

Money for Wokingham schools

I have been pressing for more cash for local schools. I have argued for a better national formula, and for more money for schools in total. I am still pressing for further improvement as I am well aware that schools would like more money.

I have just received the latest figures from Wokingham Borough Council comparing schools budgets for 2018/19 with their budgets for 2017/18. These budgets are still locally determined, though clearly national financial provision is an important determinant as it settled the totals for local schools.

The figures are for Wokingham Borough as a whole, so they stretch beyond just my constituency. They show that in total the schools budgets for 2017/18 of £94.45 m have gone up by 4.5% or £4.291 to a total for 2018/19 of £98.742 m. This is a useful increase. I am urging the government to provide further increases next year. I want more from a better national formula which gives relatively more to schools in areas like Wokingham which tend to be at the lower end of the national tables for cash. I am also seeking an increase in the general national totals for English schools.

The local distribution of the money by school does leave a few schools with less cash. This is because they have experienced a substantial loss of pupils. As a large part of the money is provided as a per pupil payment to cover individual pupil costs of teaching and provision, loss of pupils clearly does result in less grant. Bohunt is the school that gets the largest increase to reflect its rapid growth.