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

SUBMISSION FROM ANONYMOUS

I am writing to you to give a personal response and evidence of how St Mary’s contributes to the Borders.

As a class teacher here at St Mary’s for almost ten years I have seen the huge contribution the school makes to our local area. The parents who have chosen to send their children here have made the huge decision to pay for a private education having already paid their taxes to contribute to the education of children in the state schools. They do not ask for their money to be returned to their bank accounts even though their children are not being taught in the State sector.

Primary schools in the Borders are already overcrowded. If our parents had to leave the private sector then they would have to send their children to local schools. This would have a huge effect on increasing the class sizes, which are already at bursting point in some places. This would also have an impact on the SBC resources, which are continually cut back. Here at St Mary’s the parents pay for the school resources, salaries, building work and repairs, ground work, catering and in the winter, snow and ice clearing. They pay for the hiring of local facilities including Galashiels swimming pool and Tweedbank Astroturf.

They also pay for the mini buses and their maintenance. The list goes on.

I made the choice to bring my daughter here. She was being taught in a local primary school where the class sizes were increasing rapidly. She was in large class where the teacher, who was great and with best intentions, could not give much attention to her pupils including my daughter. She came here and within a small class, she thrived. She made new friends while keeping in touch with her old ones. I was paying for state education and my daughter was not there to receive any. Yet as parents, we were willing to use some of our incomes, to allow her to be taught here at St Mary’s. Something I have never regretted.

I sincerely hope that the decision to remove rates reduction for independent schools will be over turned as it will have a detrimental effect on the state sector, particularly here in the Borders. The pressures on SBC will be immense if our parents here at St Mary’s no longer can afford to continue their children’s education here at St Mary’s.