



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London, SW1P 3BT

Copy to: The Rt Hon David Laws MP, Minister for Schools

27 January 2014

Dear Secretary of State

The New National Funding Formula and Deprivation Funding

There are two issues that I would like to raise with you.

First, I am extremely concerned that the promised consultation on the proposed new National Funding Formula has not yet been announced. F40 had been led to understand this announcement would be made in December 2013 and, whilst we understand that important issues of this magnitude might suffer minor delays, there is real concern that the government's promise to tackle unfair school funding is under threat.

It would be very comforting to hear some words of encouragement at this time, particularly as f40 is staging a special NFF conference in the Palace of Westminster on 6 February. Over 120 delegates, including around thirty Members of Parliament, are attending this event and it would be helpful to have some good news for the day.

The second issue relates to deprivation funding. At a recent meeting with Tristram Hunt, the Shadow Secretary of State for Education, the general discussion about fair funding and the need for a new fairer funding formula, also flagged up an historic inequality in the amounts of deprivation funding paid in relation to children in deprived and non-deprived local authorities.

In your department's document "A consultation on school funding reform: Rationale and principles", published in 2011, there was a graph (see attached copy) which clearly presents the information that caused us concern at that time...and, although progress has been made towards a simplified formula as a first step, as yet this has still not been addressed.


On the graph there are two ringed values: £3,367 is the amount a deprived child in a non-deprived LA receives and £4,032 is the amount a non-deprived child in a deprived LA receives.

We wish to again draw attention to the significant differences. Why does a non-deprived child receive more than a deprived child just because of where they live? It's a powerful picture which shows that funding for comparable pupils is not comparable.

As this problem was highlighted by the coalition government as long ago as 2011, we are keen to ensure that the second part of the formula change that is in progress, that enables this aspect to be addressed, is not forgotten or weakened by slow change.

I look forward to receiving your response in respect of both of these critical issues.

Yours faithfully



Tom Ould

Chair of f40