

### **Couldn't the Friends of Wateringbury Primary School help?**

The funds raised by the FOWPS volunteers and the wider school community have been vital to our school. This money has enabled us to provide the latest classroom resources like interactive whiteboards and fun facilities and equipment like the playground climbing structures, wooden gazebo and picnic huts. FOWPS has also recently helped us reach our funding target for the library refurbishment. Anything FOWPS raises is a bonus and therefore we have to treat it as such. We hope that FOWPS will continue to fundraise to provide the "extras" which make our school special (and to support other projects as and when it can) but it would be wrong to rely on these funds for essential teaching and learning needs.

### **What will the Voluntary School Fund (VSF) be used for?**

The VSF will help the school to provide resources and equipment which directly support children's education and/or improve the teaching and learning environment. Longer term, we need to look at how we fund projects like extending smaller classrooms.

### **How much will parents be asked to contribute?**

We hope that families will contribute as much as they feel able to. A contribution of even £5 a month (equivalent of 16p a day) would make a big difference. If families are in a position to make a larger donation, we would welcome this.

### **And finally...**

An annual donation to this new fund is a commitment to Wateringbury CE Primary School, your child's education and to the local community. We promise in return to use the funds in the best possible way to support and enhance teaching and learning opportunities for the benefit of the children. **Thank you for your ongoing support.**



## **VOLUNTARY SCHOOL FUND**

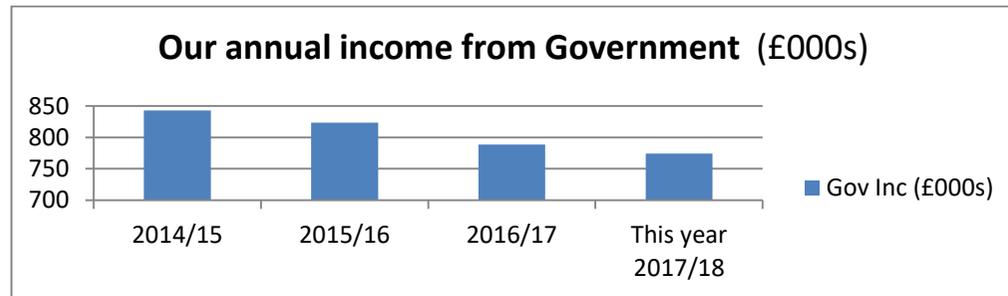
### **Questions and Answers**

## VOLUNTARY SCHOOL FUND

### What has happened to our school funding?

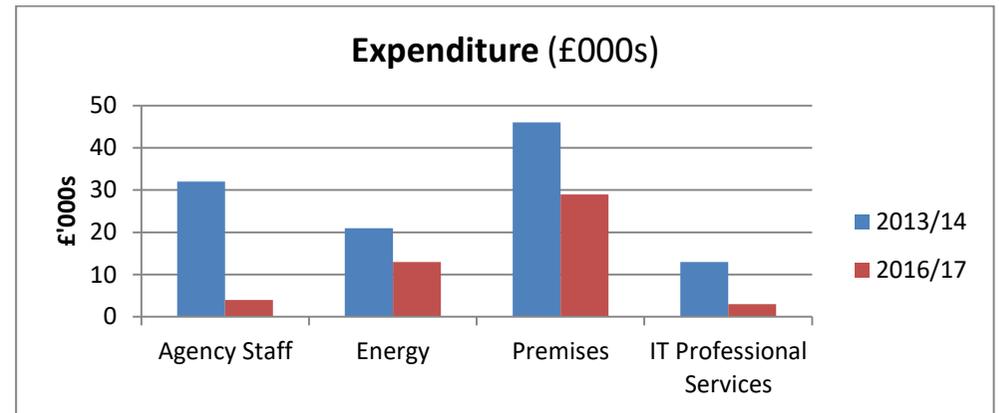
You will know from the widespread media coverage that schools up and down the country are facing rising costs and considerable budgetary constraints. Our school is no different to other schools.

We have not had an increase in the funding we receive for each child over the last 7 years but our costs have risen and continue to rise. The school faces increased running costs, rising energy bills and in April 2016 the Government introduced new rules requiring schools to increase pension contributions and National Insurance contributions for which we have not been compensated. As staffing costs typically equate to around 80% of a school's budget, this makes it all the more difficult to find significant savings in other budget areas.



### What have we done to lower our costs?

We undertake regular and rigorous reviews of our spending in a bid to keep our costs as low as possible. This process is overseen by the school's Governing Body. In recent years we have converted the school's heating system from oil to gas, saving us thousands on energy costs. We have also reduced permanent staffing costs by 7% and reduced supply teacher costs by using our in-house staff wherever possible to cover short-term absences. Midday supervisors who have left the school have not been replaced and instead their duties have been covered by existing staff. We have also carried out a thorough review of longstanding supplier contracts to ensure we are receiving best value.



### Can we cut anything else?

No. We are now at the stage where we cannot cut anything else without it having a detrimental impact on the education on offer to every child at Wateringbury. Instead, we now have to focus on increasing our income through donations and grants.

### What will happen if we don't have a Voluntary School Fund?

Without a School Fund we will be forced to review what we provide in terms of extracurricular and enrichment activities as well as our adult:child ratios. We have trimmed our budgets as much as we can and have worked very hard to maintain the number of teachers and teaching assistants in each classroom. We are very proud of the calibre of the teaching and support staff in our school and this commitment to quality teaching underpins everything we are striving to do at Wateringbury. Any such review would have a detrimental impact on morale, the quality of teaching and learning and also our longer term vision for the school.

Schools across the country are in the same boat - looking at ways to cut costs and generate more income. We believe that establishing a Voluntary School Fund is the most sensible and affordable option for our school. Our Governors, together with subject leaders in school, have also pledged to investigate other potential sources of funding to try and ease the pressures facing our school.