

20<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Nick Gibb MP  
Minister for Schools  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Nick

I would like to bring to your attention the significant difficulties Harrow Council has in striving to maintain our high standards and comply with statutory requirements in the establishment of school places in light of the growth in pupil numbers in Harrow.

Harrow, like most London boroughs, is experiencing a significant increase in pupil numbers especially in the primary sector. All the forecasts are for the increase in pupil numbers to continue. Harrow, in consultation with the school community, has developed a Primary School Expansion Strategy that would hopefully ensure that we are able to provide a suitable school place for all Harrow children in the coming years. As part of this strategy we are currently embarking upon the permanent expansion of eleven schools which will cost a significant sum, particularly in the next two years.

We strongly feel that compared to our neighbouring boroughs the funding we have been allocated by the DfE is disproportionately low and this will inevitably impact on our ability to deliver the necessary school places. The DfE are providing capital grant for the growth in pupil numbers through the Basic Need Grant. In the Basic Need Grant, which is allocated annually, Harrow has fared badly in both the 2011/12 and 2012/13 allocations. Also in the recent funding announcement for the additional Basic Need Grant, Harrow was in the bottom four of all London boroughs and only received £120,000 compared to some of our neighbours who received over £20,000,000. This equates to Harrow receiving an equivalent of **4%** relative to the 2011/12 allocation compared to the average receipt of outer London Boroughs of **157%**. To put this in context, if you compare the total Basic Need Grants allocated for 2011/12 and 2012/13 to the actual growth in pupil numbers, as recorded on the school census, the funding per pupil growth in Harrow is by far the lowest of any outer London Borough at **£8,776**, compared to the outer London average of **£31,615**. Especially bemusing is the fact that authorities with significantly lower pupil increases for 2009 to 2011 are receiving significantly more funding than Harrow. Further details are provided in the attached annex for your consideration.

We have raised these significant concerns with the DfE with a clear explanation of why any spare capacity we may have spread across many schools does not alleviate the cost of required permanent expansions, but have yet to receive any indication that the issues will be addressed, and on the contrary feel that the latest allocation continues the disproportionately low allocations suffered by Harrow.

Yours sincerely



**Cllr Bill Stephenson**  
**Leader of the Council**

Yours sincerely



**Cllr Brian Gate**  
**Portfolio Holder for Schools**  
**and Colleges**

cc Gareth Thomas MP Harrow West  
Bob Blackman MP Harrow East  
Nick Hurd MP Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner

## Annex - Allocation of Basic Need Grant Compared to Actual Growth in Pupil Numbers – Outer London Boroughs

	Pupil Nos - January 2009 census	Pupil Nos January 2011 census	Growth in Pupil Numbers 2009 to 2011		Total Basic Need Grant Allocated	Basic Need Grant FTE growth in pupil numbers £
	FTE	FTE	No of Pupils	%	£	£
Bromley	41,308	41,418	110	0%	8,179,226	74,628
Bexley	35,364	35,660	296	1%	18,169,190	61,370
Havering	34,491	34,680	189	1%	10,357,627	54,831
Sutton	27,755	28,293	538	2%	25,030,988	46,517
Brent	36,574	38,012	1,438	4%	56,318,642	39,162
Waltham Forest	34,195	35,665	1,471	4%	51,859,794	35,264
Hounslow	31,925	32,869	944	3%	33,169,420	35,152
Greenwich	31,512	32,086	574	2%	19,821,630	34,520
Barking and Dagenham	29,688	31,485	1,798	6%	60,041,890	33,403
Croydon	45,620	46,369	750	2%	22,290,580	29,729
Redbridge	41,016	42,966	1,950	5%	53,360,509	27,367
Enfield	45,586	46,799	1,213	3%	25,460,906	20,997
Hillingdon	37,527	38,644	1,117	3%	23,185,706	20,761
Merton	20,992	22,038	1,047	5%	18,895,869	18,053
Ealing	39,659	41,409	1,750	4%	30,228,604	17,271
Richmond upon Thames	19,978	20,739	761	4%	13,096,342	17,207
Kingston upon Thames	18,970	19,918	948	5%	13,229,994	13,954
Barnet	41,407	42,966	1,559	4%	18,266,191	11,717
<b>Harrow</b>	<b>28,302</b>	<b>28,996</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>6,097,771</b>	<b>8,776</b>