

School funding statement from West Sussex MPs* 12.02.18

West Sussex MPs met last week to review funding for local schools following the introduction of the National Funding Formula and following a useful meeting in Parliament with local Headteachers.

The level of funding has overall improved for West Sussex schools with an additional £28m being allocated to the county. The new formula is a fairer means of allocating funds than in the past and has been broadly welcomed as a step in the right direction.

MPs recognise that there are particular issues of concern:

“High Needs” funding: High Needs funding was not included in the formula and concerns cover both the scale of resources and how these have been historically applied in West Sussex.

Increased funding is coming at a time of rising costs. The implementation of the full benefit of the national funding formula being delayed for certain West Sussex schools. The impact of the formula on the smallest rural primaries

While the formula has improved the funding position, West Sussex MPs will be meeting the new Secretary of State for Education to go through all the issues facing West Sussex schools and to ensure he is familiarised with these concerns.

In parallel with discussions on funding, West Sussex MPs are concerned about standards in primary schools. The county was in the worst performing 10 per cent of authorities in England at Key Stage 2 and performed considerably worse than areas with lower levels of funding (the worst funded area in the country achieved some of the best Key Stage 2 results). This is an issue on which West Sussex County Council, MPs, Headteachers and parents are all, rightly, very focussed.

*Sir Peter Bottomley, Rt Hon Nick Herbert, Gillian Keegan, Tim Loughton, Jeremy Quin, Henry Smith, Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Soames