

NEWS RELEASE
Immediate
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MICHELLE DONELAN MP launches public petition calling for Fair School Funding

Michelle Donelan MP will launch a petition across her Chippenham constituency in support of a new national funding formula to deliver a fairer deal for local children.

Following a major Parliamentary briefing to make the case for fairer school funding to the Minister, Michelle has been appointed a patron of the campaign for Fair School Funding, which is being run together with the cross-party f40 Group of local authorities.

At the Parliamentary briefing on Tuesday, officials from the f40 Group set out the case for a fairer school funding settlement in detail, highlighting research showing that the ten best funded areas on average received grants of £6,300 per pupil this year, compared with just £4,200 per pupil that Wiltshire pupils receive.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Childcare, Sam Gyimah MP, told the meeting that the Government is determined to deliver its manifesto promise to create a fairer school funding settlement and encouraged f40 MPs to make the case for change.

Michelle Donelan said, "I am pleased to have become a patron of the Fair School Funding campaign. The unfair funding system for schools has seen children from Wiltshire lose out for far too long. At the moment schools around the country that are similar can get very different budgets and children with the same needs can receive very different levels of financial support depending on where they go to school.

"I will launch a petition across my constituency this summer and will present it in Parliament later in the year together with MPs from up and down the country. We need to bring home to ministers that parents in Wiltshire want a fair deal for their children, based on need rather than where they happen to live. I hope as many local people as possible will sign the petition so that our voice can be heard loud and clear."

F40 Group Vice Chairman, Graham Stuart MP, said, "I am delighted Michelle Donelan has become a patron of the Fair School Funding campaign. This is a hugely important campaign to deliver fairness for pupils and I know Michelle will be a fantastic champion."

Notes for Editors

1. The F40 Group campaigns for fairer funding for English schools. Its website is available here: <http://www.f40.org.uk/>
2. The f40 group has modelled a new formula that ensures that a child attending a school on one side of a local authority boundary will not attract very different funding to that of a child in the neighbouring local authority.
3. The National Audit Office issued a report last month, *Funding for disadvantaged pupils* (HC 90 Session 2015-16), which is available here: <http://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Funding-for-disadvantaged-pupils.pdf>

This recommended (p.12): "As it sets core funding for schools in future, the Department should use a fairer formula so that pupils across England receive similar funding, related more closely to their needs and less affected by where they live."

