



April 2015

Dear Parent/Guardian

We are writing to you personally to ask you to sign up to/review your payments to the BWS Gift Aid Income Appeal Scheme. Regrettably there is no sign of a let-up in the tough financial climate. Indeed you may have seen the Salisbury Journal's report of a parliamentary debate on Grammar School funding in which John Glen MP said that we had faced "increasingly challenging financial settlements, primarily because of the decision to ring-fence the education budget for 5 to 16-year-olds, while the 16-to-18 budget has no such protection. That has had a significant impact, particularly on Bishop Wordsworth's, which faces a deficit of more than £300,000 in its sixth-form budget this year. In the past three years, it has seen a 7% reduction in its sixth-form pupil funding. Next year, it faces a budget deficit of more than £150,000". (*Hansard 13<sup>th</sup> January 2015*)

It would be difficult to put the case more forcefully. Alongside this we have also contributed to a call from the Grammar School Heads' Association to write directly to the Secretary of state for Education to express our concerns at the way in which schools' funding is distributed (our General Annual Grant fell by £103,000 between 2013 and 2014). Put simply, the persistent underlying theme is that amongst secondary schools it is the Grammar Schools that are hardest hit. Moreover it is unlikely that there will be a real increase in our budgetary settlement in the new Parliament. Therefore in order to maintain the very high standards and educational experience (in Lower and Middle Schools, and the Sixth Form) at Bishop's we need to make up the shortfall.

There are now only 164 Grammar Schools left out of the original 1,379 which catered for the top 25% of all pupils. Our boys are therefore part of the hugely privileged 4% able to benefit from a quality of education on a par with the best of the independent sector, where funding per pupil is typically four times higher than ours. Whilst we have had to reduce the breadth of the GCSE curriculum and we continue to do our utmost to reduce our costs, we are determined that our ambition will remain undiminished. That leaves us with few choices other than to turn to our hugely supportive parent body, with which we are blessed, to ask for whatever financial assistance you are able give.

Therefore we would be grateful if you would please sign up if you have not already done so (the form needed is enclosed with this letter). If you are already contributing, then please review your contribution level. Please help me and my staff to do what we all entered the teaching profession for – to help your boy(s) achieve fantastic things each and every year. A donation of £50 per month for all seven years of a boy's career at Bishop's would cost less than one term's fees at a typical private secondary school, and yet there is no doubt that the quality of what we offer (which you have rightly come to expect and value and your son deserves) is equal to the best that the independent sector can offer. Salisbury really does have an educational gem at its heart – please do what you can to help us preserve it.

Yours sincerely

Dr S D Smallwood  
Head Master

Mrs J Ranaboldo  
Chair of Governors

Dr K Monserrat  
Chair of  
Finance Committee



Science



LANGUAGE  
COLLEGES