



HM Prison &
Probation Service



Official

Dame Meg Hillier MP,
Chair of Public Accounts Committee,
House of Parliament,
London, SW1A 0AA

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Public Accounts Committee: Secure Training Centres and Secure Schools

Dear Chair,

At the PAC session on 25 May 2022, following a question from Kate Green MP, I agreed to update the committee regarding whether local authorities will be able to establish academy trusts to run secure schools.

The Department for Education (DfE) has confirmed that, as set out in the recent Schools White Paper, local authorities will be able to establish new multi-academy trusts in certain circumstances. On 25 May, DfE published further information to support local authorities interested in setting up a multi-academy trust.

The MoJ will continue to work closely with the DfE to explore how this will affect secure schools. As you may be aware, the PCSC Act established secure schools as both Secure Children's Homes and 16 – 19 academies, meaning that DfE rules on academies will usually apply to secure schools.

The Government's intention is that secure schools will create a therapeutic environment within a secure setting, with a central focus on health, education and purposeful activity, in line with international evidence that this is the most successful approach in reducing reoffending. Ministers want the best visionary, child-focused providers to run this new form of youth custody, and while it is envisaged that providers will mainly be charities, this could include local authorities. The Government will fully evaluate the process of delivering, and the outcomes achieved by, the first secure school to inform their further rollout.

Yours sincerely,

HELGA SWIDENBANK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, YOUTH CUSTODY SERVICE

Cc: Antonia Romeo, Permanent Secretary, MoJ
Amy Rees, Director-General Probation and Youth, HMPPS