LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
CALL FOR VIEWS ON THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (SCOTLAND) BILL
SUBMISSION FROM SARAH FRESELE

I am writing in response to the proposed Non-Domestic Rates (Scotland) Bill, in particular Section 10 as an employee and parent in the Independent Sector.

Our school, St Mary’s has very close links with the local community:

- We hold a large Science Festival – Bang Goes the Borders every year which has free entry.
- The school organises a Teamwork and Leadership challenge day every year which invites 16 local schools to participate in.
- The children, staff and parents raise money for various charities throughout the year including Macmillan, Rowan Bowlan charity, Down Syndrome Awareness and Clic Sargent.
- Our pupils participate in local concerts, charity events, entertain at nursing homes and during local celebrations.

I sincerely hope that the Non-Domestic Rates (Scotland) Bill will not be overturned. If it goes ahead, it will result in many of our pupils faced with the prospect of moving to local education authority schools due to school fees having to increase. This in turn will have a huge impact on the already large class sizes, with experienced teachers who are coping with reduced additional support and resources. I have taught a large number of children whose parents have made the decision to attend our school due to small class size and also because their child was finding it impossible to cope in a local authority class with over 30 pupils. These parents who are choosing this option to educate their child in an independent school are already paying tax to enable their child to have a place at a local authority school.