I am a parent at Fettes College, Edinburgh, Scotland. I understand that Fettes, like many schools, is a registered charity. I understand further that some 60 schools in Scotland have been singled out to have their charitable status rates relief removed. I am informed that this will create a large yearly liability for the school. The school will have no option but to pass on that cost to parents. I wish to record my opposition to the proposal. There is an assumption that this cost will fall on parents who all have the equal ability to carry an additional cost given that they are wealthy to an extent that this cost is not material to them. This is no doubt true for some parents. But for many others this is not true and it certainly is not true for those school pupils on bursaries. For those of us who make sacrifices to send our child to a school like Fettes, the increase in cost will be prejudicial; children on bursaries may well need to leave the school. If this is an effort to expand the fiscal base, this approach really does not make sense. I would like to record my strong opposition to this plan.

My reasons are:

The quality of education at Fettes and full-boarding ethos necessitates fees at the higher end of the range in Scotland, but Fettes continues to be a not-for-profit organisation and has passed the test set by OSCR (the Scottish Charity Regulator) to validate its charitable status. To remove this status seems unfair and illegal in this case.

There are 24,000 registered charities in Scotland and of these it is only the 60 independent schools that have been singled out for the removal of charitable rates relief. This is not fair treatment in law. There is an implicit assumption that all parents would be able to afford increased fees. This, too, is unfair.