

Fairer funding for Wokingham and West Berkshire schools

At the recent candidates debate for the Wokingham constituency some misunderstandings about fairer funding were on display.

I have been lobbying for fairer funding, making this clear in private meetings with the Secretary of State, in public debates and on this website. It is true Rob Wilson also took a delegation to see the junior Minister, Mr Gibb. When I heard about it after the event I also lobbied him, telling him of my exchanges with his boss, the Secretary of State. Local Conservative Councillors have been as keen on fair funding as I have been, and have also lobbied.

The main policy issue has been handled by the Secretary of State. I helped secure the place of fairer funding in the 2015 Manifesto, and have been keen to see the government enact it since. I did not agree with the formula proposed in the Consultation document, as I wish to see a higher proportion of the money allocated as an identical lump sum per pupil for every school which will help our schools and seems to me to be fairer. Many of the costs are similar around the country given national pay scales.

If elected to Parliament next week I will press for a better formula and will argue for increases in the total money going to English schools. One way or another I want our local schools to have a real increase to help meet their budgetary pressures.

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