

Sally Smith  
Central Capital Unit  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

(Insert Date)

Dear Ms Smith,

#### **THE COMMUNICATION TRUST – REVISED SCHOOL PREMISES REGULATIONS**

I am writing on behalf of The Communication Trust to offer our views on the Department for Education's consultation on Revised School Premises Regulations. Whilst we have no significant comments on each of the areas of guidance we have some comments to make around proposals affecting the needs of the 1 million children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). We feel it is best to set these out in a letter.

The Communication Trust combines a wealth of experience in the field of children's communication and is seeking to drive forward many of the key recommendations of the Bercow Review of services for children and young people with SLCN. Supported by the Department for Education, Department for Health, BT and other funders, The Communication Trust works to improve the speech, language and communication skills of children and young people and to ensure that all children with SLCN, including those with severe or complex SLCN, are better supported and included.

The Communication Trust is pleased that the revisions to the regulations governing school premises retains guidance around acoustics and particularly welcomes the fact that the new guidance highlights the fact that 'good acoustic conditions are essential to education, particularly for children and young people and those with hearing impairments, communication difficulties or for whom English is a second language'.

Two members of the Communication Consortium, the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) and the British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD) have particular expertise around acoustics in schools and have been instrumental in lobbying for recognition of the importance of acoustics in schools and developing guidance.

We support their detailed submissions to this consultation and encourage further dialogue with third sector organisations and practitioners on both reviewing 'Acoustic design of schools' later this year and in implementing the guidance.

Although we welcome the inclusion of acoustics in the Standards for Schools Premises, we also support our partner organisations in making the case that whilst guidance is important, compliance is key. We call on Government to take action to ensure that all children are able to listen and learn effectively in the classroom by ensuring that there is mandatory acoustic testing in new schools buildings, major refurbishment projects and structural extensions. This will ensure the best use of capital investment and the best outcomes for all children.

I hope you find this information helpful and please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require any further information or would like to meet to discuss it in greater detail.

Yours sincerely,

Anita Kerwin-Nye  
**Director, The Communication Trust**

**For further information please contact:**

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