



2017/0002751POJN

**Lord Nash**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System  
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Dr Carolyn Wilkins OBE  
Chief Executive, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council  
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Your ref: Council – Fire Suppression - 20161214

31<sup>st</sup> January 2017

Dear Dr Wilkins,

Thank you for your letter of 9 January, about *Building Bulletin 100: Design for Fire Safety for Schools* (BB100).

I would like to reassure you that the department takes fire safety in schools extremely seriously. I am clear that the proper standard of fire safety in all schools, to protect life and property, is essential. Schools in England are assessed on a case-by-case basis for fire safety and where sprinklers are recommended by a fire safety risk assessment, they will be fitted. This has been the consistent position of the department since 2007 and has not changed in the updates to our guidance document.

As you note, the document has been revised to simplify our guidance, shorten it and bring it up-to-date as it enters its tenth year in publication. This was a necessary process that received support from consultees. Unfortunately, as many consultees have noted, some of the wording in the executive summary and throughout the document has given the inadvertent impression that we have changed our guidance surrounding sprinklers. This is absolutely not the case and I have committed that departmental officials ensure that our unchanged approach to fire safety is clear throughout the guidance document when the revised BB100 is published in due course.

Until the revised guidance is published, the 2007 version remains the department's advice on fire safety design for school buildings. The document that has generated concerns from consultees was our draft consultation document and I am grateful to stakeholders, such as yourself, for highlighting these issues in our draft.

No changes have been taken to department policy as the original document remains in use and there is no intention to change the guidance in relation to the installation of sprinklers in our revised publication.

Once again, I am grateful for you, and your council colleagues, for raising these issues with me.

Thank you for writing to me on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Nash', written in a cursive style.

JOHN NASH