



TORQUAY GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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Dear Parent

In June, I am speaking at a conference outlining the challenges and opportunities that being a Headteacher in one of the country's highest achieving schools provides, and having started reflecting on what I will say, I think my main theme will be to outline what a privilege it is to work with such humorous, generous and hard-working young people. I will also say what a responsibility it is to give them the best education we can. Here at TGGs I am fortunate in being ably supported in this aim by working alongside highly committed teaching and non-teaching staff. The result of their dedication and of your daughter's determination to do well is that we are now in the top 5% of schools in the country for the progress the girls make. This should help your daughters to feel empowered to fulfil whatever aspirations they have and to know that hard-work gives great satisfaction.

However, I reluctantly have to acknowledge that the stark reality is that the quality of this education is under threat due to the speed of the financial cuts being placed upon us. We fully accept that we need to manage our finances prudently, and that in these uncertain post austerity, pre-Brexit days, cuts are inevitable, but the sudden scale of them is very challenging indeed. Our projected budget for 2018-19 is £500,000 less than it was in 2011, even though we have 100 more students.

I have troubled you before on this issue, and would like to sincerely thank those of you who have responded so positively. I am encouraged by the number of parents who have got involved with their local politician, the media and the Department for Education, as well as those of you who already contribute to our school fund.

You will also know that I, and the Heads of Churston Ferrers Grammar School and Torquay Boys' Grammar School, visited Nick Gibb, MP, to express our concerns; we were listened to very cordially but as yet, there has been no movement from the Government on the one aspect of the cuts that we addressed with him. We have now written to the Prime Minister to outline our concerns. In it we have pointed out that whilst the Government are keen on more grammar schools and excellence in education, those that already exist are finding it almost impossible to maintain the very quality of education that is admired and wished to be replicated.

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So, why am I writing to you? It is with regret that I once again ask if there are any other parents who feel they are in a position to contribute so that we can maintain most of what we already have. I fully appreciate that what is affordable to one family may well not be to another, and there will be many of you who simply are not in a position to help. In addition, many of you will be philosophically opposed to the principle of contributing financially towards a state education, a view I understand and respect more than you may think. If you are in either of these categories, we respect your decision and position.

However, if you are able and willing to help, then please do so. I feel uncomfortable in specifying a figure for a financial contribution, but in response to the parents who have asked for an indication of a suitable amount to donate, an average of **£72 per year, or £6 a month**, if given by all the families who are in a position to help, would not eradicate the financial situation we find ourselves in, but would allow us to maintain most of our frontline services both educationally and with regard to student welfare. I must point out that all donations, large or small, are genuinely appreciated and entirely voluntary.

I am very grateful for the supportive comments from so many parents on this issue. I do not enjoy writing such letters, but have enjoyed reading your positive letters in response.

Thank you again for your support.

Yours sincerely



Dr Nicholas Smith
Headteacher

You can donate by setting up a standing order using the attached form or on-line. Contact Mrs Sally Stone if you require any assistance with this 01803 653 760