



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

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The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP  
Secretary of State  
Department for Education

17<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Dear Gillian,

Thank you for your recent letter about Clevedon School.

As you know, this has been an extremely difficult period for all concerned. I would like to thank your officials for the very positive way in which they have engaged with the school, and I would like to set out for special praise the way in which the Head Teacher, Jim Smith, and his staff and governors have dealt with an enormous problem which was not of their making.

In particular, their efforts to ensure that all students stay at school is enormously important given the disruption that has happened in recent years because of the pandemic. Ensuring that pupils have the necessary social contact and support has been enormously appreciated, as has the tremendous efforts put in to keep parents informed at all stages.

I have also been extremely impressed at the wise way in which money has been spent by the school in dealing with this emergency situation, which is something I think bodes well for any future programmes. In fact, I would go as far as to say that they have had an exemplary response from which many lessons could be learned for the future.

There are a number of issues which require clarification going ahead. At the moment, all the current costs have been borne by the Futura Trust but one of the key aims must be to get the school within the budget of, and accepted onto, the School Rebuilding Programme. It is from this decision that subsequent work naturally flows (for example, a site master plan, procurement of the longer-term interim solution, and an end to the uncertainty for teachers as the school enters the key season of recruitment and retention).

It is very difficult to plan for an interim solution until we know what the bigger financial picture looks like. As you will know, this is something of an exceptional situation because the school is not affected by the RACC issue, the problem faced by most schools, but by the unusual problem of High Alumina Cement Concrete (HACC).

This is not just a financial issue as, with exams looming on the horizon, the school, pupils and parents need some certainty about the situation and, looking ahead, we face the dilemma about



whether the curriculum and the choice for students will be shaped by the state of the buildings or whether students will have the full choice that they should be entitled to.

I know that discussions are ongoing but any help that you can give us in clarifying these most important points as soon as possible would be enormously appreciated by all of us.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Liam Fox'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.

**The Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP**  
**Member of Parliament for North Somerset**