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Rt Hon Estelle Morris MP

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Councillor Harry Barber  
Leicestershire County Council  
County Hall  
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Dear Councillor Harry Barber

### EDUCATION FUNDING

Details of the 2002-03 provisional Education SSA allocations for each Local Education Authority have now been announced. The increase in Education SSAs is £1.3 billion: taking account of the adjustments needed to calculate floors and ceilings, this is an increase of 6.2%. If we adjust SSAs for the ending of Education Budget Support Grant, and adjust for the Learning and Skills Council transfer on the alternative basis of including the LSC allocation in SSA figures for both years, the increase is 5.7% and the LGA are content to use this figure.

This is only part of the additional funding which the Government is making available to authorities next year. The Government is also providing an extra £160 million in earmarked funding through the Standards Fund, to support initiatives such as literacy and numeracy in primary and secondary schools, and tackling truancy. Schools will also benefit from an increase of 2.75% in the School Standards Grant. We propose to round the amounts of grant up to the nearest £100: the resulting rates are in the appendix to this letter.

Taken together all these increases represent a very substantial real terms increase in funding. Local Education Authorities and schools will also benefit next year from further capital investment. These increases reflect the top priority which the Government continues to give to the Education Service and to ensuring that Local Education Authorities and schools have the funds they need to deliver the Government's key objectives, especially the drive to raise standards in our schools

I am therefore writing on behalf of the Government to urge you to ensure that all the additional provision we have made available is actually spent on education, and in particular is made available to support the work of schools so that the resources can be spent directly on raising standards in the classroom. We are grateful to the many authorities which have responded positively to the Government's messages on this theme in each of the last three years, I appreciate that you face pressures from many quarters - and that there are difficulties faced by authorities across services. I also appreciate the pressure faced by authorities whose total general government



grant increase has been subject to the ceiling on grant or has not kept pace with the increase in Education SSA. Some authorities will have a relatively modest capacity to raise council tax income locally. My department will be happy to discuss with any authority in this position what increase in its education budget can reasonably be expected.

I am particularly mindful of the pressures on personal social services and in the interests of achieving our broader policy agenda, the Secretary of State for Health and I will expect authorities to continue to protect and develop personal social services to support an integrated approach to tackling disadvantage.

We are also continuing our drive to ensure that the maximum possible funding is delegated to schools. I can now confirm the Government has decided that the delegation targets for next year should be:

- spend on central administration to be below f70 per pupil in London and f60 per pupil elsewhere;
- each Local Education Authority to delegate at least 87% of its local school budget to schools.

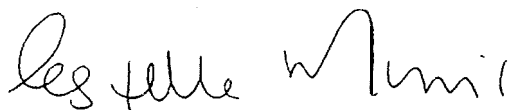
Officials of the Department's Local Implementation Division will be contacting authorities shortly to discuss progress on these targets.

The Government believes that all political parties should unite behind the lead we have given by providing additional help to improve standards in schools. We know that you will want to work with parents, teachers and governors and with us in raising standards and ensuring that the provision we have made is reflected in your authority's budget deliberations over the coming months.

It is for your authority to decide precisely how to use the extra funding that the Government has made available. We hope that you will again respond positively to the challenge of raising educational standards - an aim which is shared by local and central government.

I would like to put on record my appreciation for the response of those authorities which over the past 3 years have taken on the challenge we have set and have played such an important part in the agenda to raise standards.

I am copying this letter to your lead Councillor for Education, your Chief Executive, and your Chief Education Officer and also to Sir Jeremy Beecham and Graham Lane.



**Estelle Morris**

## Appendix

### Schools Standards Grant: Rates for 2002-03

#### Primary, Nursery, PRUs, Middle deemed primary

Up to 100 pupils	£7,200
101-200 pupils	£13,900
201-400 pupils	£24,700
401-600 pupils	£30,900
601+ pupils	£49,400

#### Secondary, Middle deemed secondary, CTC

Up to 600 pupils	£59,600
601-1200 pupils	£72,000
1201+ pupils	£84,300

#### Special, Non-Maintained Special

Up to 100 pupils	f 20,600
101+ pupils	£28,800