

Protecting What Matters Most





Protecting What Matters Most

The Context

"Pupils consistently embody Coleridge core values. Their deep understanding of the values leads to a strong sense of community, belonging and inclusion. This is a school that warmly welcomes everyone. One pupil said, 'Everyone plays together here; we all feel included', a view represented by many.

Pupils are rightly proud to be part of this welcoming and diverse school community. Pupils are safe in this 'telling school' because they know they can tell their 'trusted adult' who will address any worries they may have."

Ofsted 2025



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Understanding the Ofsted Inspection Process

- Before visiting, the Lead Inspector carefully reviewed our school website. This helps them understand our school's context, values, and curriculum offer.
 - The inspection team held a two-hour phone call with our Senior Leadership Team before the visit. They asked detailed questions about what we do at Coleridge and the impact of our work. They were particularly interested in how the school has developed over the last 10 years since our last inspection.
 - The focus wasn't just on where we are now—but on our school's journey over time.
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Understanding the Ofsted Inspection Process at Coleridge

During the call, inspectors confirmed the areas they would be looking at in depth (called "deep dives"):

- ▶ Reading
- ▶ Maths
- ▶ History
- ▶ Art
- ▶ They also planned to spend significant time in the Early Years setting.

Over the two-day visit, inspectors spoke with a wide range of people:

- ▶ Children
- ▶ Teachers and school staff
- ▶ School leaders
- ▶ Parents
- ▶ Governors

This range of conversations helped inspectors check that what they saw in school matched the experiences and views of our whole community.

A Strong and Thoughtful Curriculum

A Strong and Thoughtful Curriculum

- Our curriculum is well-planned and carefully sequenced in all subjects, helping children build knowledge step by step.
- Children are learning and remembering a wide and rich vocabulary.
- The curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and representative of our school community.
- Inspectors were particularly impressed with children's deep understanding in subjects like history, maths, and art.

High Quality Teaching

- Teachers have high expectations and use effective teaching methods consistently across the school
- Staff have strong subject knowledge, which helps children learn better.
- Lessons regularly include vocabulary work, recapping of key ideas, and helpful assessment techniques.
- Teachers are skilled at spotting and addressing misunderstandings through smart questioning and feedback.

Engaged and Confident Learners

- Children use key skills confidently in their work.
- Year 6 pupils showed deep thinking across the curriculum. For example, making clever links to Latin root words in other subjects.
- Pupils enjoy learning, which was clear from surveys and conversations with inspectors.
- High levels of enjoyment and engagement in lessons.
- Children behave exceptionally well and actively participate in their lessons .

SEND Provision at Coleridge – A Strength Highlighted by Ofsted

How Do We Support Children with SEND?

Expert Team & Leadership

- Highly skilled and collaborative SEND team
- Strong, effective leadership from the SENCO and SLT
- External professionals speak very highly of our SEND provision

Early Identification & Support

- Needs are identified early with timely support put in place
- Effective use of staff and resources ensures access to learning for all
- Teachers are supported with tailored strategies and regular input from the SEND team

Inclusive, Personalised Approach

- The Rainbow Room offers a safe, supportive learning space
- Staff working with high-need pupils receive ongoing supervision and support

Training & Professional Development

- Specialist training provided for physical and emotional needs
- Strategies are embedded in everyday classroom practice

Positive Parent Partnerships

- Strong relationships with parents through regular communication and reviews

Behaviour and Attitudes

Core Values & School Culture

- Core values are deeply embedded in school life, not just symbolic.
- Children understand and apply values, supported by the Golden Books system.
- Warm, respectful atmosphere—children greet adults politely and feel safe.
- Strong, trusted relationships between staff and pupils.
- Inspectors highlighted the staff's genuine care for children.

Children's Attitudes & Behaviour

- Behaviour is excellent, with minimal low-level disruptions.
- Staff manage behaviour proactively and fairly, using consistent praise.
- Racism, bullying, and discrimination are not tolerated—clear policies ensure swift action.
- Restorative approaches help repair relationships after conflicts.

Fairness & Respect

- Children believe in fairness and feel heard by teachers.
- High levels of mutual respect, even in busy playgrounds

Personal Development

Inclusive Culture & Equity

- Strong culture of equity with equal opportunities for all
- Children embrace our inclusive ethos and respect differences

Personal Development & Wellbeing

- Comprehensive and **relevant** PSHE, RSE, and RE curriculum
- Children are confident discussing PSHE and know how to stay safe
- High-quality bespoke pastoral and wellbeing support for children, families, and staff

Extracurricular Opportunities

- Broad range of clubs led by staff and pupils
- Strong focus on engaging Pupil Premium children
- Emphasis on creative, imaginative experiences

Wider Curriculum & Enrichment

- Learning enriched through trips, visitors, and the arts
- Assemblies and lessons tailored to children's needs
- British values and school values woven throughout

Leadership and Management

Leadership & Vision

- Outstanding leadership creates a high-performing, forward-thinking school
- Clear and continuous focus on improvement and future priorities
- Governing Body offers balanced challenge and support, with a strong understanding of school progress

Staff Culture & Wellbeing

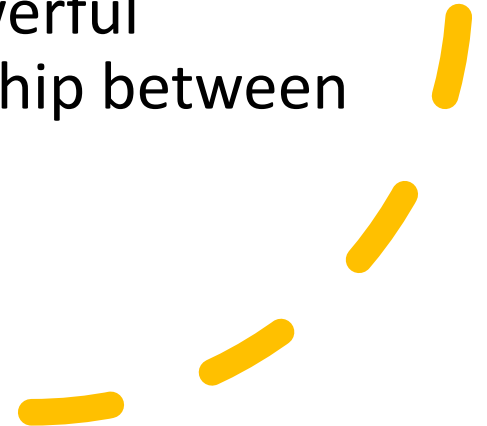
- Positive, supportive environment with excellent staff retention
- Staff feel respected, valued, and well-supported by SLT
- Effective workload management supports wellbeing
- Staff voices are heard, with overwhelmingly positive feedback

Professional Development

- Professional development closely aligned with the School Development Plan (SDP)
- Impact monitored through learning walks and observations
- Change is implemented smoothly with strong staff engagement
- Robust support programme for Early Career Teachers (ECTs)
- Teachers demonstrate exceptional subject knowledge

Parent Feedback – A Powerful Endorsement

- Parents were overwhelmingly positive about Coleridge.
- Inspectors were genuinely blown away by the scale and strength of the response – something they told us they rarely see during inspections.
- We had 386 responses to the parent survey – an exceptional number.
- Responses was supportive and positive about what we do as a school.
- This incredible feedback was a powerful reflection of the trust and partnership between home and school.
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Parent Feedback – A Powerful Endorsement

Latin at Coleridge – Inspection Feedback

- A few parents raised questions about Latin being taught at Coleridge.
- As a result, the inspectors conducted a shallow dive into Latin on day two of the inspection.
- They looked at children's work, planning documents, and spoke with staff.
- The team were very satisfied with what they saw.
- Inspectors noted how well Latin aligns with our school ethos and curriculum and appreciated the thinking behind its inclusion.

School Finance

Your questions answered

Is this an issue unique to Coleridge ?

**SCHOOLS
WEEK**

Monday, 10 Feb 2025

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└ School funding

20% rise in council primaries in deficit, but secondaries improve slightly

New data shows primary and special schools hit hardest by cuts - as the proportion of LA-run schools in deficit hits record levels

Record numbers of council-run schools have slipped into the red, with the proportion of primaries racking up deficits leaping again by 20 per cent.

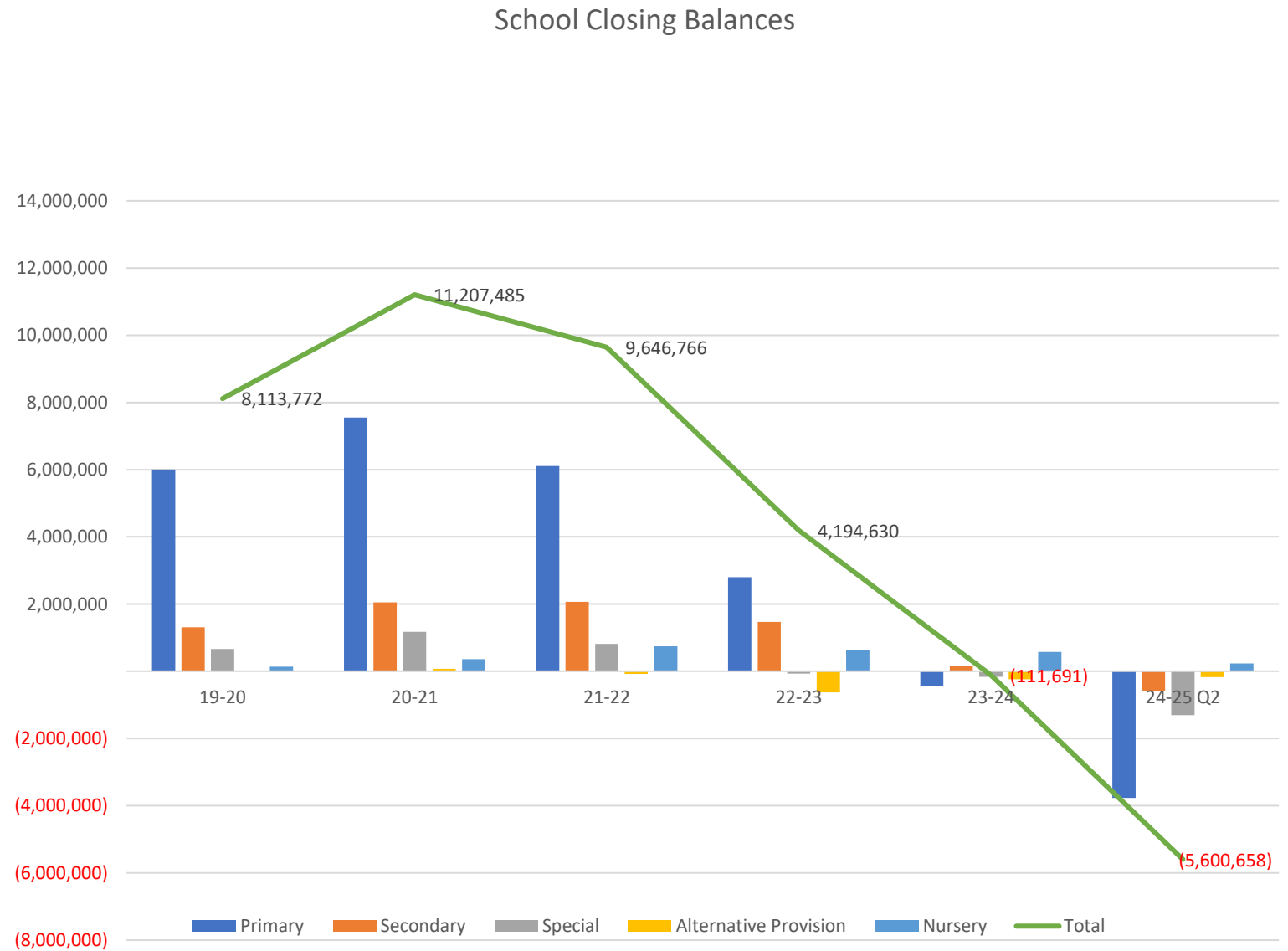
Spending **data published this morning** by the Department for Education shows almost 15 per cent of local authority-maintained primaries ended 2023-24 in deficit, up from 12.3 per cent the previous year.

Despite this, the proportion of secondaries making a loss dropped in the last 12 months

But National Education Union general secretary Daniel Kebede has argued the figures highlight “that after 14 years of austerity, schools are in no position to absorb the unfunded pay rise that the government put forward” earlier this week.

This comes as schools increasingly look to alternative income sources, with amounts generated through activities like lettings and donations hitting a nine-year high of £1.5 billion.

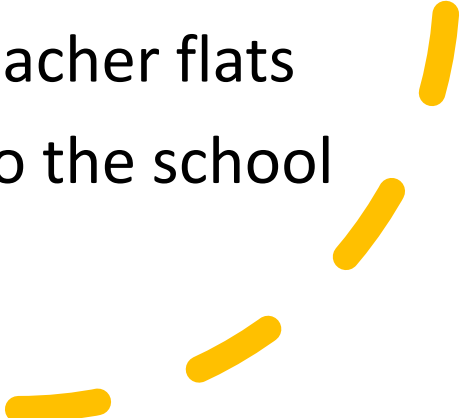
We are not alone!



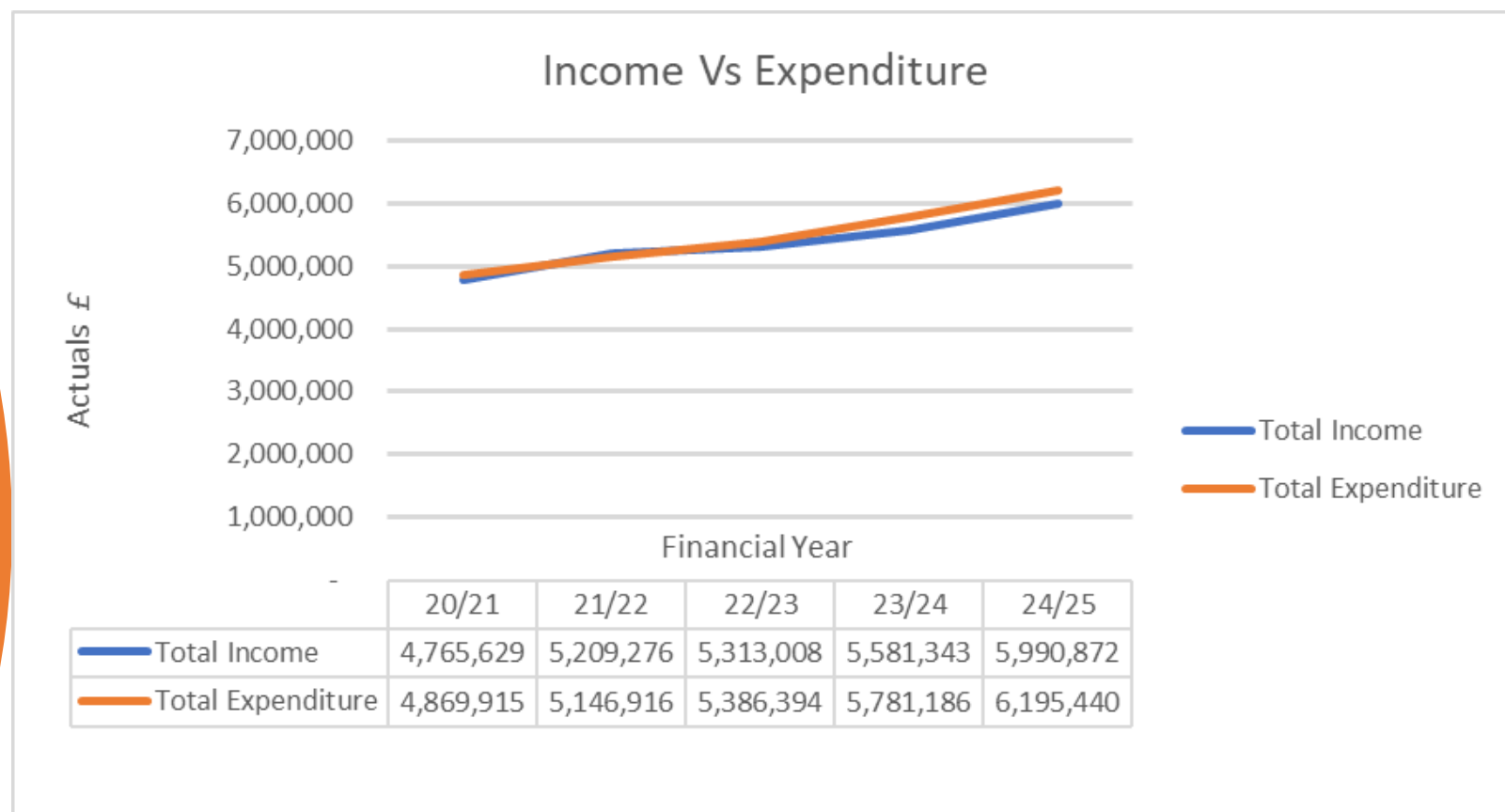
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Haven't we
been here
before?

The simple answer is yes. However, following the Covid pandemic, we:

- Made voluntary redundancies
 - Chose not to replace certain staff members when they left, instead amalgamating roles
 - Reduced the size of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
 - Introduced Latin to the curriculum
 - Began teaching the ukulele
 - Renovated the Boffey House into teacher flats
 - Reached out to parents to donate to the school
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What Is the
School's
Income Versus
Its
Expenditure?
(Keeping Up
with the
Curve)



Why do we have a deficit?

Despite prudent financial management the school faces very significant financial pressures which are beyond our own control and form part of a broader national trend.

Some of these are as follows:

- **Skyrocketing Costs:** The school's energy bills rose 58% last year, with another rise expected in 2025/26. (Since 2020, our utilities costs have risen by a massive £110,000 per annum)
- **Falling Birth Rate:** School funding depends on the number of pupils—fewer children mean less funding
- **Government Shortfalls:** Teacher and support staff pay rises haven't been fully funded by the DfE—schools are covering the gap. (Teacher increases have been both partially and fully funded, but all support staff increases have not been funded.)
- **Increases in national costs:** Including the recent 1.2% rise in National Insurance and the London Living Wage, (which the school supports.)
- **Special Educational Needs:** Demand has grown, but national funding hasn't kept pace.
- **Building & Maintenance Costs:** Running a split-site school is more expensive, and Haringey's funding falls far short.
- **Future Cost Pressures-**We anticipate further increases to our existing contracts and bills, especially for water.

What are We doing to manage our deficit?

- The school has submitted a three-year plan to reduce our deficit.
- This plan has been carefully developed by the school's leadership team.
- A Finance Working Party, set up by the Governing Body, meets regularly to scrutinise and support this work.
- The three-year budget has been presented to the full Governing Body and has been approved by Haringey Finance.
- We have set realistic annual targets to steadily reduce the deficit over time.
- So far, the local authority has been more than satisfied with the progress we are making.
- They also have full visibility of our quarterly financial returns and will continue to monitor and challenge our progress going forward.

How have we been tackling our growing deficit?

We have significantly increased the school's income over the past couple of years through external lettings, the expansion of wraparound care, and successful grant applications.

- We have also made staffing efficiencies by not replacing staff who leave and by combining roles and responsibilities where possible.
- Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members are now covering lessons as much as their schedules allow.
- Unfortunately, we have had to reduce our wellbeing budget by £15,000, and we anticipate further cuts may be necessary to our invaluable Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) this year.
- We are continuing to expand our lettings, particularly through our partnership with Fair Play to grow our wraparound care provision.
- In addition, our new Junior Youth Club raised £35,000 last year, and we aim to build on this success in the current financial year.

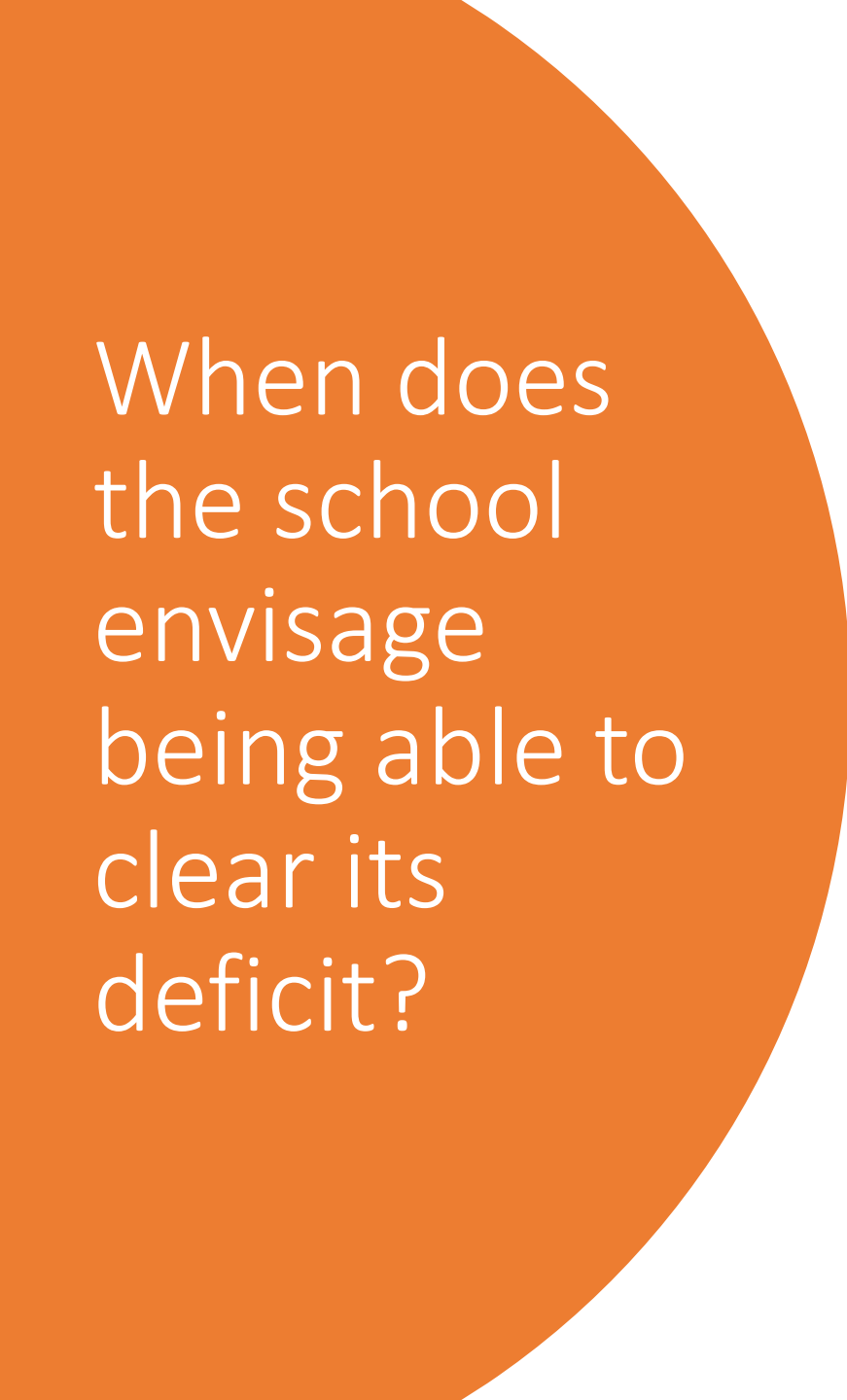
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How have we
been tackling
our growing
deficit?

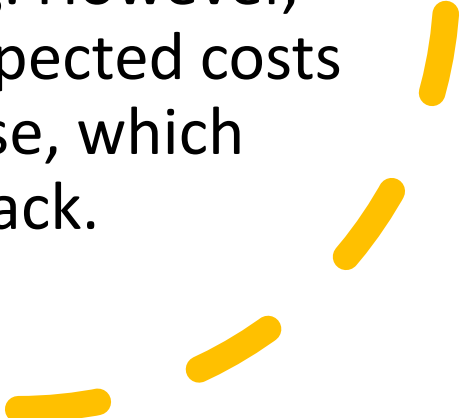
How Are We Planning to Increase Income and Manage Spending?

We are exploring creative ways to boost income while carefully reviewing where spending can be adjusted. Current strategies include:

- Applying for additional grants
 - Exploring future use of the Site Manager's house
 - Expanding lettings through enhanced wraparound care provision
 - Strengthening collaboration with local primary and secondary schools
 - Reviewing staffing structure — merging roles and not replacing staff when posts become vacant (e.g. within the Senior Leadership Team)
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When does
the school
envisage
being able to
clear its
deficit?

- We currently have a licensed deficit in place, approved by the local authority for a three-year period. The expectation is that we have paid off the deficit and will be able to present a balanced budget by the end of that term.
 - Our three-year budget plan aims to significantly reduce the deficit to by the end of the period. Haringey has approved this plan and is satisfied with our approach for now.
 - Our projections are based on several assumptions about future spending. However, as we've seen in recent years, unexpected costs outside the school's control can arise, which may impact our ability to stay on track.
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Two steps forward one step back..

Although we are making savings and increasing our income, external factors continue to drive our expenditure beyond what we can afford.

- In October, our pupil numbers were down by 8 children. This is largely due to falling birth rates in the area and the rising cost of living. As a result, we received £45,000 less in funding this year. We are currently 12 children short of capacity. If this remains the case in October, our funding will be reduced by a further £72,000.
- The recent national insurance increase has cost us £65,000 — almost cancelling out the gains we've made through our income generation efforts.
- The global economic situation has also affected the school, particularly through rising energy costs. Despite being part of a large consortium to secure the best value, our energy bills have increased by 58% over the past two years, with a possible further rise expected in 2025/26. Since 2020, our annual utility costs have risen by a staggering £110,000.

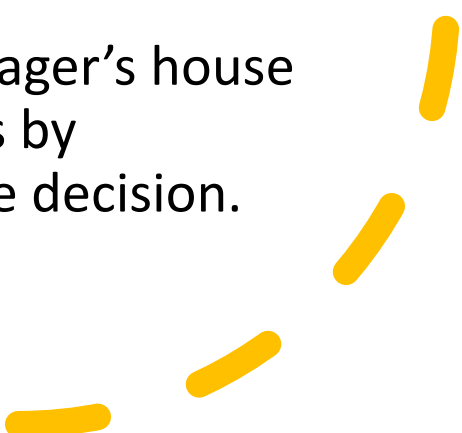
How are we being transparent about the school's finances?

- The school regularly reports on financial matters and related work to the Governing Body. Parent-elected representatives sit on the Governing Body, and this is where we formally report on our financial position.
- We will also keep all parents informed in general terms through newsletters — sharing updates on our efforts to raise income and manage spending.
- We recognise that following the last round of fundraising, we need to improve how we report back to parents on how much has been raised and how those funds are being spent.
- When appropriate, we may also reach out for help or advice from within our parent community — for example, from architects, builders, or others with relevant expertise.

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Who have
you reached
out to for
help?

Working with Our Local MP – Catherine West

- We've met with our local MP, Catherine West, on several occasions to raise concerns about school funding.
 - Most recently, I met with her on Friday 16th May, following emails she received from concerned parents.
 - I have been open about our current financial situation and asked her to investigate areas where we believe DfE funding policies are unfair — particularly around split-site funding and the limited capital funding we receive.
 - Catherine West has agreed to follow up with the Department for Education on these matters.
 - I also discussed our plans for the site manager's house with her and asked if she could support us by encouraging the council to make a positive decision.
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Response from Catherine west

Dear Leon,

It was a pleasure to speak with you last week, thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule.

I have now written to the Secretary for Education, Bridget Phillipson, and to Zena Brabazon, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Families at Haringey Council, to request they review the concerns you raised with me. I will be in touch as soon as I receive a response to share it with you.

I would like to wish you all the best in the meantime and thank you once again for the important work you do.

Kind regards,
Catherine

Catherine West

Labour Member of Parliament for Hornsey and Friern Barnet

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Affairs

Tel: 020 7219 6141 | House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

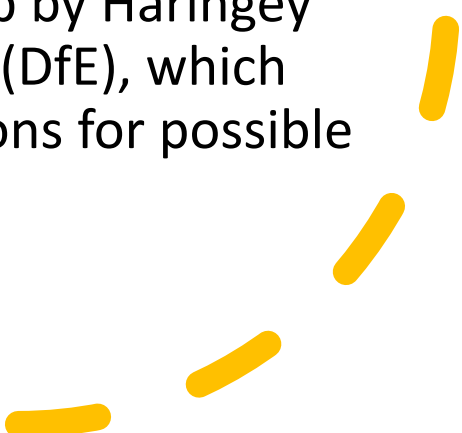
X: @CatherineWest1 | Follow my Facebook here

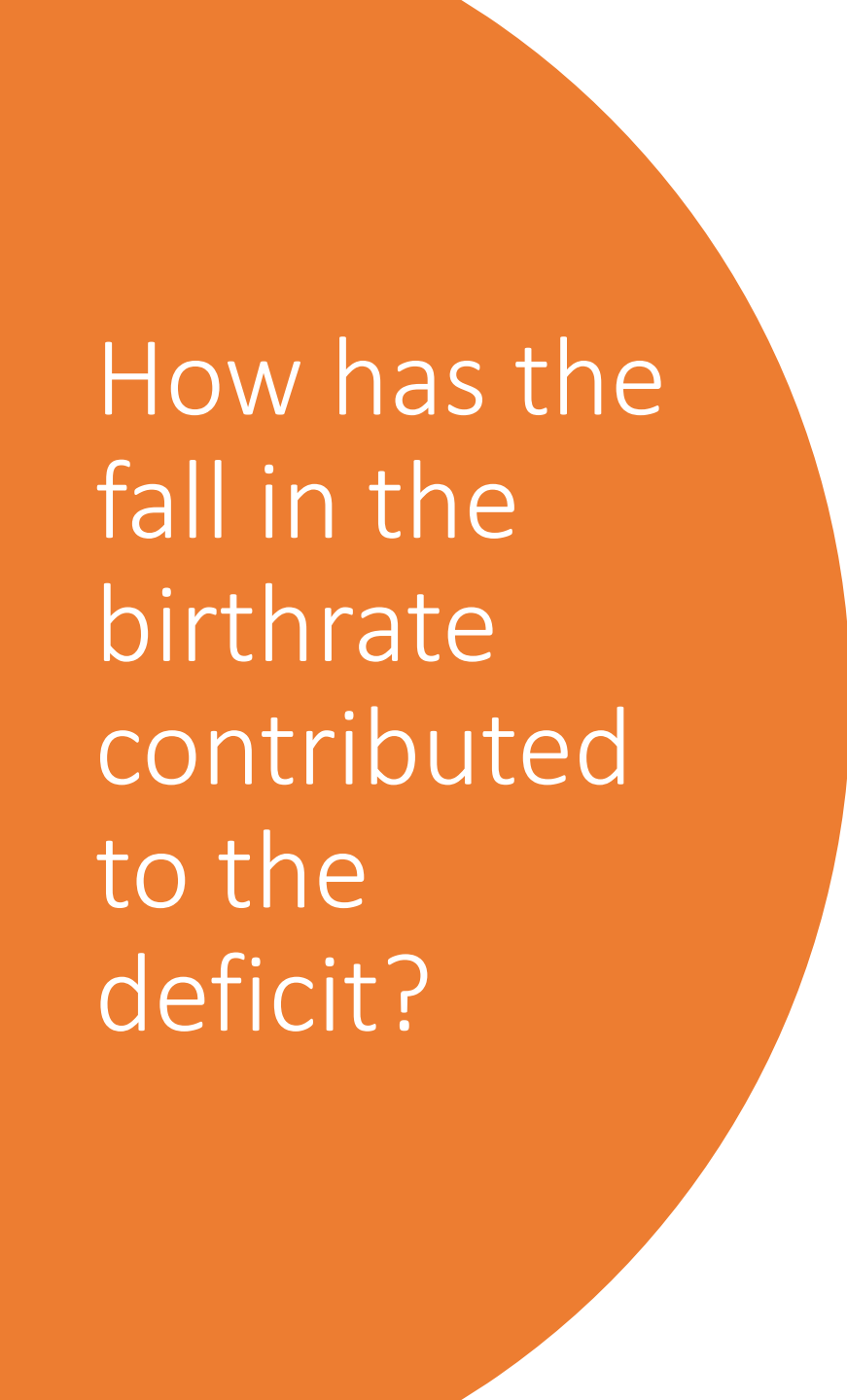
W:<https://www.catherinewest.org.uk/>

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Who have
you reached
out to for
help?

Meetings with the Local Authority

- The school has met separately with Jane Edwards and Cllr Zena Brabazon to discuss the challenges we are currently facing.
 - I've been open and honest with both about our situation.
 - While they have listened, they have been less forthcoming with support.
 - I understand that the council is currently prioritising schools facing even more severe difficulties, which appears to be where their main focus lies.
 - We have also taken part in a review, set up by Haringey and run by the Department for Education (DfE), which has provided a number of recommendations for possible budget savings.
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How has the fall in the birthrate contributed to the deficit?

- There has been a **significant drop in the birthrate**, which has raised funding concerns for all schools. This is an issue because it is our main source of income. Each child on average is worth £6,000.
 - **Haringey Council has been working closely with schools** to manage this, aiming to avoid a surplus of school places.
 - To address the issue, a couple of schools have **closed**, and others have **reduced in size**.
 - These measures have helped to **mitigate further financial pressures** on schools.
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How are you reaching out to prospective parents?

- We run weekly school tours, typically welcoming 5–6 families each week, led by myself or Louise Foulkes.
 - In the two months before the admissions deadline, we offer daily tours—in the last year, we welcomed over 600 prospective parents during this period.
 - Our school website has been updated with a new 'Join Us' page featuring key information for prospective families.
 - We are also strengthening our social media presence, sharing relevant and meaningful content to engage with our wider community.
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How Do We Ensure Value for Money in Capital and Renovation Projects?

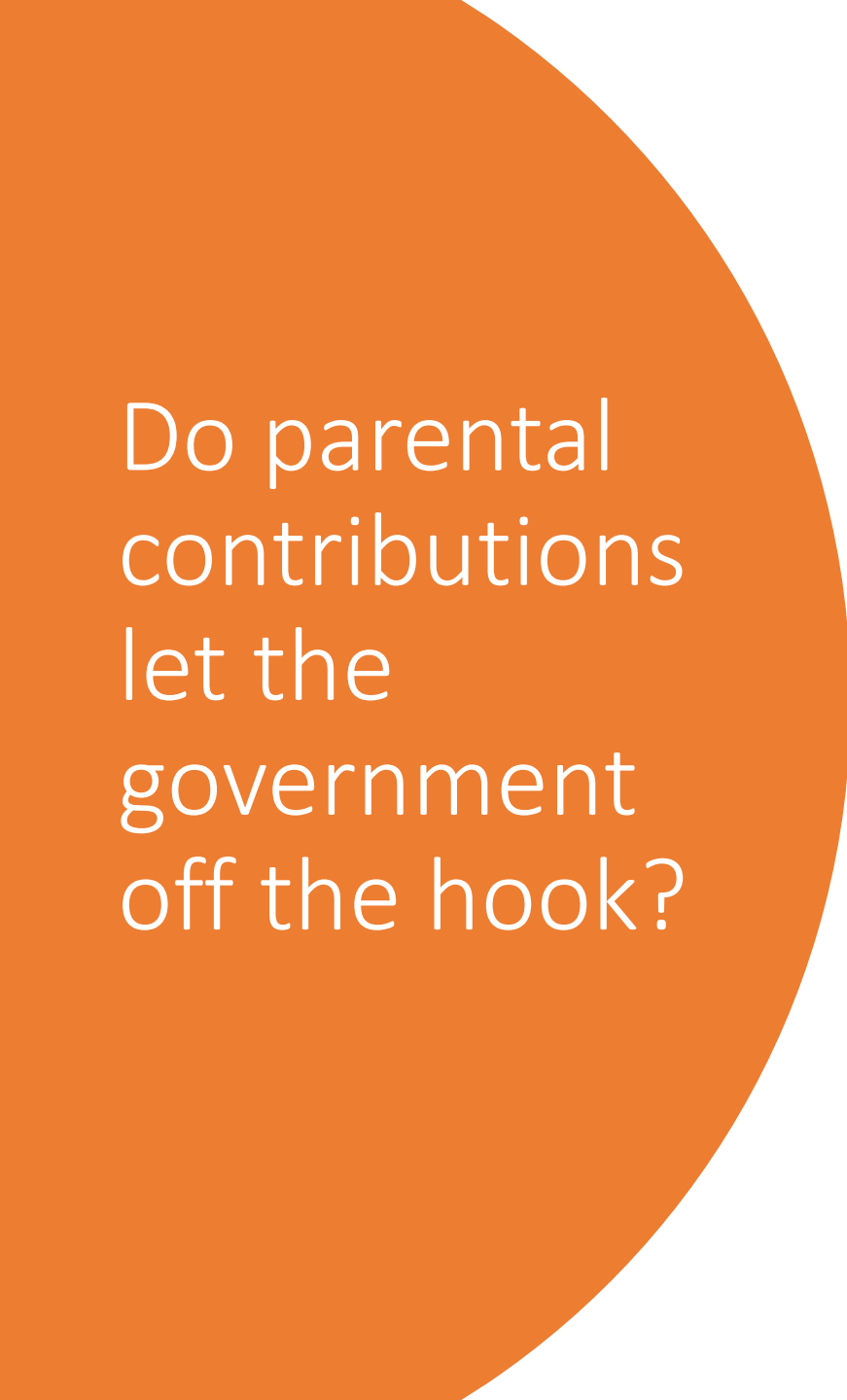
- For all work carried out, we obtain **three separate quotes** to ensure best value.
- We use **recommended contractors** from Haringey and take **trusted recommendations** from other schools.
- We are fortunate to have a **talented site team** who can carry out many repairs, builds and maintenance jobs **in-house**, significantly reducing costs.
- We are currently **recruiting a new site manager** to join our team.
- Where appropriate, we also work with **parents in the trade**, using their companies or materials to help reduce costs further and maintain high-quality work.
- We have approached Haringey Council and Catherine West MP regarding funding inequalities related to the school's capital funding.

How will money raised by parents for the Coleridge Voluntary Fund be spent?

- The simple answer is that the money currently needs to be used to support the day-to-day running of the school.
- This includes covering essential costs such as utility bills, maintaining the school site, funding professional development, and purchasing equipment and resources – all of which have been carefully budgeted for this year.
- Some of the specific items we've allocated funds for include upgrading our school Wi-Fi system and purchasing new furniture.
- However, there are still important projects that fall outside our current budget, such as replacing carpets in Key Stage 1 and installing new kitchen units in the middle areas of Reception. We are currently looking for ways to cover these costs.

Next Steps: Strengthening Our Fundraising Infrastructure

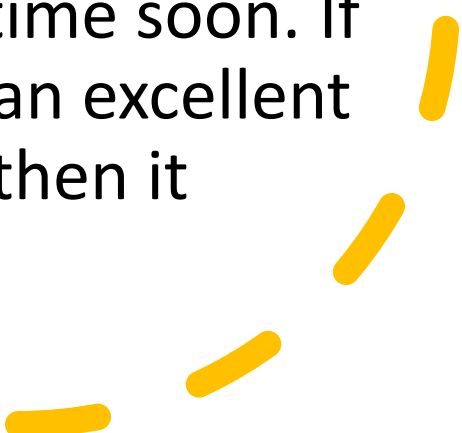
- **Improve Infrastructure & Systems for Giving**
 - Create clear and user-friendly systems for parents to donate.
 - Ensure transparency about where donations go and their impact.
- **Clarify Donation Options**
 - Communicate clearly the different ways parents can give.
 - Ensure all donation information is easy to find and access.
- **Offer Flexible Giving Streams**
 - **Regular Giving:** e.g. Direct Debits to support day-to-day running costs.
 - **Flash Campaigns:** for urgent or one-off needs (e.g. replacing a broken oven).
 - **Targeted Donations:** e.g. to services parents have benefitted from like the wellbeing service.
- **Develop a Dedicated Giving Page on Website**
 - Include live links to campaigns.
 - Show where money is being spent and the impact it's having.
 - Allow parents to offer help through contacts, grants, or skills.
- **Sustainability**
 - Embed systems to prevent future drops in donations (e.g. Coleridge Voluntary Fund).

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Do parental
contributions
let the
government
off the hook?

It is argued by many that asking parents for financial support hides the true cost of running state schools and allows the government to continue to underfund state schools. To some extent this is true.

We have participated in campaigns to improve funding at a national level through the unions and contact with our local MP. Unfortunately, give the current political situation it is unlikely that the situation will change any time soon. If Coleridge is to continue providing an excellent level of service for its community, then it needs to increase income.

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How Can Parents Help Support Our Fundraising Efforts?

- We are working hard to make donating easier and more effective.
- We're exploring ways for parents to donate and encourage their employers to offer match funding.
- We're also looking at simplifying the Gift Aid process to maximise the value of donations.
- If any parents here today are willing to help us investigate and set these initiatives up, we would be very appreciative.
- We're also thinking about how to strengthen parental engagement by drawing on the skills and services of our parent community—for example, involving volunteers or connecting with parents who for example, work in the building trade or as architects.

How much do Coleridge families raise annually and what is the money spent on?

How Has Fundraising Helped the School?

- The amount raised each year varies depending on the events held and attendance levels.
- Over time, fundraising has significantly improved the school environment.
- Funds have supported:
 - Toilet and playground renovations
 - Hall improvements
 - New books and classroom resources
- *Coleridge Families* do consult the school on funding priorities.
- They have also funded guest speakers for parent sessions on key topics such as:
 - Smartphone use
 - Anti-racism
 - Misogyny and sexism

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Any Other
Questions ?

If you do have further
questions suggestions, please do
get in touch

Head@coleridgeprimary.net

Thank you

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