



July 1, 2022

**Invitation to meet with f40 to discuss fairness, quantum and SEND education funding**

Dear Secretary of State

I hope you are enjoying your role as Secretary of State for Education and the enormous responsibilities that come with steering our schools and their pupils to successful and rewarding futures as they get back to normal following the pandemic.

As you know, f40 represents 42 of the lowest funded local authorities for education across England, including your own constituency of Stratford Upon Avon, in Warwickshire, and would very much welcome an opportunity to meet with you.

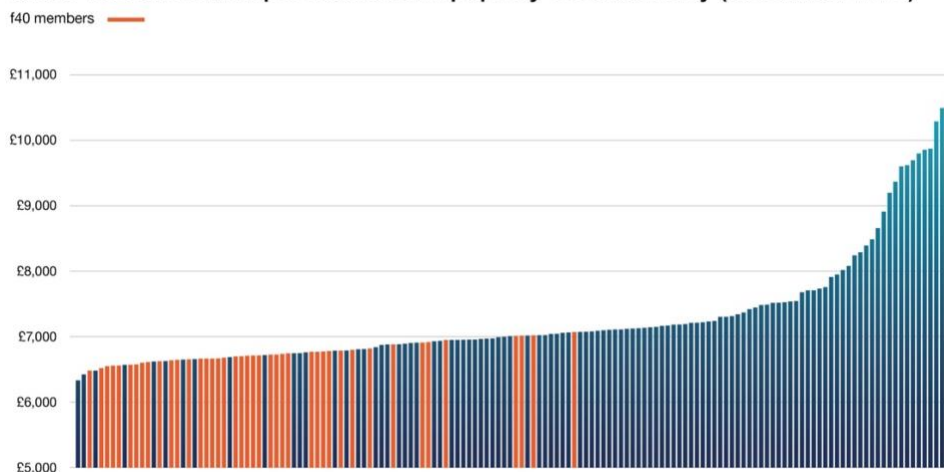
**We are also holding a Members’ Briefing session in the House of Commons next Tuesday, July 5, between 5.45pm and 7.15pm – in Committee Room 10 – and would be delighted if you were able to attend.**

f40 has long been concerned about the fairness of education funding as historic inequalities mean that funding has not been distributed fairly to schools for many years.

We appreciate Government has recognised the unfairness and is attempting to level up – without reducing the funding provided to the better off schools – however, progress is extremely slow. At the current pace, we believe it will take 15-20 years for the gap in funding to close. That is the education of more than a whole generation of children.

You can see from the graph below the difference in funding across local authority areas in England. While we do not wish to see funding taken away from the better-funded schools, and we appreciate some areas will always receive more funding – such as London, we do question the extent of the variation in funding.

**Gross DSG allocation per mainstream pupil by local authority (December 2021)**



We urge the Government to act more quickly and make urgent changes to the National Funding Formula to make it fairer, more transparent, and proportionate.

While f40 welcomes the additional funding for education recently, it’s important to recognise that schools are having to do far more with relatively less funding.

In 2019 we, along with a number of other educational organisations, estimated that £12.6 billion was required to return schools to 2010 funding levels, but only £7.1 billion was provided.

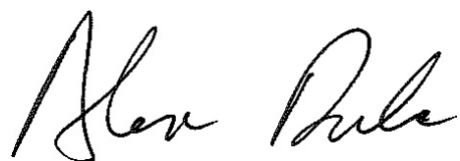
Since then, additional funding has been given, but pressures that had built up between 2010 and 2019 have still not been addressed and Covid 19 has further exacerbated issues, leading to even greater concerns around the education and mental health of pupils.

The extra needs of children and young people, including those with SEND, are more complex now than ever, and the number of children impacted has grown exponentially. Current budgets are simply not sufficient to meet the growing demand.

Budget reductions made in the past to early intervention services, such as support for mental health, speech and language, parenting and youth work, and frequent staff shortages, mean that schools have to step in to provide this additional support where they can – with no additional funding or resources. This has occurred at a time when the basic funding for schools has been reduced. In practice, schools are providing all of these extra services within their already-stretched budgets. Pastoral support to pupils is vital to enable them to engage with their learning, but it is woefully underfunded.

We would welcome an opportunity to meet with you to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Dale', written in a cursive style.

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