



Department for Education

Councillor Mel Shepherd
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Dear Councillor Shepherd

Thank you for your letter of 20 September, addressed to the Secretary of State, enclosing a draft final report of the review of health messages and eating disorders. I am sure you will appreciate that the Secretary of State receives a vast amount of correspondence and is unable to answer them all personally. It is for this reason I have been asked to reply.

Ministers appreciate it when organisations make the Department aware of work they are doing on issues relating to education. The draft final report was forwarded to the relevant policy team for their consideration and they have provided the following feedback:

In response to the recommendation about an educational pack for schools to enable special sessions on body image; as you may know, body image and self-esteem are covered within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education non-statutory programmes of study for Key Stages 3 and 4. This includes how the media portrays young people, body image and health issues. However, the Department does not prescribe to schools how they should teach PSHE.

We are committed to giving teachers more freedom to decide how to teach their pupils. Schools are free to use external resources or engage expert organisations to improve teaching practice. You may be interested to know that we are reviewing PSHE education, which also includes diet and healthy lifestyles, to determine how we can support schools to improve the quality of PSHE teaching. We will publish the outcome of the review in due course.

I note that your report has a number of recommendations targeted at Ofsted. Ofsted school inspections focus on teaching quality, pupils' achievement, the quality of leadership and pupils' behaviour and safety. Inspectors are not required to assess, specifically, a school's adherence to the school food standards during their routine visits. If however, inspectors become aware of concerns, these can be taken into account as part of the inspection. It is the responsibility of the school governing body to ensure that the school meets its statutory obligations, including those related to school food.

Thank you again for taking the time to make the Department aware of your work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pamela Kearns". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Pamela Kearns
Public Communications Unit