Home address

[MP’s address / email]

[Date]

Dear [Name of MP]

**Pay Disparity between Sixth Form Colleges and 16-19 Academies**

Congratulations on your election to parliament. I am looking forward to you representing me as your constituent.

Today I am writing to you about an issue where I would be glad of your urgent support. Please could I ask you to write to the Secretary of State for Education in relation to an inequity she has created between school teachers and teachers in Sixth Form Colleges regarding this year’s pay?

You will be aware that the government has committed to fully funding this year’s school teachers’ pay award. This is excellent news. This they are doing by offering a top up pay grant of 3.65% to all schools and academies (including 16-19 academies) to support them to meet the 5.5% award that was recommended by the School Teachers’ Review Body (STRB).

Inexplicably, **the Secretary of State has decided to exclude Sixth Form College teachers and staff at Hills Road and 39 other Colleges from the additional funding uplift of 3.65%.** This is despite the fact that identical institutions – such as Long Road Sixth Form College just over half a mile away whose staff are on identical terms and conditions and who are also not subject to STRB recommendations – will receive the funded uplift for pay because they became a 16-19 academy on 1st September 24 and therefore are in scope, along with schools, to receive this money.

I just wanted to make you aware of the impact of this locally in relation to Hills Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge where I am a [member of staff / student / parent / governor / concerned member of the community - *please delete as applicable*].

Hills Road Sixth Form College has been the top performing Sixth Form College nationally since records began over a quarter of a century ago. This year, the *per capita* funding increase at the College is just 1.89% to meet all rising costs and to fund a pay award to allow it to continue to reward its staff fairly and meet its students’ needs.

Hills Road has been working on academy status and had an initial bid rejected by the last government to become one, so is currently stuck in limbo on this issue.

An additional 3.65% of funding would mean the difference of £434,000 to Hills Road this academic year: enough to meet the teacher pay rise and to settle this dispute. With just 40 Colleges nationally in this position, it would cost the government relatively little in budget terms to set this right.

Understandably, staff in Sixth Form Colleges are really frustrated by this inconsistency of treatment and are planning to take industrial action on the issue. Everyone involved wants to avoid this outcome, but it becomes inevitable if the Secretary of State will not put this obvious disparity right. The Sixth Form Colleges Association are following a Judicial Review process to seek to have this decision overturned too, such is its obvious illogicality.

I urge you to support [my /our] local Sixth Form College, which has continued to provide an education of distinction for young people locally. This is despite the level of cuts experienced since 2010 which has seen the *per capita* funding rate go from £5049 per pupil in 2010 to £4834 in 2024. This does not even account for the real terms decline which is naturally greater still.

Additionally, as you are aware, Sixth Form Colleges, such as Hills Road, along with the whole Further Education sector currently pay VAT – and have done since 1992. Across the past five years, Hills Road has paid almost £2 million in unrecoverable VAT back to the government. In the context of the current debate about independent schools and VAT, this feels like an important matter to correct.

Please press the Secretary of State to include all schools and all Sixth Form Colleges within the additional funding that has been given currently only to some Sixth Form Colleges and to all schools. This is urgent.

Kind regards

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[XXXXXXX Constituency]