



02/02/2006

F40 Group demonstrates funding model to DfES finance experts

The f40 campaign for fair funding for all school children took a significant step forward at a meeting this week (Monday, 30 January) with the school funding team at the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

The purpose of the meeting was to explore how the funding model developed by f40 authorities - the worst funded in the country - might be used to inform the planned national review of school funding arrangements for 2008 as part of the Treasury's Comprehensive Spending Review.

The f40 funding model enables accurate modelling of school funding pressures and policy impacts at the local authority level. It could be used to check on the implications of funding changes before they are implemented in order to avoid unforeseen consequences. It can also focus on specific national issues, for example workforce reform or falling school rolls.

A wide ranging and detailed discussion with the DfES funding team proved extremely useful. Jon Mager, Director of Children, Family and Adult Services at East Riding of Yorkshire Council and the lead Director on behalf of the f40 group, said: "The DfES team now has a thorough and positive understanding of how powerful the f40 funding model is in examining budget issues at school and at the local authority level.

"The meeting also gave the f40 Group an important opportunity to gain a better understanding of the national issues currently being addressed by the DfES team. We have offered further co-operation in support of the funding review. Continued dialogue can only be of benefit to all schools and all school age children, especially those in f40 areas."

The meeting follows an important parliamentary debate (18 January 2006) initiated by the chair of the f40 group, David Kidney MP for Stafford, and an undertaking by the Schools' Minister, Jacqui Smith, to take account of f40 views in the spending review.

At the f40 national spring conference, scheduled for Saturday 11 March in Nottinghamshire, which will be attended by councillors, education and finance experts from local authorities, governors, head teachers and teaching staff, education trade union members and parents, the Group will launch its lobby for fairer funding for the lowest funded authorities.

The spending review offers an opportunity for national debate about school funding and it is very significant that the f40 group is ready and able to give a clear, well-informed message about the unfairness of the current system, as well as present well-reasoned and practical methods for improving the funding arrangements.