



Education Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 1376 **E-mail** educom@parliament.uk

Website www.parliament.uk/education-committee

Nick Gibb MP
Minister of State for School Standards
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

12 December 2016

Dear Nick,

Thank you for your letter of 23 November. Since the Government launched its consultation on introducing new national funding formulae for schools and high needs, the project has been subject to a number of unfortunate delays.

On 27 June, the hon. Member for East Surrey wrote to me to explain that he would not be in a position to discuss the response to the consultation in a public meeting as previously agreed. In my letter of 30 June, I wrote that:

If this delay in launching the second phase of the consultation impacts upon the Government's timetable for introducing reformed arrangements for funding, it is vital that Parliament—in both Chambers and committee—has the opportunity to consider the consequences.

It was therefore with some regret that, on 21 July I had to ask Mr Speaker to grant an Urgent Question to bring the Secretary of State to the House to give Members an opportunity of questioning her on the Government's significant change of plan, which would have otherwise been made in a written statement alone.

The delay to the implementation of new funding formulae announced on 21 July exacerbated existing funding pressures across England. Many schools find themselves unable to deliver essential functions and, the way in which funding is distributed between schools is a second-order question. We are both all too well aware of the wider financial pressures under which schools in our own constituencies are seeking to operate.

I understand that the Public Accounts Committee is due to hold a session with departmental officials early in the new year on the financial sustainability of schools. I am copying this letter to Meg Hillier as a signal of this Committee's growing interest in the overall financial position of our schools.

I look forward to discussing the matter with you and your officials in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil Carmichael". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

Neil Carmichael MP
Chair of the Education Committee