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**Head Master:** Dr S D Smallwood BSc (Hons) PhD NPQH

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Dear Parents/Guardians

As the public exam season draws to a close and the long Summer break beckons, there is a story to be told.

In the last few years while the government's economic policy focus has been on driving down the deficit, we are probably all feeling the pinch. Most of us will have noticed the potholed roads and the untidy verges, many of us will have had to come to terms with fortnightly collections of household waste, all of us are aware of growing NHS waiting lists, and I am sure many rue the passing of the beat Bobby. I need hardly mention the acres of newsprint and hours of media coverage on education funding. I suspect there is still some way to go and despite the current political uncertainties, I do not anticipate any significant change in the overall position.

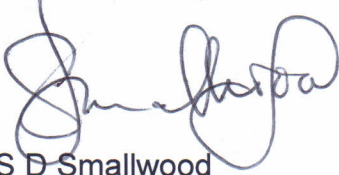
Against that grim backdrop and whilst we're probably not yet out of the woods, Bishop's has managed to weather the storm. To give you some context, in the coming 2017-18 academic year we will receive £417,000 less than we received in 2013-14. However in that time we have built an entire new teaching block, moved our reception from No. 11 to the main site, installed an array of solar panels on the Sixth Form roof, created two new classrooms out of existing internal spaces, made major repairs to Bishopgate, expanded our Advanced Physics laboratory, added a full suite of services to two laboratories to enable the teaching of all science subjects, increased the floor-space for DT, improved Britford Lane, had our first unconditional offer from Harvard, reached the final of a national schools' rugby competition and established the Bishop Wordsworth's School Foundation.

Bishops' Boys have also competed in the upper echelons of regional and national competitions in several other sports, we have hosted master classes in sports and music, run the biggest and most successful Duke of Edinburgh Award unit in Wiltshire, achieved some of the strongest academic progress figures (from one of the highest starting points) and offered what is probably the largest scale provision of Latin and Mandarin in the county too. That all sounds elite – and it is – but at the same time because of the changes in our admissions procedures we have made the school accessible to boys irrespective of their domestic circumstances. When you contemplate that list of achievements alongside the funding cuts of the last few years, I think all of us can be immensely proud of what we manage to do. When we compare how well we perform against the richly funded independent sector pride must surely turn to amazement.

Many of you may not appreciate that we are probably the only grammar school in the South West which has never set a deficit budget during this period of austerity. To achieve that takes sound financial planning and management, the backing of a supportive Governing Body, and committed and diligent staff. However, as the poet, John Donne, famously said, "no man is an island" and the same can be said for a school. Quite simply the decisive factor that has enabled us to 'wash our face' has been the generosity of parents (and grandparents) in contributing to our Income Appeal.

Please therefore allow me, on behalf of the staff, governors and pupils of Bishop Wordsworth's School to say a heartfelt 'thank you'. I hope you manage to find some tranquillity away from the rat race over the Summer ready for the challenges of the next school year!

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S D Smallwood', written in a cursive style.

S D Smallwood  
Head Master