



# Birches Primary School Funding Crisis



Dear Parents

This week our school, along with 631 other schools in Northern Ireland received a letter stating that our budget for 2017/2018 has 'not been approved.'

Currently the budget for each school in Northern Ireland is allocated using different criteria. There is a basic amount for each child in school and then other factors are taken into account including:

- Free school meals
- Number of statemented children
- Number of newcomer families

Despite having a rising enrolment, our budget was significantly lower than expected due to budget cuts. Due to having a low percentage of families on free school meals and no newcomer families at our school we are relying on the basic funding to run our school. It is simply not enough money.

We are unable to stay within our allocated budget and maintain the standard of education for our children which we have always strived to provide.

It is vital that sufficient funds are given to school budgets to enable the delivery of the continued high standard of education, not only in our school but throughout Northern Ireland.

## **How Can Parents Support our School**

There are different ways in which you can help:

- Go to Twitter and Facebook and share your views on why more money needs to be invested in education using the hashtag #FundNISchools.
- Write to your MP/MLA using the template letter from my union, NAHT (link below)
- Attend the next regional event held by the NAHT in Omagh on Thursday 8 February – further information is on the other side of this letter.

For more information on the campaign, template letters and details of our funding events visit

[www.naht.org.uk/fund-ni-schools/](http://www.naht.org.uk/fund-ni-schools/)

The current financial situation is of grave concern to myself and my governors and I hope I have the support of our school community in trying to change the way funding is allocated to schools in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Watson

Principal

