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Baroness Barran

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Bob Blackman MP
By email: bob.blackman.mp@parliament.uk

4 October 2023

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your letter of 20 September, regarding our meeting on 5 September 2023 and the revised version of Building Bulletin 100: Fire Safety Design for Schools (BB100).

Firstly, I would like to assure you that the department places the highest importance on the health and safety of pupils and staff. This is why all schools must meet the requirements set out in the Building Regulations, including installing sprinklers where they are considered necessary to protect pupils and staff.

I recognise that the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) has concerns regarding sprinkler systems in schools and I would like to confirm that I have already spoken with departmental officials, who will re-review the data that has been provided to date. I will also ask officials to contact you to ensure they have the latest information from the APPG and to collect any additional comments you may have. I can confirm that the department has committed to publishing the cost benefit analysis with the consultation response, I have attached a copy of the cost-benefit analysis that I understand was shared with the APPG following the last stakeholder meeting.

It is not possible to say how many schools will be built which will be 4 storeys or over 11 meters as this will depend on each school's site. The School Rebuilding Programme has announced that it will include 21 special schools and a further 41 are planned under Free Schools programme.

Finally, I would like to thank APPG members for their review of BB100 and their acknowledgement of the inclusion of measures that will improve the fire safety standards in school buildings.

Thank you for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

BARONESS BARRAN

MINISTER FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND STUDENT FINANCE