



ROBERT OWEN ACADEMY

Robert Owen Academy

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20th October 2016

Dear Parent / Carer

Re: Financial Notice to Improve (FNtl)

We are writing to all parents in relation to the Financial Notice to Improve that was placed on the academy in June of this year by the Education Funding Agency (EFA). These notices are not uncommon for new or recently opened schools and academies and are generally issued where concerns are raised over the budget generated by low student numbers.

A new school or academy, like ours, is initially funded using an estimate of the expected student numbers and the level of complex needs that may arise. After three years or so, this funding mechanism is changed to work on the actual numbers of students that are on roll, often leaving schools and academies with no option but to look at ways of making significant savings whilst ensuring student needs are met.

Since late June, we have been working closely with the EFA on providing a budget that allows us to maintain the best level of staffing possible to meet the sometimes complex needs of our students. The Trust has met all deadlines set by the EFA and is in regular contact with them as we work through this issue to ensure the long term stability of the academy.

As a result of the discussions that have already taken place, we will be required to make savings in a number of areas this financial year, however, everything is being done to ensure that the curriculum we offer is protected. We will be able to ensure that all current courses continue this year and allow students to achieve in line with their potential. However, this may mean some changes in staffing and the likelihood of a revised timetable being put in place from January onwards to create additional capacity and flexibility.

The FNtl received by the academy is centred almost entirely on the issue of student number and the higher than planned staffing levels used to meet student's needs. As part of the FNtl, an independent auditor has been commissioned to examine how funds are allocated and report back to the EFA. The report identified that there are no concerns in relation to financial mismanagement at the Robert Owen Academy as has been the case in some other well established academy trusts.

We firmly believe that our students make significant progress in terms of their academic achievement and emotional well-being, often from very low starting points. We will continue to put the needs of our learners first and will engage fully with parents on the details behind any

ASPIRATION

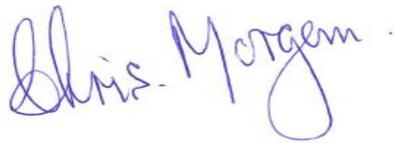
INNOVATION

CO-OPERATION

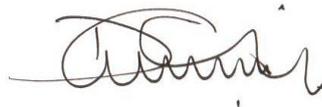
changes that may occur in the near future. There can be no doubt that this is a challenging time for all schools with more established providers also experiencing significant cuts in budgets. However, we remain fully committed to the long term future of the academy and the success of its learners and will continue to work hard behind the scenes to ensure this.

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this letter in more detail, please do not hesitate to contact either of us using the email address info@roacademy.org.

Yours faithfully



Chris Morgan
Chair of Trustees



Debbie Gittoes
Chair of Governors