HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

25 June 2019

Dear Chancellor,

We write to you as Members of Parliament who support the f40 Campaign Group. Our respective constituencies fall within those local authorities that are the worst funded for education in England.

As you will know, the f40 Campaign Group seeks fairness and equal opportunities in education for all children, regardless of where they live, and wishes to see schools properly funded and equipped to enable them to provide a quality education to meet the future needs of Britain.

The introduction of a National Funding Formula and additional funding of £1.3billion for 2018-19 and 2019-20 were welcomed and f40 viewed the overall outcome as another step towards fairer funding.

Regrettably, however, the group continues to have fundamental concerns about the new formula. We believe the Government has replaced one unfair system with another, as some of the historic unfairness has been locked into the new formula.

The National Funding Formula falls short of what was expected, does not deliver true fairness and is therefore in need of fundamental change. In particular, we are concerned that the formula does not give enough basic entitlement to schools and allows too much for add-ons, enabling big differences in funding to occur between different local authorities and schools.

Another major concern is the crisis in high needs funding that we feel the government must address before permanent damage is done to very many vulnerable pupils.

Significant funding pressures are being placed on local authority budgets and the Dedicated Schools Grant. This, combined with the effect of tighter budgets for Local Authorities, means that schools are being asked to take on more and more work that traditionally was undertaken elsewhere, such as youth work, parental support and mental health.

Schools need to be suitably funded and trained for this work. Schools are significantly more complex institutions than they were in the past and the funding for this has not kept pace.

We therefore believe that urgent changes to the National Funding Formula are needed to make it fairer, more easily understood and transparent so that it meets the aspirations for equity set out in early consultations.

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We urge you to consider the following in this year's spending review:

- The removal of the historic inequalities and funding protections in the system;
- The raising of basic entitlement to ensure the core cost of running a school are met;
- An immediate injection of at least £1.4billion of additional funding to deal with a crisis in High Needs provision across the country;
- A significant increase in funding for all schools to ensure there is enough to meet the cost pressures facing all schools and to allow them to operate successfully and provide quality education for all children, regardless of where they live.

Kind Regards

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