



**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP**  
Secretary of State

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8 March 2012

Dear Charlie,

### **Review of Alternative Provision**

Thank you so much for your superb review of alternative provision (AP). I am pleased to be able to respond here to your report. I am also very grateful to the schools, AP providers, and local authorities who were able to help you during the course of your review.

We share the same high aspirations for alternative provision. Alternative provision should ensure that vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils have just as much chance of succeeding as their peers.

On behalf of the Government, I accept all your recommendations.

I share your view that there is some excellent alternative provision. But we both know the overall standard isn't nearly good enough. The organisation of this sector – provision, commissioning and inspection – needs to be completely redrawn, learning from what has worked in school reform.

Freeing our best schools enables them to deliver greater success. I endorse your proposal that all Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) should have the opportunity to convert to AP Academies and benefit from Academy freedoms. I agree that PRUs should, in most circumstances, become Academies. This freedom must be coupled with more effective accountability for all AP providers: we will set up a trial using payment by results as you suggest.

Ofsted inspections must demand the same quality of teaching and provision for children in AP as for those in mainstream schools. There is a case for changing the

inspection framework for PRUs and those larger AP providers that are inspected. The use of AP by mainstream schools should be looked at in detail through inspection. Further, our exclusions trials are already testing out a larger role for schools in commissioning AP and I think it is likely that we will continue to move in this direction. It is therefore important that school inspections consider the quality of AP they use and how well it is managed.

In order to ensure that your recommendations are implemented swiftly I would like you to continue to work closely with officials on these areas. I would be grateful if you could write to me by June to update me about progress.

I am placing a copy of your report and copies of our correspondence in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament. I am also copying this letter to Sir Michael Wilshaw HMCI.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M' and a long, sweeping tail.

MICHAEL GOVE