

## Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

### Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

#### Cyllido Ysgolion yng Nghymru | School Funding in Wales

#### SF 33

#### Ymateb gan: Fitzalan High School

#### Response from: Fitzalan High School

*1. The sufficiency of provision for school budgets, in the context of other public service budgets and available resources:*

WG had initially promised the same amount to Local Authorities for 2018 – 19 as 2017 - 18, to pay for teachers' pay rises and pension costs. WG has however, confirmed that it is covering pay rises but not pension costs. In addition there are many staff in school who are not on teachers' pay and conditions who do not have their pay rises or pension costs covered by the funding allocated for schools by WG. This has put additional pressure on school budgets.

Also, energy costs and other related costs have increased and schools will have to absorb these, as higher utility costs are not covered by any increases in funding.

In addition, the MEAG is due to cease in 12 months' time which will have a massive negative impact. The PDG and EIG are not increasing and are not keeping pace with inflation and pay rises. New WG legislation with regard to eligibility for fsm puts a net income cap of £7,600 on FSM eligibility. Changes to income support and eligibility criteria for immigrants also removes additional pupils from eligibility for FSM. This means there are now only 16 schools with more than 30% of pupils eligible for FSM compared to 24 schools last year even though the levels of deprivation in Wales have not decreased. This increases the experience of deprivation for families; in our

school an increasing number of pupils, who are now no longer eligible for FSM, are going through the whole day without eating.

2. *The extent to which the level of provision for school budgets complements or inhibits delivery of the Welsh Government's policy objectives:*

The 'real terms' cut in funding means that the WG policy directive of eliminating deprivation, improving provision and outcomes for pupils, and, supporting the UNICEF Rights of the Child are not being met, specifically Articles 24, 26 and 27. Grant funding is quite often short term, and sporadic and there is quite a lot of bureaucracy involved in receiving the funding, which makes the administration costs very high. When grant funding is available, the size of the school or cluster is not taken into consideration e.g., for the Welsh Language cluster grant, our cluster with 10 schools was allocated the same amount of funding as other clusters with only 3 or 4 schools.

3. *The relationship, balance and transparency between various sources of schools' funding, including core budgets and hypothecated funding:*

There is currently no transparency between LAs regarding school funding. There is a lack of transparency, even for hypothecated funding. For example, in theory, funds are 'delegated', but in practice they are used to fund central services that maintained schools have to buy into. Once funding is received by the LA from WG, there is no guarantee that the full increase will be transferred from each LA to the school.

The new ALN bill is changing the way pupils' additional learning needs are being met. There is a danger that the funding available for pupils who are currently receiving additional interventions will be cut.

Balance between schools is often not transparent. For example, the allocation of attendance officer funding (which is delegated to schools)

should use objective data such as the size of the school and level of deprivation. However, this does not happen.

4. *The local government funding formula and the weighting given to education and school budgets specifically within the Local Government Settlement:*

Our LA has made some attempts to protect school budgets in the past, but because of the difficulty of the settlement this year that is not going to happen. In your own briefing document, on Page 6, you state that there has been a 7.9% real terms decrease in funding for schools.

5. *Welsh Government oversight of how Local Authorities set individual schools' budgets including, for example, the weighting given to factors such as age profile of pupils, deprivation, language of provision, number of pupils with Additional Learning Needs and pre-compulsory age provision:*

You state that in 2018 - 19 £5,675 is budgeted per pupil. For my school that amount is over £500 less at £4,968. However for other schools in my LA the value per pupil is £6,082 for one school and £6,442 for another school. Our school is being treated less favourably with regard to funding allocation per pupil.

In addition, once the MEAG ends my school will not be able to provide an effective education as currently over 70% of pupils have English as an additional language. This coupled with the fact that 60% come from the most deprived areas of Wales using the WIMD means that the needs of individual pupils will not be met.

6. *Progress and developments since previous Assembly Committees' reviews (for example those of the **Enterprise and Learning Committee in the Third Assembly**):*

I do not have in depth knowledge of progress and developments since previous assembly committees.

*7. The availability and use of comparisons between education funding and school budgets in Wales and other UK nations.*

My school often links with similar schools in England. On average, schools of similar size and profile in England that we are aware of, receive approximately £1m more than we do in Wales, which equates to approximately £600 per pupil.