



**Rt Hon Justine Greening MP\***  
Secretary of State

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6 November 2017

Dear Dame Christine and Mark

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you both for your considered report on the experiences and outcomes of children and young people in residential special schools and colleges, published today, and for all of the work you have put in over the course of this review. I would also like to thank the many children and young people, parent/carers, schools, colleges, local authorities and other organisations that gave their time to speak to you for this important piece of work.

Since we passed the Children and Families Act, 2014, the special educational needs and disability (SEND) sector has made huge strides on the identification and assessment of children and young people with SEND, and planning to meet their needs. As your report rightly identifies, it is now time to increase our focus on the quality of the support that these children and young people receive.

This is particularly important for the children and young people in residential special schools and colleges, who are some of the most vulnerable in our society. Your report makes clear that there is some excellent practice by schools, colleges, local authorities and other services, and this should be celebrated. But it also makes clear that, too often, this excellent practice is in spite of, rather than because of, how the system works currently.

I welcome the recommendations you make to address this and support the review's vision for the future of this sector. To give your recommendations the consideration they deserve, I have instructed my officials to look at them in greater depth, with a view to responding to them more fully next year. However, to demonstrate our commitment to the findings of the review, I am today announcing some actions we will take forward immediately. These are:

- as recommended in the review, we will establish a national leadership board for children and young people with high needs, reporting to the minister for children and families. I would like to invite you both to sit on this board to continue your involvement in taking this agenda forward;
- as recommended in the review, we are today publishing updated guidance for local authorities, making clear their statutory responsibility to visit

children and young people with SEND or health conditions in long-term residential settings; and

- to improve how schools and colleges support children and young people with SEND, we are today announcing the publication of a new resource, developed by ASK Research and Coventry University, setting out evidence on effective approaches for these children and young people, and examples of current practice in good and outstanding schools and colleges.

Once again, thank you for your extensive efforts in completing this review, which I know will benefit this important sector and the children and young people it serves.

I am placing a copy of your report and copies of this correspondence in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

*Bert Wishes,*

*Justine*

RT HON JUSTINE GREENING MP