



10 February 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

Worth Less? Update – meeting with Sam Gyimah (MP and Minister for Education)

As you will no doubt be aware, a group of representative Headteachers joined up with our local MPs for a meeting with the Minister for Education – Sam Gyimah MP – at Westminster on Monday 8 February.

We were pleased to have the opportunity to state the case for a much improved long term funding formula. To that end, we were able to echo the long held views of school leaders and local MPs that any formula must provide a much fairer deal for every pupil in West Sussex.

The Minister confirmed that a consultation will be launched very soon on a new formula which should be fairer and more transparent for every child in England. This should greatly help every child in West Sussex.

We also raised the key point relating to substantial interim funding for West Sussex schools. In particular, our concerns relating to staffing levels and the need to be able to invest adequately in bare essentials such as books, equipment and computers were made. We also made powerful points relating to some brand new cost pressures that are linked to unfunded pension and national insurance contributions. These have pushed all of our budgets to breaking point.

During the meeting local MPs also made a concerted effort on our behalf and we are, again, grateful for their input. The final outcome of the meeting is, however, uncertain. We are pleased that the Minister agreed to consider our request for interim funding in more detail but no final decision was made.

Local MPs are using further detailed information (provided by schools) to continue to lobby on the Fair Funding Formula and for an interim payment. We are hopeful that through their good offices, a vital payment will be made.

We would like to thank you for your support and will be in contact again to update you on progress.

Yours faithfully

**Peter Midwinter
Principal**

