

STEELSTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL and NURSERY UNIT

40 Steelstown Road, Derry BT48 8EX

Telephone 028 7135 1830 Fax 028 7135 0175

email info@steelstown.derry.ni.sch.uk



Dear Parents/Guardians

9 October 2018

We the Principals representing the Catholic Maintained, Controlled, Integrated and Irish Medium Sectors are writing to inform you about the unprecedented financial pressures that have been placed on our school budgets over the past four years. The amount of funding that we are receiving for each child has been reduced by approx. 4% (£70 per child). This amounts to a considerable reduction in funding when you consider the numbers of children attending our schools. Before this reduction was made schools were struggling to address the educational and emotional needs of our pupils.

At present and based on the financial cuts in education the following are giving us cause for grave concern as they are an inevitable outcome of these cuts;

- Increased class sizes.
- Composite classes being introduced
- More demands placed on parents/staff to pay for costs incurred by the school
- Reduction in teaching staff and support staff
- Charging for before and after school clubs/supervision
- Support for children with additional and special educational needs affected
- Essential maintenance works not being carried out
- Support agencies, such as counselling and educational psychology will see longer waiting lists for referrals and interventions
- Reduced spend on essential curriculum resources – books, stationery etc.
- School swimming programmes/music and art provision/ trips becoming unaffordable
- Maintaining/raising standards and educational provision becoming more difficult
- Morale among all sectors of education at an all-time low
- Added stress and workload on all staff

This is also compounded by the fact that other areas in the UK have significantly better funding for education than Northern Ireland even though there is 25% of Northern Ireland suffering poverty whilst the rest of the UK has 11%.

Consequently, if funding is not increased, we will not be able to continue to deliver the high quality educational standards that we have become accustomed to and which our children have experienced in the past and have a right to expect.

If we fail to invest in our children, then we are failing them. We appeal to our politicians to put whatever difficulties they currently have aside and get the Executive up and running again to deal with the current crisis in Education.

As educators we have always been proud of the high standards that we have been able to deliver in all of our schools in Derry throughout the years. However, all of this is being compromised and threatened by the lack of financial support and political support that we are being given to run our schools.

As a group of principals we feel that you, the parents, need to be aware of the profoundly negative impact that these cuts are having on your children's education. We would like all of our parents to get behind our schools and to use whatever influence that you might have to encourage our political representatives to move this situation forward.

We need the amount of money that we receive for each child to be restored to at least its original value, or more, so that our schools can continue to deliver high quality education to our children. Our children deserve nothing but the best and anything less is simply unacceptable.

Mrs S. Gillen and The Principals of Primary Schools listed below

Broadbridge P.S., Bunscoil Cholmcille, Chapel Road P.S., Faughanvale P.S., Glendermott P.S. & Nursery Unit, Good Shepherd Primary and Nursery School, Greenhaw Primary and Nursery School, Groarty Integrated P.S., Hollybush Primary and Nursery School, Holy Child P.S., Holy Family P.S., Longtower P.S., Model P.S., Nazareth House Primary and Nursery School, Oakgrove IPSN, Our Lady of Fatima PS: Listress site, Our Lady of Fatima PS: Mullabuy site, Rosemount Primary & Nursery School, Saint Eithne's P.S., St. Brigid's Primary and Nursery School, St. Columba's P.S., St Colmcilles Claudy, St. Eugene's P.S., St. John's P.S., St. Oliver Plunkett P.S., St. Patrick's P.S., St. Paul's Primary and Nursery School, St. Thérèse's P.S., Steelstown P.S.,