

Press release: Helping children learn through a proportionate primary assessment system

Plans have been announced by Education Secretary Justine Greening for a primary assessment system which focuses on pupil progress, mastering literacy and numeracy, and scrapping unnecessary workload for teachers.

The plans to create a stable, long-term approach that ensures children are taught the essential knowledge and skills they need to succeed at secondary school and in later life were published today following a 12-week consultation with the teaching profession and other stakeholders. This is delivering on the commitments the government made at the election.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

A good primary education lays the foundations for success at secondary school and beyond. This year's key stage 2 results showed our curriculum reforms are starting to raise standards and it is vital we have an assessment system that supports that.

These changes will free up teachers to educate and inspire young children while holding schools to account in a proportionate and effective way.

The government confirmed that it will:

- Introduce a new teacher-mediated assessment in the reception year from 2020 to provide a baseline measure to better track pupils' progress during primary school. The check, which will be developed in conjunction with the teaching profession, will ensure schools are given credit for all the work they do throughout a child's time at primary school;
- Improve the early years foundation stage profile – a check on a child's school readiness at the end of their early years education. This includes reviewing supporting guidance, to reduce burdens for teachers;
- Make key stage 1 tests and assessments non-statutory from 2023 and remove the requirement for schools to submit teacher assessment data to the government for reading and maths at the end of key stage 2, as these subjects are already assessed through statutory tests, from 2018-19;
- Introduce a multiplication tables check to aid children's fluency in mathematics from 2019-20;
- Improve teacher assessment of English writing by giving teachers greater scope to use their professional judgement when assessing pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 from the current academic year (2017-18).

Nick Brook, deputy general secretary of school leaders' union NAHT said:

Today the government have confirmed that, from this year, teachers will once again be able to apply professional judgement when assessing pupils' writing. Teachers and school leaders have argued strongly that sufficient flexibility to properly recognise pupils' achievements was needed. This move is a welcome step in the right direction.

The decision to make SATs for seven year olds non-statutory in favour of a new reception baseline assessment may well be met with trepidation by some, but it is absolutely the right thing to do. Under current accountability arrangements, the hard work and success of schools during those critical first years is largely ignored. If designed properly, these new assessments can provide useful information for schools to help inform teaching and learning whilst avoiding unnecessary burdens on teachers or anxiety for young children.

We intend to work with government to ensure that this is exactly where we end up. Taken together, these measures are a big step in the right direction.

The government has also set out how it will better support children who are not yet working at the standard of the national curriculum tests.

The changes, which follow a consultation on the findings of the independent Rochford Review, will ensure there are appropriate assessment arrangements in place and there will be a pilot of a new approach to assessing the attainment of children with the most complex special educational needs.

Introducing these measures will help schools support these children to progress on to mainstream forms of assessment during primary school, if and when they are ready, ensuring no child is left behind.

Speech: Culture Secretary's speech at RTS Cambridge Convention 2017

It really is an honour to address the RTS Conference. This is one of the top fixtures in a Culture Secretary's diary – and I would have been very disappointed to miss out.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: I have the best job in government.

How could it be otherwise, when I get to engage with such a rich variety of sectors?

They are a huge and growing part of our economy; they are energetic and exciting; they are educational and enjoyable; they are major sources of jobs; and they export on a massive scale and showcase the UK to the rest of the world.

And television does all of these things single-handedly.

As for almost everyone else, it has been a huge part of my life. I grew up an avid Coronation Street viewer, have spent decades laughing along with Dad's Army and Only Fools and Horses – my kids love them – and now I'll often be found catching up with programmes on iPlayer or watching Bosch on Amazon Prime. Or, my guilty pleasure – back to back Come Dine With Me.

I want to pay tribute to three giants of British television who have recently died.

The newsreader Mike Neville was a hugely popular figure for more than forty years – described as “the face and voice of the North East”. I was in Newcastle the day after he died and it was clear from the number of people who spoke to me about their sadness what a big role he had played in people's lives.

Sir Bruce Forsyth likewise had a glittering career, the like of which I wonder if we will see again.

And Steve Hewlett did sterling work in both broadcasting and print journalism, becoming one of the most articulate and respected voices in the industry. It was very apt that earlier this year the RTS and The Media Society should announce the creation of a scholarship for young journalists in his name.

It is not my job to decide what should be on TV. Happily, we don't live in a country like that.

My role is to support and to challenge you, and to be your champion abroad.

The best champions are also candid friends. Where I think the industry can and should do more, I will not be afraid to say so. I take a deep interest in the entire industry, of course, but I have a particular responsibility to make sure that public service television is serving the entire public.

It is precisely because British TV is so important and so good – indeed peerless throughout the world – that I want it to reach everyone.

The success of our television industry cannot only be measured by how widely it is watched. We know that we score extremely highly on that metric. This is indeed a world of opportunity for UK television.

Television's success must also be measured by how well different communities are represented on and off screen, by differences in pay, and by whether the industry is flourishing in every part of our nations and regions.

British television is strong because it is diverse – and will become stronger

still the more diverse it becomes – which in turn will allow it to thrive internationally.

TV provides role models and help drive change in society. I think of diverse casting in *Balamory*, the first lesbian kiss on *Brookside*, and transgender Haley on *Coronation Street*.

Television is the window through which much of the world sees the United Kingdom. It is only right, then, that the picture they see is one of a dynamic and diverse country. TV must reflect the real world and the country that we live in.

But be in no doubt that TV production is excessively concentrated in London.

Pact has found that of the £2 billion budget for UK productions in 2016, just 32 per cent was spent outside London, and only 35 per cent of jobs.

In March I announced that the Government wanted Channel 4 to increase its regional impact. Relocation may not mean the whole business, but I am clear that Channel 4 must have a major presence outside London, and potentially increase commissioning. In doing so Channel 4 can play a leading role, as a publicly-owned public service broadcaster, in a system that reflects and provides for the country as a whole.

We ran a public consultation on the best way forward. Today we will publish the results from that consultation, and I can announce that the overwhelming majority of respondents stated that Channel 4's regional impact would be enhanced if more of its people and activities were located outside London.

One respondent noted that Channel 4 is an important part of a media sector that has a "duty to hold up a mirror to the nation". I think this is a really nice way to sum up how we feel about Channel 4.

A significant majority further agreed that increasing Channel 4's commissioning quotas would be an appropriate and effective way to enhance Channel 4's impact in the nations and regions.

We also commissioned independent economic analysis. This is due to report to us next week, but emerging findings suggest there would be regional economic benefits from relocating Channel 4 and from increasing commissioning.

Channel 4 has often led the way in representing different communities. Its commitment to disability, for example, is superb – its year of disability in 2016 was a tremendous success, and developing *The Last Leg* into a mainstream success is testament to its efforts.

I know Channel 4 works very hard to give a voice to as wide a range of people as possible.

It is this very sensibility that makes it well placed to relocate outside London – along with its unique status as a public service broadcaster paid for by commercial activity but owned by the taxpayer.

I want to be very clear regarding Channel 4 – it is a great broadcaster with many fantastic programmes. However, as a public asset I expect it to do even more to support the whole country.

Decisions about its programming should not all be made in the bubble of Westminster. And people seeking to work in the media should not feel that they have to move to London.

I will continue to work really closely with Channel 4, and my preference is to agree a way forward in concert with Channel 4.

I am delighted that Alex Mahon has been appointed CEO. She has had a fantastic career in software, TV and retail, along with her commendable work as Appeal Chair of The Scar Free Foundation.

I am conscious that Alex doesn't formally start until November, but we have already had constructive discussions. We have got to get this right for Channel 4 and the country that owns it.

This is about Channel 4's long-term future, and it may take some time to resolve. We are not looking at people moving tomorrow, but I do expect change by the end of this Parliament – and I hope to reach an agreement with Channel 4 on the direction forward by the end of the year.

Another of our great public service broadcasters is the BBC, which has a unique place in our broadcasting ecology.

I'm very proud of what we've achieved with the new Charter. It gives the BBC the foundation to thrive in the coming years.

The public deserves to know how the licence fee is being spent. That is why we have required the BBC to improve its transparency and efficiency – establishing the National Audit Office as the BBC's financial auditor and giving it the power to undertake value-for-money studies on the BBC's commercial subsidiaries.

The new BBC Board brings effective, modern governance and will deliver further transparency and efficiency, including on pay.

We have required the BBC to disclose the pay of talent, with a threshold of £150,000 – in line with the BBC's executives and management and the civil service.

As you have noticed, the publication of BBC talent pay caused something of a stir, especially in relation to the gender pay gap. It is not for the Government to dictate how much individual stars are paid, but transparency will help ensure pay levels are reasonable and fair.

This is not a case of singling out the BBC. The Government has introduced mandatory gender pay gap reporting for all organisations with more than 250 employees, starting next year.

Greater transparency will encourage employers to scrutinise their own

practices and take steps to close pay gaps. Indeed the BBC Director-General has made clear his commitment to close the BBC's gender pay gap by 2020 and I fully support and welcome the action he is taking.

There has been some debate about how far the BBC should be expected to go on pay transparency. The Chairman of the Culture Select Committee is eager to extend pay data as far as independent production companies, which the industry – including the BBC – currently feels would be excessive. However, while I recognise the BBC's concerns, I must say that I sympathise with the principle that the BBC should be at the forefront of pay transparency, and we expect them to lead the way.

The BBC – and indeed UK television – also needs to look like the country it represents, both on and off screen.

I make no apology for writing to Ofcom to outline the Government's position that the BBC should be leading the way with both on- and off-screen diversity – and that this is up to the BBC Board and Ofcom as the regulator to hold them to account.

Project Diamond, run by the Creative Diversity Network, is very much a beginning, not the end of the story. Nevertheless, the first stage considered 81,000 pieces of TV content. It found that while BAME people are statistically well represented on-screen, off-screen is another matter.

And people with disabilities are very underrepresented both on-screen and off-screen. We have made some progress in terms of viewers with disabilities. The Government has worked to extend audio description services and subtitling to Video on Demand through the Digital Economy Act. But people with disabilities should not be limited to experiencing television as consumers. It should be a career option as well.

I fully respect the fact that it is for the broadcasters, the BBC board, and Ofcom to implement the changes we all want to see, but it is also right that I should lay down a challenge for them to do so. It will not be straightforward – but just because something is hard does not mean that we shouldn't try.

One of the many reasons that this matters is that media is the prism through which the rest of the world sees us.

Diversity at home – and drawing on everybody's talents – is essential if we are to make the most of global opportunities.

As the UK exits the European Union, strengthening existing relationships with other countries – and forging new ones – becomes all the more important, as you have just been discussing in your previous session.

Television is already a leader in this area. British TV – such as Sherlock, Downton Abbey, and The Octonauts – is phenomenally popular in China. The Octonauts has clocked up 4.1 billion views since its launch on three of China's most popular online TV channels.

Securing the right deal for broadcasters is an essential part of our Brexit negotiations. Both DCMS and DexEU are working closely with broadcasters on a wide range of issues. I have heard how important Country of Origin rules and European Works quotas are for the sector, for example.

In terms of talent, the whole Government appreciates that creative industries operate in a global marketplace. We will always want immigration, including from EU countries, and especially high-skilled immigration. In June, the government made its 'fair and serious' offer around the rights of EU citizens. The second phase of our immigration proposals will be a temporary implementation period starting on exit day, before new long-term migration arrangements for EU citizens are introduced. This will ensure there is no cliff-edge on the UK's departure for employers or individuals.

I can't tell you exactly what the future holds, but I will continue to engage and discuss these critical issues with you, so that together we can work towards the best possible outcome for the sector, one which maintains the UK's preeminent position in the world when it comes to TV production and broadcasting.

What I am certain about is that TV will help lead the charge as we shape a new relationship with the rest of the world.

So to conclude...

Diversity is not merely a buzzword. It encompasses gender, age, ethnicity, disability, and a range of other characteristics. Above all, though, it is a vital phenomenon – the absence of which means that we cannot collectively thrive as we should do.

The aggregate effect of making things fairer and more accessible for individuals can be enormous – injecting even more talent into our TV industry and showcasing our country in all its diverse glory to the world.

I am here to encourage and occasionally cajole you. And I have immense faith in you. British TV is one of our great jewels – and it can shine even more brightly.

Statement to Parliament: Local housing need

With permission, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to make a statement on the latest stage of our work to fix this country's broken housing market.

As I told the House in February when I published our Housing White Paper, successive governments, all the way back to the Wilson era, have failed to

get enough new homes built.

We're making some progress in tackling that – 189,000 homes delivered last year and a record number of planning permissions granted.

But if we're going to make a lasting change – building the homes we need to meet both current and future demand – we need a proper understanding of exactly how many homes are needed and where.

The existing system for determining this simply isn't good enough.

It relies on assessments commissioned by individual authorities according to their own requirements, carried out by expensive consultants using their own methodologies.

The result is an opaque mish-mash of different figures that are consistent only in their complexity.

This piecemeal approach simply doesn't give an accurate picture of housing need across the country.

Nor does it impress local people who see their area taking on a huge number of new homes while a town on the other side of a local authority boundary barely expands at all.

If we're going to get the right number of homes built in the right places we need an honest, open, consistent approach to assessing local housing need.

And that's exactly what we're [publishing today](#) (14 September 2017).

Objectively assessed need

The approach we're putting out for consultation follows 3 steps.

The first uses household growth projections published by the Office of National Statistics to establish how many new homes will be needed to meet rising need.

I should add at this point that these projections already take into account a substantial fall in net immigration after March 2019.

But this number simply shows the bare minimum that will be required in order to stand still.

If we only meet rising demand in the future, we will do nothing to fix the broken housing market – a situation caused by the long-term failure to match supply with demand.

So the second step increases the number of homes that are needed in the less affordable areas.

In any area where the average house prices are more than 4 times average earnings, we increase the number of homes that will be planned for.

The assessment goes up by 0.25% for every 1% affordability ratio rises above 4.

Of course, the state of the housing market means that there are some areas where this would deliver large numbers that go well beyond what communities have previously agreed as part of their local plans.

That's we've added a third stage.

A third stage of the assessment sets a cap on the level of increase that local authorities should plan for.

If they have an adopted local plan that's less than 5 years old, increases will be capped at no more than 40% above their local plan figure.

If the plan is not up-to-date the cap will be at 40% above either the level in the plan or the ONS projected household growth for the area, whichever is higher.

These 3 steps will provide a starting point, an honest appraisal of how many homes an area needs.

But it should not be mistaken for a hard and fast target.

There will be places where constraints – for example, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, national parks or others – mean there's not enough space to meet local need.

Other areas may find they have more than enough room and are willing and able to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities.

Statement of common ground

That kind of co-operation between authorities is something I want to see a lot more of.

To the frustration of town planners, local communities are much more fluid than local authority boundaries.

People who live on one side of a line may well work on the other.

Communities at the edge of a county may share closer ties and more infrastructure with a community in the neighbouring county than they do with another town served by their own council.

And so on.

Talking to the people who live in these kind of communities it's clear that they get frustrated by plans being based on lines on a map rather than day-to-day, real-life experience.

Planning authorities are already under a duty to co-operate with their neighbours, but that duty is not being met consistently.

So today we're also publishing a requirement for a "statement of common ground", a new framework that will make cross-boundary co-operation more transparent and more straightforward.

Under our proposals, planning authorities will have 12 months to set out exactly how they are working with their counterparts across their housing market area to meet local need and fill any shortfalls.

Impact

The methodology that we're publishing today shows that the starting point for local plans across England should be 266,000 homes per year.

Nationwide, this represents a 5% increase on the upper end of local authority estimates, showing that the local planning system is broadly on target.

For almost half of the authorities we have data for, the new assessment of need is within 20% either way of their original estimate.

Nearly half, that's 148, actually see a fall in their assessment.

They go down by an average of 28%.

In the 156 areas where the assessed need increases, the average rise is 35%.

But in most cases the increase will be more modest.

Seventy-seven authorities see an increase of more than 20%.

We are not attempting to micro-manage local development.

(political content removed)

It will be up to local authorities to apply these estimates in their own areas.

We're not dictating targets from on-high.

All we are doing is setting out a clear, consistent process for assessing what may be needed in the years to come.

How to meet the demand, whether it's possible to meet the demand, where to develop, where NOT to develop, what to develop, how to work with neighbouring authorities and so on remains a decision for local authorities and local communities.

Infrastructure

But new homes don't exist in a bubble.

New households need new school places, new GP surgeries, greater road capacity and so on.

That's why, earlier this year, we launched our new Housing Infrastructure Fund.

Worth a total of £2.3 billion, it ensures essential infrastructure is built, alongside the new homes that we need so badly.

We will also be exploring bespoke housing deals with authorities that serve high-demand areas and have a genuine ambition to build.

And we are providing further support to local authority planning departments with a £15 million capacity fund.

Conclusion

So those are our proposals, Madam Deputy Speaker.

(political content removed)

These measures alone will not fix our broken housing market.

I make no claim that they will.

As the White Paper made clear, we need action on many fronts.

This new approach is one of them.

On its own, it will simply provide us with numbers.

But taken with the other measures outlined in the White Paper it marks a significant step in helping to meet our commitment to deliver a million new homes by 2020 and a further 500,000 by 2022.

And it's so important that we fulfil that commitment.

Because the young people of 21st century Britain are reaching out, in increasing desperation, for the bottom rung of the housing ladder.

For the comfortably-housed children of the 50s, the 60s, the 70s to pull that ladder up behind them would be nothing less than an act of inter-generational betrayal.

One that our children and grandchildren will neither forget nor forgive.

If we're going to avoid that, together, all of us, if we're going to avoid that, if we're going to fix the broken market and build the homes the people of this country need and deserve, we must start with an honest, open, objective assessment of what is needed and where.

[Today's publication](#) provides the means for making that assessment, and I commend it to the House.

News story: Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) events on EEA and international migrant workers

The MAC will attend regional events around the UK to meet and take evidence from stakeholders on EEA and international migrant workers.

The MAC's representatives will be available on the following dates and at the following locations:

20 September Edinburgh
29 September Newcastle/Gateshead
2 October Coventry/Birmingham
5 October Manchester
6 October Cambridge
11 October Herefords and Worcestershire
12 October Doncaster
18 October Nottingham
23 October Ipswich

The full itineraries for these visits are still being worked out. The MAC are working on arranging visits to Northern Ireland, Wales, Lancashire, the south west and south east of England and updated dates will be added to this website as they are arranged.

If you would like to engage with the MAC on these dates, please get in touch with us at either MAC@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or on 020 7035 1764.

If these dates or locations are not suitable, then please also get in touch with us using the same contact details.

Find out more about the [MAC commission on EEA-workers in the UK labour market](#)

Statement to Parliament: Justine

Greening statement on national funding formula

In my statement to the House on 17 July, I set out my Department's plans to increase spending on schools by £1.3 billion over the next two years, on top of our existing plans.

I informed the House that this would mean that we could press ahead with introducing a national funding formula for schools and high needs from April 2018 that would provide a per pupil cash increase in respect of every school and every local area, and maintain the overall budget in real terms, per pupil. And I promised to return to the House in September to set out the Government's final decisions on introducing fairer funding in full. Today I am doing just that.

This is an historic reform. It means, for the first time, the resources that the government is investing in our schools will be distributed according to a formula based on the individual needs and characteristics of every school in the country.

Not only will the national funding formula direct resources where they are most needed, helping to ensure that every child can get the high quality education that they deserve, wherever they live. It will also provide that money through a transparent formula, providing greater predictability. And, by clearly setting out the sums that we are directing to different aspects of the formula – to the basic amount per pupil, or to children with additional needs – for the first time it allows for properly informed debate on this vital topic: something the existing, opaque system has held back.

The need for reform has been widely recognised across this House, and beyond. The National Association of Head Teachers says, and I quote, “a revised funding formula for schools is essential” . The Association of School and College Leaders believes that, and I quote, “the way in which funding has been distributed to schools has been flawed for many years... Reform of the school funding system is vital” .

The case is so strong because of the manifest unfairness when Coventry receives £510 more per pupil than Plymouth despite having equal proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals; or Nottingham similarly attracts £555 more than Halton – near Liverpool, in Cheshire.

Addressing these simple but damaging inequalities will represent the biggest improvement in the school funding system for decades. It is a step that previous Governments have failed to take for far too long.

In making such a significant reform, it has been vital to take account of a broad range of views. Our wide-ranging consultations, in both 2016 and earlier this year, allowed us to hear from over 26,000 individual respondents and representative organisations. I am grateful to everyone who took the time

to share their views and to respond to the consultations, including many members from across this House. We have carefully considered them all.

As I said to the House in July, I am putting an additional £1.3 billion into core funding for schools and high needs so that the overall budget will now rise by around £2.6 billion in total, from almost £41 billion in 2017-18 to around £42.4 billion in 2018-19 and £43.5 billion in 2019-20. So, building on this firm foundation, I can today set out the final funding formulae we will introduce, which, over the next two years, will mean we will deliver on our manifesto pledge to make school funding fairer and ensure that we do deliver higher funding in respect of every area and school.

Building on our consultation proposals, as I set out in the House prior to summer recess, I am:

- Increasing the basic amount of funding that every pupil will attract.
- We recognise the challenges of the very lowest funded schools so will introduce a minimum per pupil funding level. Under the national funding formula, in 2019-20 all secondary schools will attract at least £4,800 per pupil. Today I can announce that all primary schools will attract at least £3,500 per pupil through the formula in 2019-20. And the formula will provide these levels of funding quickly: secondary schools will attract at least £4,600, and primary schools £3,300 in 2018-19; and then the full amounts the following year.
- I will also provide a cash increase in respect of every school. Final decisions on local distribution will be taken by local authorities, but under the national funding formula every school will attract at least 0.5% more per pupil in 2018-19, and 1% more in 2019-20, compared to its baseline.

Many schools will, of course, attract significantly larger increases under the formula – up to 3% per pupil in 2018-19 and a further 3% per pupil in 2019-20. And the minimum per pupil funding level will not be subject to this gains cap – delivering particularly fast gains in respect of the very lowest funded schools.

Our consultation confirmed the importance of funding for additional needs – deprivation and low prior attainment. We know that these factors are our best way to identify the children who are most likely to fall behind, and to remain behind, their peers, and it is only right that we provide the greatest resources to the schools that face the greatest challenges. As I said in July, we will protect the funding the formula will direct towards additional needs at the level proposed in our consultation, and I can therefore confirm today the total spending on additional needs will be £5.9 billion.

But, as we proposed in December, we will distribute that funding more fairly, in line with the best available evidence. We will use a broad measure of

deprivation to include all of those who are likely to need extra help. And we will increase the proportion of additional needs spending allocated on the basis of low prior attainment, to give additional support to those who may not be economically deprived but who still need help to catch up. I can also confirm today that, as we proposed in December, the national funding formula will allocate a lump sum of £110,000 for every school.

For the smallest, most remote schools, we will distribute a further £26 million in dedicated sparsity funding. Only 47% of eligible schools received sparsity funding in 2017-18 because some local authorities chose not to use this factor. Our national funding formula will recognise all eligible schools.

And, our formula will rightly result in a significant boost directed towards the schools that are currently least well-funded directly. Secondary schools that would have been the lowest funded under our December proposals will now gain on average 4.7%. Rural schools will gain on average 3.9%, with those schools in the most remote locations gaining 5.0%. Those schools with high numbers of pupils starting with low attainment will gain on average 3.8%.

As I set out in my statement in July, to provide stability for schools through the transition to the national funding formula, each local authority will continue to set a local formula which will determine individual schools' budgets in their areas, in 2018-19 and 2019-20, in consultation with local schools.

So, this means that the school-level allocations from Government I am publishing today, alongside this announcement, are notional allocations which we will use to set the total funding available for schools in each area. As I have set out in the House, schools' final actual funding allocations for 2018-19 and 2019-20 will be based on that local formula agreed in their area by the local authority and schools will receive that allocation ahead of the financial year as normal. I will place copies of both documents in the House of Commons library – and the Lords.

Our objective to provide the best education for every child places a particular focus on the support we offer to the children who face the greatest barriers to success, and on the high needs budget that provides that support. The case for reform of high needs funding is every bit as strong as the case for school funding reform, and therefore the move to a national funding formula every bit as important.

We set out full proposals for the introduction of a high needs funding formula last December, alongside our schools formula. And I am today confirming that we will proceed with those proposals.

And thanks to the additional £1.3 billion investment that I announced in July, I can increase funding for high needs so that I will also be able to raise the funding floor to provide a minimum increase of 0.5% per head in 2018-19 and 1% per head in 2019-20 for every local authority. Underfunded local authorities will receive up to 3% per head gains a year for the next two years to help them catch up.

That is a more generous protection than we proposed in December, to help every local authority maintain and improve the support it offers to some of our most vulnerable children. It means that local authorities will see a 4.6% increase on average in their high needs budgets.

The additional £1.3 billion we are investing in schools and high needs means that all local authorities will receive an increase in 2018-19, over the amount they plan to spend in 2017-18. Local authorities will take the final decisions on distributing funding to schools within local areas, but the formula will provide for all schools to see an increase in funding compared to their baseline.

In conclusion, the new national funding formulae will redress historic inequities in funding that have existed for too long, whilst also maintaining stability so that schools and local areas are not disadvantaged in the process.

After too many years in which the funding system has placed our schools on an unfair playing field, we are finally making the decisive and historic move towards fair funding.

The national funding formulae for schools and high needs and the increased investment we are making in schools will help us continue to improve standards and create a world-class education system. No one in this House, Madam Deputy Speaker, should accept the system as it has been. It has perpetuated inequality and that is unacceptable. I am proud that it is a Conservative Government that is now putting this right. And, on this firm foundation, we will all – government and schools, teachers and parents – be able to build a system that finally allows every child to achieve their potential, no matter what their background, or where they are growing up.