



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves
Chancellor of the Exchequer
HM Treasury
1 Horse Guards Road
LONDON
SW1A 2HQ

CC Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education

29 July 2024

Dear Chancellor

We write as a collective group of West Midlands MPs, on behalf of many of our constituents relating to the Government's proposal to introduce VAT on independent schools.

You will undoubtedly be aware that hard working families, with differing degrees of household income or wealth, send their children to independent schools. This is a personal choice with many varying reasons why families choose to pursue this, often at great personal cost to those families who make sacrifices to do what they feel is in the best interests of their children.

The Government's proposal to impose VAT on independent school fees is an ill-conceived affront, not just to the children and families who currently exercise choice in education provision, it is an attack on the wider education system that will undoubtedly do little to enhance the quality of state education, and will instead level-down the standard of education across the board.

We firmly believe this assault on the aspiration of hard-working families, many of whom aren't wealthy and who make considerable sacrifices to do what they feel is in the best interests of their children, is ill-judged and it would risk the viability of independent schools across our constituencies, and the wider country, and would cost taxpayers up to £1.6 billion.

By pushing tens of thousands of more children into state schools, this policy would reduce the quality of education for children across the country at the expense of those with the greatest special education needs provision, or those who would otherwise be at risk of lesser attainment.

We believe that hard-working British families should have the choice of where to send their children to school, and this policy will remove that option for many.

Across our region, schools need certainty to ensure their long-term viability, certainty for students, their families and the thousands of individuals who are employed in the independent education sector. With the need for certainty in mind, we urge you to confirm the timetable for the Government's plan to introduce this policy.

We therefore write to you to urge you to drop this destructive policy that makes the UK the only Western nation to tax education, and we request a meeting with you to discuss our concerns in more detail.



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Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bradley Thomas".

Bradley Thomas MP
Member of Parliament for Bromsgrove and the Villages

Neil Shastri-Hurst MP
Dame Harriett Baldwin MP
Rt Hon Sir Gavin Williamson MP
Mark Garnier MP
Rt Hon Andrew Mitchell MP