

CDN

17 March 2017

Dear Parents

Re: Organisational Change and Herald and Post Article dated 16th March 2017

I am writing to advise you that the School is undergoing a process of Organisational Change.

As many of you are aware, schools across the country are facing unprecedented challenges in respect of their funding and trying to 'make the books balance'. Ickniel High School is just one of thousands of schools who need to make significant and substantial adjustments to the way in which they will need to operate in the future.

The School has already made substantial savings over the last few years but has now reached the point whereby it needs to consider the next steps in securing the financial position of the School whilst prioritising the education of the students here.

Organisational Change is not new and many schools across the country have implemented the process including schools within this Local Authority.

The Reasons

Whilst the Government have insisted they have 'protected' the schools' budgets, their choice of words has always been careful and over the last three years, Ickniel's budget has declined by over £300,000.

There is expenditure coming into the School which has not been funded by central government and this is as follows:

1. Annual pay rise for teachers and support staff
2. Staff appraisal outcomes
3. The Living Wage
4. Employer National Insurance Contribution rise
5. Employer Pension Contribution rise
6. Compulsory Work Place Pension Opt-in
7. The Apprenticeship Levy
8. Increased Service Costings above the rate of inflation
9. New National Formula Funding for Schools resulting in a reduction of income

All schools across the country are subject to the same pressures to varying degrees. This includes those who have faced or are facing deficit budgets and have already gone through Organisational Change; they are likely to have to do it again.

The Current Position

The School is currently in a period of consultation as part of the Organisational Process. The posts identified as being 'at risk' pertain to support staff and not teaching staff. Once the consultation process has been concluded, the Governing Body will decide the extent to which the Organisational Change Plan will be implemented from not at all, to partial or to full implementation.

The Herald and Post Article

I can fully appreciate why our decision at this time has drawn the attention of the local press particularly as school funding is national news. I need to correct two very important inaccuracies which have been reported.

Firstly, the £1m whilst headline grabbing, is not accurate as the article has simply added £250k to £750k whereas the figure the projected deficit is from £250k in 2017-18 TO £750k in 2018-19. This would be the situation if the School took no action to remedy the projected deficit.

Secondly, towards the end of the article there is a reference to 28 teacher job losses at Icknield in 2019 and this is based on the inaccuracies of the £1m. This figure has been reached based on assumptions which are simply not true.

The Future

The future is a very difficult thing to predict but all we can do is plan for it and manage for it in the best ways we can. Our priority will always be to provide the best possible education for the young people who come to Icknield and to recruit and retain the best quality staff we can. The single greatest asset of this School always has been, its staff but it is also the single greatest expenditure.

We are therefore faced with some unpalatable decisions and this will be a very difficult time for the School and all those within it. The School will continue to review all of its expenditure to ensure the best value for money and to ensure any monies spent have a positive impact on the quality of education we provide at Icknield.

Should parents, individually, collectively and as a community, wish to raise this issue with the local MPs, I would fully support this action. Perhaps by doing so, the Government will begin to recognise that by funding its existing schools to the appropriate levels, schools are more likely to deliver a world class education from which the whole country and all of society will reap the benefits.

Yours sincerely



Mr C W Dean
Headteacher