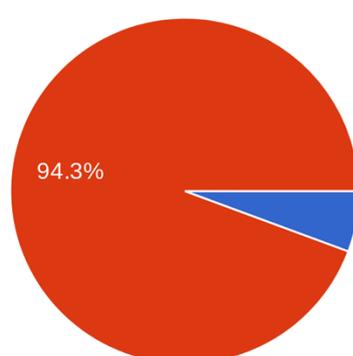


Barnet Primary and Secondary Headteacher Forums

Responses from 53 Barnet schools regarding 2019-20 budget projections and any impact on school resources.

Question

53 responses



- A- The current situation is a challenge to our school but we are able to make adjustments and we do not expect it to have a significant impact on the welfare or education of our students.
- B- 2019-20 budget projections are a serious concern and are likely to seriously undermine the services we can offer to students.

- We are likely to need to make cuts to our staffing in the coming financial year.
- Each year is worse, already restructured last year - will do more this year. Curriculum is being reduced each year too. Quality and choice will suffer.
- My school will be significantly impacted with a reduction of 42K. In addition to this I have a falling roll and low uptake in Year 12, therefore, making my school as a whole extremely vulnerable.
- The only way we are going to be able to set a balanced budget for 2019/20 (and beyond) is by the cutting our support and intervention staff in half (at least). We have reduced numbers by not recruiting in recent years and compromising on what we have previously provided. The only option now is to make significant redundancies (approximately 9 staff based on current calculations) and the children who will be affected are children in our vulnerable groups.
- The situation is extremely serious for us and will impact on our ability to provide the 'extended services' we have now come to take for granted. This means that interventions in place to safeguard children from a number of external challenges and threats will be undermined or removed. There are already a large number of compromises built in to our curriculum offer and class sizes of 35 in some key stage 4 classes for Science, Maths and English.
- Although we can make adjustments this year, this will impact on budget projections for 2020-2021

- Following a restructuring we were aiming for a £0 budget but this now undermines this opportunity and I may need to consider another restructure which is deeply demoralising when the school is already operating with 20% fewer staff than 5 years ago.
- It was difficult to comment at the meeting, as it was only really when seeing the proposal documents which included the amounts to each school, that I was able to see just how much it will impact upon my school. Have seen the budget cuts coming so I haven't replaced staff when they've left etc but we're on a skeleton staff now as it is, and I can't see how I can cut anymore
- At *****, we entered the current financial year with a budget recovery plan already in place. We have cut everything back just to ensure we can repay our deficit. With the planned reductions to school income, I do not see how we can manage to make ends meet in the 19/20 financial year. We will have to restructure TAs to the point that most classes will have no additional support.
- I have huge concerns about the proposed budget cuts and the effect they will have on our children.
- Huge and probably unrealistic reductions in expenditure (resources and supply) allowed us to balance the budget at Oct forecast. Extremely likely to be in deficit by April. 2019/20 cannot be set as we are now. Not actually sure what to do, cutting any more support staff will mean leaving SEN/vulnerable children unsupported. Cutting a leadership post (or removing responsibilities and agreeing salary reductions...unlikely!) might balance the budget for a year but will have a devastating effect on how the school operates and standards. Weakening our structure would be a massive backwards step for the school, the children and the community. We feel as though many years hard work is being strangled and all of the monitoring, scrutiny, drive for improvements etc etc (stressful enough with money!) has to be shelved. I do anticipate cuts in staffing (support staff and not replacing teachers if anyone leaves) and will ask senior staff to take on a flexible approach whereby we meet in the morning at allocate any and every role necessary to keep the school functioning. Highly skilled and experienced teachers plugging the gaps so that teaching and learning can go ahead, the school is clean and tidy and the children are safe/secure. That's if I can motivate them to stay!
- Having to apply for a licensed deficit, make support staff redundant and consider reducing hours further. We are a good school, progress measures particularly good and attainment by the end of KS2 v.good. Last 2 years falling roll due to unpredictability of placement planning - we have taken a hit with numbers.
- We have just emerged from 3 years of a deficit budget. This financial year we are positive. We then move back into a large, ever decreasing deficit next year (April 2019), not even taking into account the proposals. We have already restructured 3 times and have very few options left on the table. Our children's education is already being negatively impacted, however, losing more money will have disastrous consequences. I understand Barnet need the money and I believe the LNIs do a great job but we are certainly between a rock and a hard place.
- We have small contingency (less than £1000) with our current projections. Any further expenditure or any less income would result in the loss of essential staff.
- We are currently looking at restructuring and face having to make staff redundant, which will have a direct effect on the quality of our provision. We have a low staff turnover, so I fear we will not make the savings we have to make to survive through natural wastage alone. This is despite having a surplus in reserves of

£800,000+ two years ago. It is frightening how quickly the reserves will be used up on basic running costs. We could well be insolvent within three years.

- Some Secondary Schools taking in additional places, seemingly unknown to the LA School Places Committee and certainly unknown to all HTs across the LA, has hit us badly in Year 7. For the first time in many years, our intake into Year 7 is much lower than was predicted. 'Good' schools will suffer because of this, and the downward spiral will begin across all these schools.
- We are cutting all unnecessary expenses, but the only effective cuts will be those we now face having to make to staffing.
- The proposal equates to a loss of income to the school of £60,000. Increases to teachers pensions etc will add additional costs in future years. Real term loss of income will be greater than £60,000.
- We will be forced to re structure and lose the last few TAs we have left. We have lost 3 posts from the office, a welfare assistant, two part time teachers who supported in class and we are now cutting the hours of our SENco. Class teachers have very few resources and we ask children to bring in tissues and glue sticks for the classes. We haven't seen the school nurse for over 3 years, we can't afford to buy into EWO or H&S monitoring. We have had to find a different Ed Psych provider as the borough was too expensive and never available. We have had to cut the number of trips we provide for the children as parents can no longer afford to contribute and we were having to fund the shortfall. We have nothing left to cut.
- We will be making cuts to staffing next year as well and we will be left with only support staff supporting children with an EHCP and this will certainly impact on standards as we won't be able to offer all the successful interventions we have been able to run until this year. It will also impact on staff wellbeing as staff are already feeling the strain of cut backs which have been gradually happening over the last few years. Something will have to be done as this can't go on..... We are left to make decisions that we know are not based on what is right for the children.
- We will have to adjust staffing and this means our offer to pupils will be compromised. Specifically, we will have to do without several key roles supporting our most vulnerable learners.
- We will be voting 'no' to the proposals as we cannot afford to increase our contribution by the amount that Barnet proposes. To do so would lead to an undermining of the services offered to our students.
- We are very reliant on parent contributions as a faith school in order to support the wider needs of our school beyond religious education, such as special needs provision for our pupils, alongside topping up funds for LSAs who work one to one. Whilst our academic achievements continue to be high, it comes with a financial cost. Our children are not immune to mental health challenges and anger management issues and we are increasingly having to consider careful measures for pupils who would otherwise be excluded, which also comes with a financial cost. Having to pay careful attention to recruitment and retention of staff and to keep up with quality CPD in order for us to retain our standards and to ensure that we are a positive choice for staff also has cost implications.
- We are already in an in-year deficit, but we will have exhausted our contingency by April 2020. As a ***** we are not sure how the funding proposals will affect us, however, ***** might have to close as a day provision which means that Barnet may lose an outstanding provision. We have already restructured once,

it is possible that we will have to consider a 1 to1 bedside teaching model rather than the whole school curriculum model which we currently have, this will result in an impoverished curriculum for the most vulnerable students and may also mean that it will be harder to reintegrate students back to mainstream after a hospital inpatient stay. With mental health so high on the agenda, cuts to the high needs budget for ***** would be devastating.

- It is time that our local politicians supported us to address this issue
- My budget will be particularly affected in 2020-21. We are already reducing support staff and only renewing on fixed term contracts. We are struggling to support children with SEND effectively due to the rising staffing costs
- As a VA school, this will place intolerable pressures and expectations on the school and Governing Body.
- 2018-19 Budget = £150,000 in year deficit position. Significant cost cutting, including restructuring (6 TA redundancies, the non replacement of 1 teacher and a reduction in office admin hours), was required to balance the budget. I am very concerned about 2019 projections and the school's ability to function effectively!
- We have increased teaching contact time, gone over our PAN to allow 240 students on entry instead of 210. I am operating without a Deputy to save money and as a new Head that is clearly a risk but it is something I feel I need to do! We have had a staffing restructure. Staff well-being is certainly being compromised as is the offer to students. We have raised our concerns with the ESFA and are in regular contact with them.
- As a VA school we are only afloat because an eye-watering 25% of our budget is covered by unsustainable support from our foundation body, which depends on voluntary donations from the parents. Our income from the LA last year was 1.5 million and our salary bill 1.6 million because we retain excellent staff - we have 8 members of staff on UPS3 and just one on M1. We have 9 EHCP children for whom the provision is costing us well in excess of the money we receive and parents are routinely having to fund therapies written into the EHCP but not forthcoming. We receive no pupil premium. We feel we pay a heavy price for being a successful inclusive school. We have cut way back on support and cover staff which is putting huge pressure on senior staff in particular.
- LBB must pass on the total of the funding which the government intend for schools - it is not possible to manage with any less than that and schools are being put at risk. They will simply have to cut services or charge for more of them.
- We will be having to make serious cuts to our provisions for all children including a full restructure meaning the loss of people leaving our children with little or no additional support.
- Have already done a restructure; have to meet needs of SEN but with little resources to do so; by 2020/2021 will be in deficit
- I have reduced the number of support staff such that my level 3 and 4 TAs are having to juggle 1 to 1 support for pupils with EHCPs with intervention and cover roles and this is already impacting on the provision for our most vulnerable pupils and the anxiety and frustration of our very dedicated and capable TAs. Beyond 2020 there is no choice but to cut teaching, admin and TA roles and with all staff working very

hard and efficiently at the moment, this will mean we will have to stop doing much of the work for our SEN and vulnerable groups as it stands now.

- We are running the school on a skeleton staffing. We have over 300 children and do not have a Deputy Head. We have over twice the Nat Av % of EHCPs and many other pupils with complex needs, without EHCPs. The small amount of banded funding that comes into school does not stretch to meet the needs of the SEND pupils we have. It is also concerning that in the current recruiting crisis, inexperienced teachers often have to manage several children with significant needs in their classes, with very little, or no additional adult support. We just hope they don't give up and leave the profession.
- We are categorically in option B and any additional strain on our budget is simply unsustainable.
- We have already had to lose staff. We need to lose more over this and the next financial year. Our ability to support children with their emotional needs and mental health has been undermined. The financial situation will become even more critical the following financial year. I feel that we need to make a stand to protect the very essence of our education system. We need to make our voices heard so that every parent in the country understands what is happening across the board.