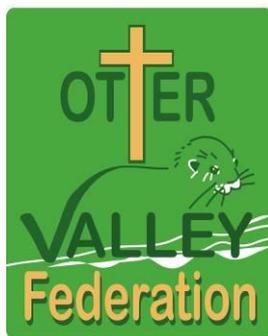


Feniton Church of England
(VA) Primary School
Station Road
Feniton
Devon
EX14 3EA



Tel: 01404 850303
Email: admin@feniton.devon.sch.uk



Tipton St. John Church of England
(VA) Primary School
Tipton St. John
Sidmouth
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EX10 0AG



TIPTON ST JOHN
CHURCH OF ENGLAND VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tel: 01404 812943
Email admin@tipton-stjohn.devon.sch.uk

9th February 2017

Dear Parent or Guardian,

School Funding

You may have seen or read about the ongoing situation regarding school funding on the news recently so we are writing to update you on how the issue impacts upon our federation and our schools.

For many years, schools around the country have been funded at different levels. This has resulted in some schools receiving more money and some schools receiving less. Devon is one of the lowest funded authorities in the country. Currently, the annual funding allocated for a pupil in Devon is £290 less than the national average. For the Federation that is approximately £90,000 per year, every year. (A few years ago we were £460 below the average - that was then a total of £144,000 below the average!). Year on year we have been underfunded.

The government is planning a move towards a National Funding Formula (NFF) which means that funds are spread evenly regardless of where you are based in the country. However, moves to a national funding formula for schools, creating a fairer funding system, will not bring the benefits to our school that we had hoped to see as the effect will be more than offset by the many other pressures facing our school budget at this time.

- National Insurance and pension contributions are going up again meaning we will have to spend more on staff costs.
- Just like home bills, for things like utilities and other goods and services that we buy, the costs are also going up.
- The Government are imposing a tax on organisations from April 2017 requiring us to pay a percentage of our budget back into a pot known as the 'Apprenticeship Levy'.
- Finally, the Local Authority is providing far fewer services to schools than they once did. This means that we now have to pay for these services ourselves, with no extra funding. One effect will be reduced support, both financial and advisory, for pupils with special needs.

In recent years the federation has worked hard at trimming costs while maintaining the educational experiences for the children. We are now having to look at substantial and significant cuts to balance our budget for the next 3 years.

Many Headteachers and Governing Boards have been writing to their MPs and recently, on 18th January, Devon MPs led by Hugo Swire met with the DFE to put the case for better funding.
<http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Guide>

A new website calculates the effect of rising costs against reducing budgets for each school to show the effect by 2019/20:

- Feniton Church of England Budget reduction £49,716
- Tipton St. John Church of England reduction £ 7,932

(Unfortunately we shall have to cut significantly more than that to set the three year balanced budget)

The broader picture is that 98% of schools nationally show a reduction in their budget and that Devon's reduction is a massive £35,157,274; £401 per pupil, the equivalent of 943 fewer teachers.

What can you do to help?

Visit www.schoolcuts.org.uk

- sign up to the petition and
- email your MP. (This is made easy to do through the site.)

Our school is not alone. The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has shown that more than half (55%) of school leaders in a recent survey felt that their deficit would be untenable by 2018/19. Funding pressures are being felt across all phases and in all schools, not just our own.

Please be assured that the school will take the utmost care with budgets, to ensure all the money we have is spent effectively on your children. Plus that we will continue to lobby local MPs and work with the Devon Association for Primary Heads (DAPH), National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) and Devon Association for Governors (DAG).

We are sorry if this letter makes for some difficult reading but we feel it is important to let you know of the challenges we are facing as a federation and for each of our schools with regards to funding so that you can better understand what is happening. We are of course always available to talk to you about this matter if you would find that helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Colin Butler
Executive Headteacher
Otter Valley Federation

John Sherwood
Chair of Governors
Otter Valley Federation

Amanda Parsons
Head of School Feniton CofE

Michael Tuckett
Head of school Tipton St. John CofE