

VOLUNTARY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS BODY CALLS FOR URGENT INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION

The Governing Bodies Association (GBA) has welcomed the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) report into Education Funding. The organisation, which represents the 50 voluntary grammar schools in Northern Ireland has called for urgent much needed investment in Education following publication of the Committee's findings.

The NIAC report clearly illustrates that the current levels of funding are unmanageable and that further investment in education is urgently needed to address growing funding pressures.

The GBA is well-aware of the financial pressures facing schools in Northern Ireland and has consistently advocated for greater funding for the education system. In oral and written evidence to the inquiry, the GBA stated the levels of funding allocated in the education budget were not sufficient to maintain let alone improve educational outcomes.

A recent survey conducted by the GBA found that an average of 88.8% of delegated school budgets are spent on staffing costs. In some cases, schools spent over 95% of their annual budgets on teaching and non-teaching staff. Given this position schools have significant constraints on their budget and options for reducing costs have been exhausted.

Commenting on the report, GBA Chairman Terry McDaid said

“After a decade of real-term funding cuts a review of education funding is long overdue. Over the past ten years our schools have had to absorb real-terms cuts to their budgets. The report clearly indicates that this position can no longer be sustained, and that urgent funding intervention is needed.

Schools across the education sector will be forced to make cuts to curricular and extra-curricular provision which is hugely unfair to the children and young people attending schools. This position cannot be sustained. The budget allocations for education must rise not only in line with inflation but also to reflect the increasing numbers of pupils in the system.

The important thing now is to ensure that the funding recommendations of this report are implemented”.

ENDS