



The Manor

A FOUNDATION SCHOOL WITH A
PERFORMING ARTS SPECIALISM

24th March, 2011

Dear Parents and Carers,

Significant Financial Pressures – updating parents and carers

It is with a heavy heart that I write to inform you about the significant financial pressures the school is facing at present. As parents and carers I feel that it is very important that you are “kept in the loop”.

Due to our extremely high “fixed costs” – all small schools suffer with this - we have found it increasingly difficult to make ends meet especially as budgets are cut. Our fixed costs include the substantial amount we spend on teachers, support staff, intervention, administration and premises.

We are currently re-applying for a deficit license for 2011/12 (rather like an arranged overdraft). This has to be paid back within three years despite the fact that schools’ budgets nationally will be cut dramatically during this time as a result of central government funding cuts. For example, we have already been told that our capital budget for 2011/12 (used for spending on the buildings and ICT equipment) will be cut by 66%!

In order to repay the deficit and to ensure the school is financially viable going forward governors have taken the difficult decision to reduce our staffing levels. As such three members of staff have been given notice to retire in accordance with the school’s Age Retirement Policy which, under current legislation, requires them to retire at 65. Furthermore, we are also reducing staff in three other areas which affects four members of staff. All staff have been consulted in full on the proposals as have their trade unions and the methods of selection have been “entirely open and fair” according to the main trade union.

I ask for your trust and support at this extremely difficult time. I will do everything in my power to ensure that your children’s education remains unaffected. To clarify, unlike many other schools across the country and across the county, **all teaching staff (therefore all subjects) have been protected. No teachers will lose their jobs** with the exception of one teacher who, unfortunately, will be retiring.

Arbury Road, Cambridge CB4 2JF
Tel: 01223 508742 • Fax: 01223 508747
Email: office@themanorcambridge.org

Principal: Ben Slade BA (Hons) Ed, QTS (Wales), NPQH, FRSA
Chair of Governors: Andy Pellew • Chair of Trustees: Roger Salmon

Founder Member of The North Cambridge Community Trust

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You may have heard some rumours about reductions in the support for students with special educational needs. **These are completely untrue.** In fact, we are increasing our support for students with SEN from September 2011 and we will be enhancing the support offered to students of *all* abilities. I will write to you all next term to explain this in more details. We continue to strive to “put students first”.

This is the dark time for all schools. However, I believe this school needs strong leadership now more than ever especially as we negotiate the challenges of the budget and consider the most appropriate status for the school going forward. I can assure you that, despite these changes, we will continue to improve and to grow.

Above all else, I would like to thank staff for their hard work and dedicated service to this great school.

Ben Slade
Principal

Andy Pellew
Chair of Governors

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