



# St. James The Great

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Dear parent or guardian,

You may have seen a number of stories in the press around school funding. There have been worrying headlines and we felt it important that we let you know, as far as we are able at this stage, how this will affect our school.

School budgets across the country have been under pressure for some time. The Institute of Fiscal Funding has indicated that real terms cuts are accruing at somewhere between 8-10% of budgets. This takes into account changes to pension funding and inflationary changes to costs that schools experience.

Our school is not alone. The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has shown that more than half of school leaders felt that their budget would be untenable by 2018/19. The National Audit Office estimate a £3 billion real terms cut across all phases and in all schools.

The recent headlines have been caused by a proposed new funding formula for schools, designed to create a fairer allocation. However with increasing costs placed onto all schools the new formula will not bring the benefits that we had hoped to see. The [schoolcuts.org.uk](http://schoolcuts.org.uk) website, analysing DfE data, initially projected that this would mean the school losing approximately £235,000, this has now been reduced to £165,654. I am cautious regarding these figures as I have no information about how the figure has been calculated. The Government keeps stating that they are spending the most money ever on education, £40 billion. This is disingenuous though as it includes £500,000,000 for academy conversions, which has now been taken back by the Treasury and the money allocated to the setting up of Free Schools and new Grammar schools. The Government has stated that no school will be more than 3% worse off under the new funding arrangements for next year, which would be significantly lower than the projection above, but going forwards there are no guarantees.

We will work hard to ensure that cuts have the least impact on teaching possible. I am meeting with the Umbrella Trust Heads and Chairs on Governors on Thursday to review our progress so far on financial efficiencies.

Please be assured that we will take the utmost care with budgets, to ensure all the money we have is spent effectively on your children. We are also letting the local authority and government know just how serious the funding crisis has become. I expressed grave concern to our MP Steve Reed in January and he is setting up a meeting for me with the Chair of Croydon council, we will also discuss the impact of the pension deficit that every school in Croydon is having to find money to help solve this problem.

We have just received our indicative budget, so will be looking closely at this once we have all the information from Croydon. Once we have all of this information, I will be in a better position to have a view on how the school will be affected. We promise to let you know you in plenty of time if our budget means we'll have to take a significant decision on staffing or activities.

Yours sincerely,

C. Andrew



A Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Southwark.

St James the Great R.C. Primary and Nursery School in a charitable company limited by guarantee.

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