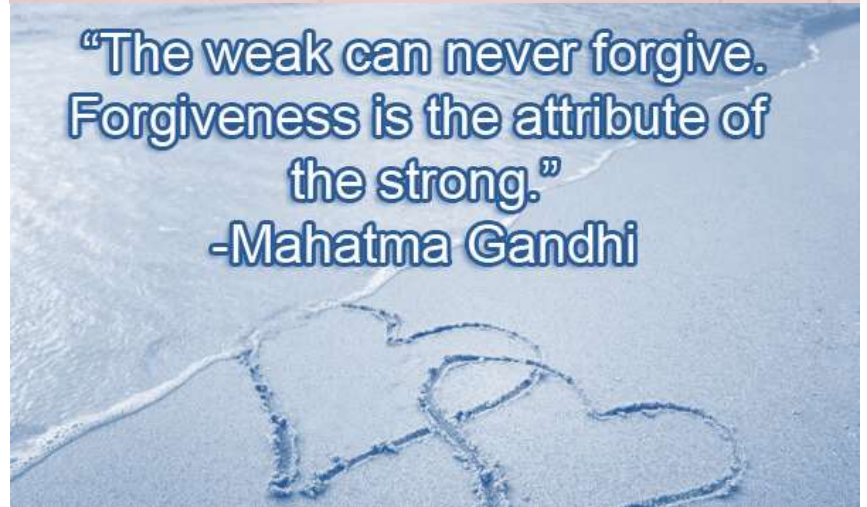
**Time to talk:** To be forgiven is a gift. Sometimes it is a gift that is difficult to accept because we feel too ashamed. Sometimes we feel so bad and too unworthy to accept the forgiveness of others. God calls to accept the forgiveness of those we hurt if we are truly sorry. He died on a cross so that we can receive this gift. He therefore calls us to not be afraid; to trust in Him; and to accept the forgiveness of others.

The act of forgiveness is an act of love. God is love. By accepting forgiveness we are accepting God – and we are choosing freedom...

There is no love  
without forgiveness,  
and there is no  
forgiveness without  
love.



**"The weak can never forgive.  
Forgiveness is the attribute of  
the strong."  
-Mahatma Gandhi**



Best wishes,

Mr Barratt

(Come on England! ☺)