



Education Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA
Tel 020 7219 1376 Email educom@parliament.uk
Website www.parliament.uk/education-committee

Tara Flood
Director
The Alliance for Inclusive Education
336 Brixton Road
London
SW9 7AA

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Dear Ms Flood

Thank you for your letter dated 26 November on the Committee's inquiry into SEND. You first wrote to express concern at the scope of the inquiry on 23 April. In his reply of 27 April, the Clerk of the Committee explained that the scope of a select committee inquiry is not fixed by the call for written evidence. I can only reiterate that clear message: the Committee has not placed restrictions on the parameters of the inquiry.

The terms of reference published on 18 April provide a clear indication of the broad approach that we are taking to this inquiry. It is therefore incorrect to claim that the Committee is only focusing on "highlighting tweaks" to the current reforms. While we have taken as our starting point Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, we began our inquiry by placing the 2014 reforms in their historical context, starting forty years ago with the Warnock Report.

It is also simply not correct to claim that the Committee is not looking at the impact that resources have on educational and support services for young people with SEND. We held a combined oral evidence session for both our SEND and funding sessions on 23 October and SEND was discussed extensively at our funding session last week on 27 November. Funding has come up strongly in both the written and oral evidence and is likely to be a significant part of our reports.

Finally, I'm disappointed and perplexed by your description of our inquiry as a 'sham'. We have much more evidence to take and the inquiry has not even passed the halfway mark. It will probably not surprise you that I do not accept your description of the Committee's inquiry or agree with you that it should be halted. We are not in the business of prejudging where our evidence will lead us.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP
Chair of the Education Committee