

The Right Honourable Justine Greening MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary House, Great Smith Street  
LONDON  
SW1P 3BL

Barnet Business Managers and Directors  
C/o Wren Academy  
Hilton Avenue  
LONDON  
N12 9HB

8 February, 2017

Dear Secretary of State

We work as Business Managers and Directors in schools in Barnet, an area of educational excellence. We are concerned that funding cuts and rising costs, largely resulting from Government, are putting that excellence at high risk.

The National Audit Office (NAO) has recently reported that the Department for Education (DfE):

*'estimates that mainstream schools will have to find savings of £3.0 billion to counteract cumulative cost pressures'*

But that:

*'The Department's savings estimates do not take account of the cost implications for schools of its policy changes'*

This is of great concern to schools. It would appear some policy base assumptions are incorrect and the full impact of changes are not understood. These include:

- Rates at which efficiency savings can be made
- Needs for re-training and new process automation
- Losses in operational flexibility
- Increases required in staff productivity
- Potential redundancy costs
- The effect on Teaching quality and Student outcomes

The expected savings, as well as changes to pension and National Insurance payments, pay rises promoted by the Department, and cuts to funding, such as the Education Services Grant, present significant challenges for all schools. For the losers under the National Funding Formula, as the majority of us we will be, these challenges will be further magnified.

The formula will place a greater proportion of the cuts on fewer schools, increasing the problems that we, in Barnet, will face. Your Department may see this as a zero sum, in which losers are balanced out by winners. However, not enough attention is being paid to the effect of this change. As losers we will have little choice but to reduce our offer, diluting our success further than other schools, resulting in measurable reductions in quality.

No one is going to get what they want under the National Funding Formula. Winners will want their funding topped up instantly. Losers will need a grace period of more than two years to adjust and make further efficiency savings, and there is a real possibility that the changes are unlikely to improve student outcomes.

This is because winners under the scheme are likely to use gains to mitigate against making additional savings and managing increased costs, rather than spending to improve teaching and learning. Why would they not?

Losers will have no room for such mitigation. It is easy to see that standards in good and outstanding schools could fall. It is difficult to see how this leads to opportunities to improve education.

Whilst we are not opposed to a more even distribution of funding to schools, the Department could help ensure that standards do not drop by maintaining funding levels for Losers under the NFF, rather than imposing funding reductions. Barnet schools, amongst others, will see a cut in real terms to their budgets. The £394M recently reclaimed by the Treasury following the abandonment of the plan to move all schools to Academy status could have usefully been put to this purpose.

The DfE standard response to public comment is to state that education funding has been protected and more is being spent on Education than ever before. This does not address the issue at the school level. On a per student basis funding is not increasing. Costs are.

It also increases the difficulty for us, as we have to pick our way between conflicting information. As professional managers we are already making savings, up to and including staffing cuts. We are not replacing staff who leave, cutting teaching and support provision, reducing spending on text books, and we will inevitably have to consider passing some of our costs onto parents.

All of this is happening now, before these further savings have to be made. It is our growing view that we can continue to make savings or we can continue to provide a better education. It is unrealistic to ask for both.

The Department appears to be behind the curve on this issue. There is, potentially, a very serious funding issue coming to the fore, which could damage the education of students. It is disappointing that the NAO also makes clear that the Department is not yet providing the necessary support to schools.

What additional help, over and above what is currently being done, is the DfE going to provide?

Yours sincerely



MGB

Melanie Barker, School Business Manager, Bishop Douglas Catholic School – Loses £94,000 under NFF



Ruth Charteris

Ruth Charteris, Business Manager, Wessex Gardens Primary School – Loses £42,000 under NFF



J. Bower

Judith Bower, Bursar, Menorah Primary School  
Loses £40,000 under NFF



E. Bunn

Emma Bunn, School Business Manager, Martin Primary School – Loses £68,000 under NFF



L. Chase

Leanne Chase, Finance Director, the Archer Academy



B. Felmer

Beata Felmer, Group Director of Finance and Operations, AIM Academies Trust - Gains just £28,000 under NFF



S. Giacone

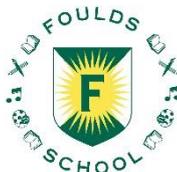
nurture – inspire – excel

Seb Giacone, School Business Manager, St Mary's & St John's CE School – Loses £25,000 under NFF



T. Holford

Tracy Holford, School Business Manager, Henrietta Barnett School – Loses £72,000 under NFF



C. Howell

Catherine Howell, School Business Manager, Foulds Primary School – Loses £32,000 under NFF



*J Katz*

Mrs T Katz, Business Manager, Menorah Foundation School  
Loses £31,000 under NFF



*[Signature]*

Kathryn Latham, School Business Manager, Dollis Junior  
School – Loses £44,000 under NFF



*[Signature]*

Simon Leicester, Finance and Business Director, Hendon  
School – Gains just £11,000 under NFF



Wren  
Academy

*[Signature]*

Marc Lewis, Finance Director, Wren Academy  
Loses £154,000 under NFF



*[Signature]*

Sean McGovern, School Business Manager, St James  
Catholic High School – Loses £12,000 under NFF

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET  
Grasvenor Avenue  
Infant School



*[Signature]*

Diane Merrill, School Business Manager, Grasvenor Avenue  
Infants School and Underhill Primary School – Lose £77,000  
in total



*[Signature]*

Susan Morley, School Business Manager, Monkfrith Primary  
School – Loses £33,000 under NFF



Deansbrook Infant School

Hole Drive Mill Hill NW7 3ED Tel: 020 8959 2192  
Email: office@deansbrookinf.barnetmail.net Web: www.deansbrookinfants.co.uk  
Headteacher: Carol Catley

*[Signature]*

Kay Morrison, School Business Manager, Deansbrook Infant  
school – Gains just £15,000 under NFF



ST. JOHN'S  
C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL



QUEENSWELL  
JUNIOR SCHOOL



Oakleigh School  
& The Early Years Centre



Edgware  
Primary School



Moss Hall Junior School



H.P.S.  
J.S.S.M.



Mill Hill County High School



THE  
COMPTON SCHOOL

National Teaching School  
"Outstanding" Ofsted



Dollis Infant School



EAST  
BARNET  
SCHOOL



"I want to learn"

*Gina North*

Gina North, School Business Manager, St John's C.E. Primary School, Queenswell Junior School and Oakleigh School – Losing £44,000 under NFF

*Neg*

Mrs Nicole Ozin, School Business Manager, Edgware Primary School -- Gains £44,000 under NFF

*Giovanni Pagnotta*

Giovanni Pagnotta, School Business Manager, Moss Hall Junior School – Loses £45,000 under NFF

*A. M. Pearlman*

Arlene Pearlman, School Business Manager, Hasmonean Primary School – Loses £22,000 under NFF

*Maja Raskovic*

Maja Raskovic, Business and Finance Director, Mill Hill County High School – Loses £196,000 under NFF

*Carol Smith*

Carol Smith, Finance Director, The Compton School  
Loses £85,000 under NFF

*Judith Wadsworth*

Judith Wadsworth, School Business Manager, Dollis Infant School – Gains just £7,000 under NFF

*Sue Waters*

Sue Waters, Bursar at East Barnet School  
Loses £151,000 under NFF

National Funding Formula (NFF) figures taken from Government information available at:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/>