

## Letter from Westminster



**Steve Brine:  
Winchester MP**

THERE has been much talk this year about the future of school funding and it rightly featured heavily during the recent General Election campaign.

With small children of my own, I am passionate about local schools. We may have

protected the core schools budget but any constituency MP doing his job knows full well rising costs are extremely challenging for headteachers right now.

On top of that, the Government is committed to introducing a new national funding formula which caused concern in some schools when a consultation was put out by the DfE earlier this year. I have long campaigned for a fairer funding formula because I do not accept the fact Hampshire remains among the lowest funded local education authorities in England but we have to get it right.

That is why I used all my experience and my position in Government to get the view from Winchester & Chandler's Ford heard. The position of small rural schools, the basic level of funding required and the future of the School Forum were all live issues which ministers needed to better understand and I am grateful to parents, heads and governors as well as Cllr Roy Perry at Hampshire County Council.

We fought hard to get a commitment in the Conservative manifesto that no school would have its budget cut as a result of the new formula and that was welcome as was the announcement last week that there will be an additional £1.3 billion for schools funding over 2018/19 and 2019/20.

I met the Education Secretary before Parliament rose for summer recess and am pleased this boost to the core schools budget will deliver the biggest improvement to the school funding system for well over a decade. This additional funding to the fairer schools funding will mean an increase in the basic amount that every pupil will get, as well as protected funding for those with high needs, and will ensure Hampshire is in a position to give schools a cash increase through the new formula.

This is excellent news and is another step to fulfilling our manifesto promise. I will be scrutinising the individual school allocations for 2018/19 when they are published in September and will remain close to constituency heads as always. I look forward to discussing this and many other issues with constituents during my 2017 Summer Tour which kicks off this week. More on that [www.stevebrine.com/summertour](http://www.stevebrine.com/summertour)

**Steve Brine**

MP for Winchester & Chandler's