



**Rt. Hon. DAVID LAMMY MP**

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Dear Governors and parents

**RE: Downhills Primary School**

A number of you have raised concerns about the Secretary of State, Michael Gove's, decision to **force** Downhills Primary School, along with other primary schools in Haringey, to become academies. I am writing because I share your deep concerns. You will appreciate that I am very proud to have attended Downhills myself, and have many happy memories, and many friends still from those days. The idea that the community should turn its back on 125 years of history in a few short weeks appals me. Downhills has always been at the heart of the community on Philip Lane and the surrounding roads and it saddens me that the name of the school and its constitution may change in this aggressive way.

As you may know, I voted against the Education Act, which allows the Secretary of State to take the powers to do this. I am surprised that Lynne Featherstone MP did not do the same. I was not consulted by the Secretary of State before his officials discussed this with Haringey Council. I sought a meeting with him a few weeks ago to voice my concerns, alongside those of the Downhills Head, Leslie Church; the Chair of Governors, Janet Share; Haringey Council; and the NUT. Michael Gove is well aware of the concerns of the entire community.

In discussion with the school, it is clear that academic performance has slipped, but it is my view that there is a range of alternative interventions that could be made, many of which the school is already making. Because of this, I have asked the Secretary of State to pause until we see the results of the next Ofsted inspection, and to consult Governors on his proposals. I will be presenting a formal a petition to Parliament which Governors, teachers, parents and the community can sign to show their opposition to these undemocratic plans. I will also be pressing the Commons Speaker to get a debate in Parliament.

Rest assured that I will do all I can to resist this undemocratic process.

*Yours ever*

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