

7th March 2017

Dear Parents and carers

You may have heard about the campaign that Headteachers in other counties, such as West Sussex have launched, in order to protest at the lack of school funding and the effect on our children and young people.

Headteachers and governors in East Sussex have decided to do something similar and we would like to ask you to join in. This letter, sent to parents of primary and secondary age children across East Sussex, is an appeal for help. We need to let local and central government know that school funding is in crisis. We are using all channels available to us but as parents we feel they might listen to you.

We are starting by lobbying our local MPs and trying to get them to ask the government to help with the rising costs for schools. Individual schools will be doing this too, but we would like to ask you to write to your MP as parents to protest about the effects of funding cuts in schools.

The government claims that funding for schools has remained the same, but they do not mention that all schools face rising costs due to inflation and other extra charges recently introduced by the government. According to the National Audit Office, this will equate to £3 billion less by 2020.

As a result, Headteachers across East Sussex are having to look very hard at our provision for pupils and we are considering decisions that would result in:

- Larger class sizes and fewer teachers and senior staff
- School buildings falling into disrepair
- Cuts to pastoral services including teaching assistants and support staff in general
- Outdated computer equipment
- Fewer GCSE and A Level options in secondary schools
- Fewer trips and after school activities that have previously been subsidised or offered free

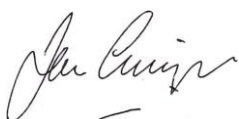
The Rye Academies are in a similarly challenging position and, whilst always putting the children and their education first, will have to make a number of changes along the lines described above in order to stay within our financial boundaries.

Overleaf, we provide contact details for the MPs who cover East Sussex, and some tips on writing the letter. We want MPs to know that the government's policy of cutting funding for schools by not supporting us with such increased costs is unpopular and that they should not support it if they want our votes. Therefore it is important that we all write individually, even if your letter is very short.

For more detailed information on the funding crisis and the impact it is having on schools nationally please see our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Gillespie".

Ian Gillespie
Acting Principal Rye College/Rye Studio



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If you are not used to communicating formerly with your MP, the following guidance has been supplied by East Sussex Schools and may be helpful.

Tips for writing letter to MP as suggested by the Chair of the East Sussex Governor Representative Group

Ideas to start your letter:

"I am writing because I am unhappy about the lack of money in schools."

"I wanted to say that I don't think it's right that schools are getting less money"

"I have heard that real term funding to schools is being cut."

Ideas for the middle of your letter:

Mention the specific things you are unhappy about. You could include anything you have experienced or heard of, such as your child being taught in larger classes, or your child's school not being able to run enough GCSE options, or problems with school buildings.

Eg "My child is unhappy because there are not enough teachers at her school to run the GCSE she wants to do."

Or "My child is experiencing stress and mental health issues, but his school cannot afford a counsellor for him. This is causing my family great unhappiness."

Ideas to end your letter:

Tell your MP what you want from them. They will listen, because they want your vote!

Eg "I would support for you if you spoke in public about the need for schools to have enough money."

"I would like to see you asking questions about the lack of funding in schools."

"I think good MPs should support their constituents by asking for more money for schools."

Rt. Hon. Amber Rudd MP

Swallow House, Theaklen Dr, St Leonards-on-sea TN38 9AZ

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