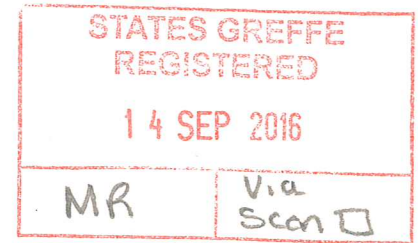




De La Salle College

A Christian education with excellence

516/36 (3)



Mr M Robbins,
Scrutiny Officer for Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel,
Scrutiny Office,
States Greffe,
Morier House,
St Helier,
Jersey,
JE1 1DD

23rd August 2016.

Dear Mr Robbins,

Thank you for taking the time and trouble to contact me. On behalf of De La Salle College I am delighted to be able to provide the Scrutiny panel with our views on the impact that the Medium Term Financial Plan Addition (MTFP) will have on our community in Jersey.

Following the publication of the MTFP, I met with the Director of Education, Mr Justin Donovan to discuss with him the concerns that we had. This meeting was held on the 13th July. It was a positive meeting with Mr Donovan taking the time to fully explain his proposals and why he felt that they were appropriate for the needs of his department. He provided me with a wide ranging explanation of the Education Department's proposals within the MTFP. He gave me an excellent insight into what the Education Department are trying to achieve. In turn Mr Donovan listened to my concerns, providing reassurance and clarification where possible. I felt that Mr Donovan understands the positive impact that we as a College have on the education of the children of Jersey. He appreciated the work that we do and the particular issues that we have. As Minister Bryans has also done in the past, Mr Donovan reaffirmed that De La Salle College is an integral part of the Jersey provision for educating the children of the Island.

I propose that I summarise the concerns I expressed at my meeting with Mr Donovan, for the benefit of the Scrutiny panel. I would then like to provide the Scrutiny panel with the answers that I received from Mr Donovan. Finally I would then like to explain the implications to De La Salle College should the MTFP be passed by the States, implemented as clarified by the Director of Education.

There were essentially two key areas of concern that I raised at my meeting. The first area of concern was why the Department felt it was necessary to reduce the funding it provides to the College. The States of Jersey is proposing to increase the amount it commits to education overall, both in terms of direct funding for schools and in terms of Capital funding of new schools & refurbishment of schools. It, therefore, appears unfair to reduce the grant funding to Not for Profit (NFP) schools such as De La Salle.

The second area of concern that I raised was the actual amount of funding that would be cut from De La Salle College. In the appendix to the MTFP on page 148 it states that there will be a minor adjustment to the subsidies for private fee paying schools in 2018 and 2019. This would create a saving to the Department of £150,000 in 2018 and then in 2019 a saving of £304,000. These figures were at odds with briefings that had been received from Mr Donovan before the

publication of the MTFP. Previous allusions to Grant cuts had intimated that they would be no greater than the 2% or 3% of the current Secondary Grant. If the cut to the De La Salle Grant was to deliver half of the savings in the MTFP (with Beaulieu Convent School delivering the other half) it would generate by 2019 a 10% cut in current secondary grant funding.

Mr Donovan addressed these two areas. With regards to my first area of concern, whilst as Director, Mr Donovan regretted the need to cut funding to any area of education, he felt that he was being asked to prioritise spending. In his view he wished to divert spending to areas of greater need. Mr Donovan felt that parents in the fee paying schools would be able to understand an increase in their fees overall, in order to allow the department to reduce its funding in this area and use those monies elsewhere.

With regards to my second area of concern, that is, the figures in the appendix to the MTFP. I was reassured that the figures are of an illustrative nature and in fact the cuts to the DLS Secondary school grant by 2019 would be to reduce the current figure of 50% of AWPU to 47% of AWPU. As De La Salle is a smaller school than the State owned fee paying schools, Mr Donovan agreed that in the new academic year he would make available time with key personnel who would provide me with some actual projected figures for the grant funding for DLS over the next three years. Mr Donovan also reassured me that students at DLS who qualify for the funding available via the pupil premium, will receive it.

The implications of the proposals within the MTFP remain troubling to us. I will need to balance the impact of a funding shortfall on the operations of the College and at the same time ensure that the quality of education that we provide to our learners is maintained. Although the actual cuts to the DLS Grant will be less than the figures in the appendix to the MTFP, suggest they will remain significant.

As a College we only have two sources of income, the funds that we receive from the States of Jersey and the funds that we receive from parents. I do not want the implications of the cuts proposed in the MTFP to result in a cut to the quality of education and support we provide to our students. De La Salle (and Beaulieu) are not selective based on academic examination. Although our funding model means that our parents pay fees, we are a Not for Profit organisation. We do not have a group of shareholders or owners who are paid a dividend. The Brothers of the De La Salle order who are our Trustees, charge no rent for the use of the school and they take no funds from the school. All the funds that we receive are spent on the education of our learners.

Our student body is comprehensive and we have students of a full range of intellectual ability. I and the Governors of the College are determined that we must continue to provide an educational provision that allows us to retain our non-selective intake. The College and the Trustees also fund bursaries to enable students to attend the College in situations where financial reasons would make this problematic. The Brothers of the De La Salle Order, who are the Trustees of the College, The Governing Body and I do not want to see the impact of these cuts reduce the support we are able to provide for this area either. As a College we do not, like State owned schools, receive funding from the States of Jersey for Capital projects such as new facilities or for refurbishing existing facilities. As the Director and Minister Ryan have said on numerous occasions the States must ensure that its' educational facilities are fit for purpose and are the best that they can be for the children of the Island. I, the Trustees & Governors of De La Salle College, agree with this philosophy and have sought to apply that to our own learners. Without access to States of Jersey funding for Capital projects we have

sought to implement a programme of refurbishment at the College to ensure our facilities fully meet the needs of our students. Denied the funds to rebuild from scratch this has been and continues to be a long term project. With our determination to protect areas of expenditure spent on students learning, the Capital Refurbishment Programme of the College is likely to be hit should these proposals be approved. Thus the true implications of this proposed cut in funding will be felt beyond the timeline of the MTFP.

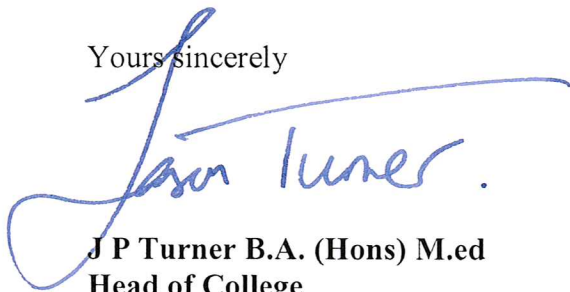
Therefore, the implications of the cuts to our grant proposed in the MTFP will be felt in three ways:

- Initially by seeking to identify further efficiencies that we can make in the administration of the College. This may well be in areas such as outsourcing etc.
- The Capital Refurbishment Programme will have its' timeline for implementation extended, which will mean that key changes in the buildings in which the students learn must occur at a slower pace.
- There will have to be in the 2018 budget an additional 1% fee increase, above the sum needed to cope with increases in cost of living and staff wage inflation and in 2019 there will have to be an additional 1.5% in the amount we charge, beyond that needed to cover cost of living and staff wage inflation.

It should be noted that although we will generate efficiency savings and delay our capital building programme, there are cost increases that lie beyond our control that must be met out of our budget. These costs relate to changes made to Safeguarding and the implementation of new GCSE's, A-levels and BTEC's. These costs I am sure Director Donovan has explained in other meetings with the Scrutiny panel. In essence things that cost more for State owned and fully funding schools also cost more for Not for Profit Schools such as De La Salle College.

Finally, I feel that it is also important that I make clear to you that we do not agree, support or approve of the MTFP proposals to reduce the funding provided to De La Salle College by the States of Jersey. We appreciate the pressures put upon the Education Department and Minister Rod Bryans by fellow ministers; we are grateful that Director Donovan has met with us and explained his reasoning and rationale for the proposals he is making. We feel, however, that there are alternative ways to achieve the targets that the Department has been set. We quite understand that this decision to suggest cutting our funding has been a difficult choice on the part of the Education Department, however, the implications on the parents who support De La Salle College are clear; their fees will rise more than they otherwise would have done should the proposals to reduce the level of grant funding be passed by Member of the States of Jersey. We do not agree that it is appropriate for those who voluntarily pay fees, in addition to the taxes they pay towards the cost of Education for all, to now be expected to pay more.

Yours sincerely



J P Turner B.A. (Hons) M.ed
Head of College