



Bishop Wordsworth's School

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Dear Old Wordsworthian

Bishop Wordsworth's School has not been immune from the pressures on the public finances. In recent years we have weathered annual reductions of over £80 per pupil for Years 7 to 11 and £195 per pupil in the Sixth Form. Further pressures this year come from increases in our contribution to the Teachers' and Local Government Pension Schemes, as well as the loss of employers' National Insurance Contributions contracted out relief. We cannot pass these pressures on, so have had to take the savings on the nose, making economies wherever possible, including, regrettably, some redundancies amongst teaching and support staff. We have also had to limit the number of subject choices at GCSE, cut minority subjects at A level and increase the size of teaching groups across the board.

We work very hard to implement savings across all areas of our budget and to identify new income streams wherever possible. However at present, despite our continuing efforts, we still depend ('rely' does not quite cut it) on voluntary donations to provide our distinctive 'edge' which is so critical in ensuring and sustaining our remarkable academic success. Quite simply, it is because of the magnanimous generosity of current parents and our alumni who recognise the true value of all that Bishop's stands for that we have been able to maintain optimal group sizes for GCSE and A level wherever possible, to continue to deliver a broad curriculum, and to maintain a stable base of dedicated and highly qualified staff.

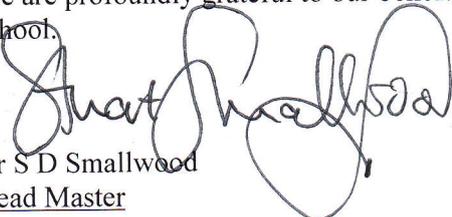
Whilst the economic case for bringing the public finances into balance is clear, schools like Bishop's have no reserves to fall back on. Therefore, despite these reactive measures, the blunt truth is that we will have little option but to increase the number of boys on the roll to maximise our revenue, and we cannot do that unless we have the facilities to accommodate them. More and better classrooms will be needed, so we will need to raise funds for capital improvements.

Out of the post-war high-water mark of about 1,400 grammar schools which catered for the top 25% of the country's pupils, only 164 survive, catering for a very privileged 4% of all pupils. Consequently schools like Bishop's have a disproportionately higher obligation to ensure that our pupils are prepared for the challenges of a changing world and are able to return some of that benefit for the greater good of society. With that in mind we are extremely grateful for all the financial assistance the wider Bishop's community can bring to bear.

Of course, Bishop's has not sat on its hands in the face of these challenges: we are in constant dialogue with our MP advocating a move to a national funding formula, which we believe will lead to a more equitable distribution of public funding amongst secondary schools, but any relief that may afford is still some way in the future.

None of this makes easy reading, but if you would like to help Bishop's remain a school which boxes well above its weight, you might consider a legacy donation. If so, a Bequests Form is available at the link below. For those who might wish to make a more regular contribution, there is also a link to a Gift Aid Declaration Form for our Income Appeal.

We are profoundly grateful to our benefactors; we rely on your support to help us secure and build the future for your school.



Dr S D Smallwood
Head Master