

HEADTEACHER BULLETIN

Aiming High, Celebrating Success



Number 2

15th March 2018

WorthLess?

You will no doubt have read in the media this last week or so that concerns continue to grow about the level of school funding currently 'on offer' in the UK.

7,000 of my headteacher colleagues (across all sectors of education) have written to their parent bodies which equates to millions of families across England. One of the key requests in that letter is that all headteachers (me included) would like parents to lobby their MPs and the government for more money to help schools.

I would like to share a key paragraph below from the letter with you.

Our schools are in a critical position and our MPs need to make this point loud and clear. Headteachers all agree that above all else we urgently need two main things:

- *The basic level of funding (Age Weighted Pupil Unit) to increase significantly for all schools so that they can function adequately.*
- *Additional resource and money to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).*

In light of this, we are urging all parents to contact their local MP to request greater levels of support. We must underline that there is no political agenda to our work. All we want is a fairer and better deal for the children and families that we serve.

At HCJS we are in a better position than many, but don't let the shiny LCD screens in the classrooms or the new library lull you into a false sense of security. Without very prudent financial planning from the school and governors over a number of years we would be in a very dark hole indeed. Running a school budget in a growing school is extremely challenging. The majority of our budget is calculated on the number of pupils on roll on census day each October. This calculates the budget allocated for the following financial year. For example, October 2018 census included 307 pupils so calculates our budget received in April 2019, but we currently have 319 pupils! Therefore our budget for Financial Year 19/20 is based on 307 pupils and not the actual number we have in school. Therefore this year, we are effectively educating 12 children for free! This has been the case for several years. The council awarded us some growth funding when we increased our admission number from 82 to 90 and this is currently covering this lagged budget, but will only do so until 2020/21.

I have never been a particularly militant headteacher (or person) and I usually try to be pragmatic about that which I cannot control, however I see a lot of value in standing up against what I see as damaging for our education system...

Last year, the 'WorthLess?' group organised a rally outside Parliament that drew an unprecedented number of state school headteachers from around England. More than 2,000 school leaders attended the protest to draw attention to budget cuts their schools have faced. I did not attend, but if they organise another, I am very likely to be there.

Operating in such an environment makes the nurture of 'partnerships' ever more important. To do the best for our pupils, fundraising, doing more with less and sharing good practice & resources are increasingly needed. The PTA is one way we can achieve these aims and we need your help! The new committee held a very productive meeting a couple of weeks ago and it was agreed that improved communication about their aims and objectives is needed; to that end I have agreed to give them a regular slot in this bulletin, the first of which appears below. Please show this new committee your support by helping out wherever possible.

HCJS is part of many networks and partnerships - some which you may be aware of and many you probably aren't. Three such groups are The Thame partnership, The Bernwode group (a local Buckinghamshire partnership) and The Stoke Mandeville Sports partnership. There are potentially many others. As the PTA article suggests, working with local businesses is one area that we may not have taken advantage of enough in the past. That said, it is something we have started to consider. Earlier this year Dandara homes started to help us with our new quiet garden and next week I am meeting with representatives of Leyland DAF, who have recently moved to Haddenham and are keen to support our school.



Oh I do like to be beside the seaside

Talking of partnership (and indeed friendships) myself, Mrs McNeil (HCIS) and Mrs Collett (Haddenham St Mary's) are currently in Brighton for the annual Buckinghamshire Headteacher conference. This time with colleagues will allow us all to reflect on our professional and personal practice, challenge preconceptions and celebrate the successes of the last 12 months. All three Haddenham Schools have an excellent working relationship with one another and I feel fortunate that I work in a village community alongside like-minded colleagues who want to work closely together for the benefit of all children in Haddenham. Given the nature of the challenges outlined above this can only be a very good thing.

Until next month.

Andy Leach

Please follow me on twitter: @HCJSHeadteacher

News from the PTA

The new PTA committee have been discussing lots of ideas and putting plans in place for upcoming events for the children and for parents and carers too. Please see below some upcoming dates for your diary.

We have two important fundraising targets:

Mr Leach has informed us about his hopes to erect two essential temporary rooms to enable the school to continue to support the wider curriculum as it grows as the last spare classroom will be filled next year.

1. **An arts room** - a dedicated, central space capable of fitting 8-12 people for music lessons, and particularly for peripatetic musical instrument teachers. This would be a useful extra small space for a number of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, which could be erected within a short timescale.
2. **An extra mobile classroom** for larger groups to accommodate extra lessons which until now have been held in spare classrooms. This extra classroom would give more flexibility to the timetable and facilitate further extra-curricular activities. This is a more expensive and longer-term project for which we need substantial funding, alongside matched funding which will be sought from Bucks County Council and other sources.

We have some ambitious plans for fundraising events and initiatives to help us raise money for these important additions to the school. *In addition, please could we also ask you to inform us of any local businesses which might be willing to donate or offer sponsorship. Could you also let us know if any of your employers offer a matched funding scheme. Please contact us with any fundraising suggestions at haddenhampta@gmail.com or chat to any of the committee.*

Many thanks

Your committee

Sara Barnes, Cassy Childs, Bhav Dalay, Lorraine Durand, Liz Evans, Caroline Grey, Tarak Gorai, Lara Hillman, Emily Jeffrey, Lucy Peel, Magali Wheeler, Stacey Wyatt.

PTA Dates for the diary

Friday 29 th March	Mufti Day & Years 3 & 4 Bake Sale £1 for mufti and Years 3 & 4 to bring in cakes to sell after school
2 nd - 4 th April	Bugsy Malone - the PTA will be serving refreshments at all performances
Friday 26 th April	The school disco is back! 5.30 - 6.30pm Years 3 & 4 6.45 - 8pm Years 5 & 6 Further details to follow
Friday 24 th May	Mufti Day - £1
TBC	Year 6 Leavers' Disco
Friday 19 th July	Year 5 & 6 Bake sale
Wednesday 24 th July	End of term Mufti Day - £1
In the pipeline	Summer Family Funday! Haddenham Fun Run New Parents Welcome event And much more...