LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

CALL FOR VIEWS ON THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM ANONYMOUS

I am writing to object to removal of the charitable status from mainstream independent schools. I am on a moderate income as a university lecturer and it became necessary for me to send my second son to the independent school, St Columba’s School in Kilmacolm. He started school very young (February birthday) and when he came to high school was unable to cope as he was too young emotionally. It was not possible to move him back a year within the state school system and he was not able to receive the correct support in his current high school, so our only option was to move him back a year by placing him in St Columba’s. At his previous high school, he was predicted only to sit National 4 exams in his fourth year and at St Columba’s he is on track to achieve 7 National 5’s. Without the charitable status, we would be unable to benefit from the substantial discount that they offered us. We simply could not stretch our budget any further to pay the full fees and even with the discount, we have sacrificed our pensions and taken on additional work so that he can attend the school.

Removing the charitable status will only further the rich-poor divide, by only allowing the super elite to afford these fees, and will lead to the closure of many independent schools as people will not be able to afford to send their children. This would place even more pressure on state schools and putting people out of work (not just teachers but the whole infrastructure within independent schools). While I am aware that my son is in a very fortunate position being able to attend St Columba’s, it was a necessary placement for him and his future and gave us choice and some control. Removing the charitable status will not only impact the wealthy, but families on lower salaries.