Dear Clive

Complaints about admissions appeals – academies and free schools

Thank you for your letter of 20 January, regarding complaints about admissions appeals for academies and free schools.

Whilst the Local Government Ombudsman and the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman are of course quite free to give your Committee their opinion about admissions appeals to academies and free schools, I would suggest that redress for those with complaints about schools admission is more properly a matter for the Secretary of State for Education to consider.

I would remark generally that the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman is something that the Government keeps under constant review. The Government recognises that when the public are let down by those that provide their services, swift and effective redress is important. The Cabinet Office have undertaken a review of the public sector ombudsman landscape, and the publication of that review will, I am sure, stimulate not just consideration of how an effective public sector ombudsman provides redress, but also about the role and remit of the public sector ombudsman, and how the public sector ombudsman service might provide an improved service to the public.

Yours sincerely

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP
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cc Nicky Morgan, Secretary of State for Education
    Graham Stuart, Chair of Education Committee