

SCHOOL FUNDING IN ENGLAND

INTRODUCTION

The NASUWT believes that there is a clear moral purpose for publicly provided education. Education should meet the needs of all children and young people on a fair and equitable basis, irrespective of where they happen to live. Education should contribute to the achievement of the country's local, national and international needs and aspirations, whilst also enhancing the lives and life chances of all children and young people.

The mechanism by which state schools are funded is critical to securing an inclusive and world-class education system, operating in the public interest and contributing to the maintenance of a democratic, just and inclusive society.

The NASUWT welcomes the debate on fair funding and the opportunity provided by the Department for Education (DfE) to participate in consultation on securing a fair funding system for schools. These high-level points are being submitted in response to the invitation to comment on the principles of fairer funding with the DfE School and Academy Funding Group.

NASUWT POSITION

The NASUWT considers that it is the responsibility of government to design a fair system of school funding.

Nevertheless, to ensure fairness and equity of entitlement for all pupils, the NASUWT believes that the funding mechanism for schools must:

- i. provide equality of opportunity and equitable access for all learners, including through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, and contribute to raising educational standards for all pupils and narrow the achievement gap;
- ii. ensure that all schools are funded on the same basis, irrespective of their legal or governance status, which should not result in anomalies between schools where their needs and circumstances and the expectations upon them are the same;
- iii. reflect the additional costs related to pupil deprivation, socio-economic circumstances, school location and setting;
- iv. ensure the provision of, and access to, high-quality education and related support services for children and young people, including vulnerable children;
- v. provide equality of entitlement for all learners to be taught by qualified teachers and for the recruitment, retention and development of a world-class workforce in every school or setting as critical components in delivering better outcomes for all children, and that these entitlements must not be based on parents' ability to pay;
- vi. be clear and transparent so that school budgets are based upon clearly identified and agreed sets of expectations about what work schools should do and the performance expectations that will apply to them;
- vii. enable fair, open and easy comparisons to be made with regard to the income and expenditure of different institutions or sponsors;
- viii. be fit for purpose, taking account of local circumstances and needs and the expectations on schools and local authorities, while promoting public and professional confidence in the system;
- ix. be sufficient in ensuring that the global amount available for the funding of schools takes full account of education priorities and needs and promotes fairness, equity, inclusion and social cohesion;
- x. ensure that changes to the funding for schools do not result in detriment to colleges or early years provisions, which are also essential in providing education for school-aged pupils;
- xi. be responsive to changing needs and circumstances;
- xii. be predicated on consultation and democratic involvement at national, local and institutional levels, including full recognition of school workforce trade unions;
- xiii. promote stability for schools and enable schools to plan and organise their priorities in the longer term, and help to minimise turbulence;
- xiv. support the best use of resources, through arrangements for strategic planning of local provision, institutional collaboration, economies of scale and the pooling of resources to meet locally identified educational needs; and
- xv. ensure that schools in receipt of state funding should not be able to make a profit and that they demonstrate the provision of good value for money.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on the NASUWT position on school funding, go to www.nasuwat.org.uk/schoolfunding.