

NICK GIBB MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

18 January 2007

Dear Mrs Taylor

I write further to my letter of 27 October and your subsequent email correspondence with my PA, Helen Megaw, and now enclose the answers I have received to my Parliamentary Questions from the Department for Education and Skills on the issue of refurbishment of schools. I hope you will find these useful.

I presume you are in close contact with your own MP about this matter? I am afraid there is a very strict rule about MPs acting on behalf of people outside their constituency and although I am Shadow Schools Minister this rule still applies.

I wish you all the very best in your campaign.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Gibb'.

Nick Gibb MP  
*Shadow Minister for Schools*

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

WRITTEN REPLY

TUESDAY 9 JANUARY 2007

TUESDAY 16 JANUARY 2007

**MR NICK GIBB (BOGNOR REGIS & LITTLEHAMPTON):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, how many school premises he estimates will be (a) rebuilt and (b) refurbished using funds from the primary capital programme in each of the next five years.

(113757)

**MR NICK GIBB (BOGNOR REGIS & LITTLEHAMPTON):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, what the policy of his department is on (a) rebuilding and (b) refurbishing school premises.

(113758)

**JIM KNIGHT:**

This Government is committed to improving school buildings so that they are suitable for teaching and learning needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are supporting record levels of investment in schools: £5.9 billion this year, rising to £8 billion a year by 2010-11. This compares with investment of under £700 million in 1996-97.

This funding is being used to rebuild or refurbish school premises. The option chosen is a local decision, which should be based on a rigorous options appraisal, including the suitability and condition of existing school buildings, value for money, whole-life costs and sustainability.

The primary capital programme starts in 2008-09, and will support investment of £150 million in that year and £500 million in each of the following two years. Subject to future

public spending decisions we expect the programme to continue for around 15 years.

The decision whether to rebuild or refurbish a school is best taken locally on the basis of a proper options appraisal.

However, we have said that our long-term objective is to improve at least half of all primary schools. Our planning assumptions are that this will include replacing or taking out of use 5 per cent of school buildings in the worst physical condition nationally, and replacing or taking out of use the 20 per cent of the worst condition buildings in our most deprived communities. With strategic and joined-up planning and funding, we hope to exceed this over the life of the programme.

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

WRITTEN REPLY

TUESDAY 9 JANUARY 2007

TUESDAY 16 JANUARY 2007

**MR NICK GIBB (BOGNOR REGIS AND LITTLEHAMPTON):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, how much funding is available for (a) rebuilding and (b) refurbishing (i) primary and (ii) secondary school premises in each of the next five years.

(113759)

**JIM KNIGHT:**

In 2007-08, the final year in the current spending review period, £6.4 billion will be available for capital improvements in primary and secondary schools. In the next spending review period, £6.6 billion will be available in 2008-09, £6.9 billion in 2009 -10, and £8.0 billion in 2010-11. No allocations have been agreed for further years.

There is no breakdown of these figures between (a) rebuilding and (b) refurbishing, or between (i) primary and (ii) secondary schools, as expenditure decisions will be made individually by each local authority.

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

WRITTEN REPLY

TUESDAY 9 JANUARY 2007

TUESDAY 16 JANUARY 2007

**MR NICK GIBB (BOGNOR REGIS & LITTLEHAMPTON):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, what the policy of his Department is on the demolition of listed school premises where a school is rebuilt under (a) Building Schools for the Future and (b) the primary capital programme.

(113755)

**MR NICK GIBB (BOGNOR REGIS & LITTLEHAMPTON):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, what steps he is taking to ensure the preservation of listed school premises.

(113756)

**JIM KNIGHT:**

We are committed to improving school buildings so that they are suitable for teaching and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In all of our capital programmes, including Building Schools for the Future and the primary capital programme, the Department promotes good design in all its forms, whether in new buildings or adaptations of old buildings.

The listing of buildings is the responsibility of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and English Heritage, whilst the development control system that protects them is the responsibility of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Decisions under these arrangements relating to listed school buildings are a local matter.

The Department for Education and Skills supports the protection these arrangements give to listed schools. We believe that existing buildings of historic or architectural

interest, particularly if listed, should be retained for school use where they can meet modern expectations for teaching and learning. Where this is not possible, the Department shares English Heritage's view that alternative use should be found rather than the building demolished.

The Department collaborated recently with English Heritage on a publication 'The Future of Historic Buildings' which seeks to increase understanding about dealing with historic school buildings in the light of our long-term school building programme.