

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

5<sup>th</sup> June 2019

*Jean Conditment,*

**RE: SCHOOL FUNDING.**

Thank you for contacting me recently about funding for schools; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

More money is going into our schools than ever before and school funding is at a record high. The core schools budget has increased to £42.4 billion this academic year and is set to rise to £43.5 billion in 2019-20. This follows the additional £1.3 billion of funding over and above the level promised in the last Spending Review. In fact, figures from the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies show that real terms per-pupil funding for 5 to 16 year-olds will be more than 50 percent higher in 2020 than it was in 2000. I welcome that the Autumn Budget reiterated the commitment to improving every child's education, with an additional £400 million for schools to spend on improving their facilities.

Alongside additional funding going into schools, I am exceptionally proud that the Government has delivered on the manifesto promise to reform the way in which schools are funded. This is an historic reform and, for the very first time, funding is being distributed based on the individual needs of every school. Schools are already benefitting from this and next year, schools that have been historically underfunded will attract up to 6 percent more per pupil compared to 2017-18.

The calculations of the "School Cuts" campaign misrepresent the funding schools will receive, presenting historical pressures on school budgets as if they were still to occur. The Department for Education has continued to challenge the misleading claims made on their website and in the media. As a result, the campaign has backtracked on some of their claims and made changes to their website. For example, they claimed that funding has reduced in real terms in 2018-19, but had to admit they simply got their numbers wrong.

In relation to school funding in Northamptonshire specifically, please find enclosed a copy of a letter I have received from the Rt. Hon Damian Hinds MP, Secretary of State for Education, which sets out in detail the situation in our area. I trust that this will be of interest to you.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes*

*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**  
**CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

*This is an issue I have consistently campaigned hard on and I am proud of the extra funding it has unlocked, but there is always still more to do, and I will keep the*



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Tom Pursglove MP  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

17 May 2019

Dear Tom,

I wanted to write to give you some further information about school results and resourcing, nationally and in Northamptonshire. These are very important subjects that I know continue to be of great interest to your constituents; I hope the information in this letter will be of use when responding to correspondence.

In Northamptonshire, 74% of children now (as at December 2018) attend schools rated good or outstanding, compared to 51% in 2010.

This decade, we are on course to create a million school places, following the net loss of 100,000 in the six years up to 2010. In Northamptonshire, over 17,000 places have been added; this includes the establishment of 10 Free Schools. A further five new schools have been agreed to be created in the coming years.

Over the two years 2018/19 and 2019/20, per-pupil funding in Northamptonshire is going up by £172 (4.1% - compared to the national average of 3.2%) and when changes in pupil numbers are taken into account, total funding rises by £30.9 million (up 7.1% compared to 2017/18).

In 2019-20, the National Funding Formula (NFF) allocates Northamptonshire:<sup>1</sup>

- £3,856 per primary pupil. For a class of 27 (the average primary class in Northamptonshire), this equates to £104,114.
- £5,051 per secondary pupil. For the same class of 27 pupils, this equates to £136,369.
- An additional £11.2 million of funding through the growth, premises and mobility factors of the formula, which are not distributed on a per pupil basis.

On top of the NFF, Northamptonshire will receive £27.3 million in Pupil Premium funding (including the Service Child Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium Plus) to support the 22,552 pupils eligible for Pupil Premium of all abilities perform better, and close the gap between them and their peers.

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<sup>1</sup> The figures refer to funding for pre-16 through the Direct Schools Grant; funding for the average class does not equal the product of per pupil funding and class size due to rounding.

Compared to 2010, there are now (as at November 2017<sup>2</sup>) 55 more teachers in Northamptonshire and 490 more teaching assistants compared to 2011.

Following the end of the 1% public sector pay cap, we are funding the unexpected additional cost of the pay award for teachers with £508 million over two years, over and above the amount schools had already been allocated. We are also covering the costs of increased pension contributions for state schools (the Teachers' Pension Scheme is a key part of the pay and benefits package to attract and retain teachers; it is one of the most generous pension schemes in the country, and with rising longevity has become more costly).

Meanwhile we are taking steps to address some of the areas of particular cost pressures that education has faced. One of these is High Needs, despite the High Needs budget having risen by £1 billion over the last five years. Steps we are taking include capital funding both for new special schools and inclusion units in mainstream schools, reviewing the structure of funding, and training more Educational Psychologists. We have also provided some additional revenue funding for this year and next to local authorities: Northamptonshire will receive an additional £3.5 million over the two years, bringing the total High Needs block funding for two to 18 year-olds to £71.9 million in 2018/19 and £76.1 million in 2019/20.

For any individual school in your constituency you can see how both their funding and spend on different categories compares to other schools of similar size and pupil characteristics elsewhere at: <https://schools-financial-benchmarking.service.gov.uk/>.

We know from independent studies that the UK is a high spender on state primary and secondary education by international standards,<sup>3</sup> and also that real spending per pupil is half as much again higher than it was in 2000.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, I very much recognise the financial constraints that schools face. As you know, the Spending Review is the key determinant of spending for government departments; I will be setting out a strong case for education, which is key to so much else in our society and our economy.

I am aware that a number of schools have written to parents about school resourcing, at the suggestion of the 'Worth Less?' campaign. I am afraid that in some cases it would appear a misleading impression may inadvertently have been relayed. Some of these letters, using wording from the campaign, suggest that ministers have refused to meet headteachers to discuss funding. This is not correct. In fact, we have met and discussed funding with headteachers from the Worth Less? campaign, and other campaign groups, unions and professional associations, and many individual headteachers and groups of headteachers.

I appreciate you continue to raise really important issues relating to school resourcing and performance. We are striving for world-class education, for all pupils, whatever their background. This means the best academic standards, updating technical education, prioritising the most disadvantaged, recruiting and retaining the best people and making sure every pound counts. To achieve this obviously needs sustained

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<sup>2</sup> Numbers of teachers and teaching assistants are full-time equivalents; teachers include those in the leadership group as well as classroom teachers.

<sup>3</sup> OECD, *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en>

<sup>4</sup> As confirmed by the IFS, real terms per pupil funding for five to sixteen year olds in 2020 will be more than 50% higher than it was in 2000, and 70% higher than in 1990. IFS, *2018 Annual Report on Education Spending in England*, 2018, London, <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/13306>

investment. I believe we have made great progress to date, but there is clearly much more still to do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Damian Hinds". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a distinct 'H'.

**Damian Hinds**  
**Secretary of State for Education**