



Department for Education

2025-0008480

Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister for School Standards

Rachel Perks
Principal, New College Worcester
By email: office@ncw.co.uk

10 April 2025

Dear Ms Perks,

Thank you for your correspondence, addressed to the Secretaries of State at the Department for Education and the Department for Work and Pensions, regarding your call for greater investment into provisions for children and young people who are blind or vision impaired. I am replying as the minister responsible for the policy area.

The Minister for Skills, Baroness Smith of Malvern, informed me that she had the pleasure of visiting New College Worcester (NCW) on 28 February, speaking with you and the rest of NCW's leadership about the challenges facing NCW in providing high-quality provision for children and young people who are vision impaired or blind. Baroness Smith noted that NCW are nurturing valuable skills in its pupils, which is a testament to its dedicated staff. Specialist institutions such as NCW will be crucial touchstones for ongoing reform to alternative provision.

The government's ambition is that all children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities or who are in alternative provision receive the right support to succeed in their education and adult life. We have been clear that a more inclusive education system is needed to give children and young people the opportunities they need to achieve and thrive. However, there remains a crucial role for special schools, not only in supporting children and young people with particularly complex needs, but also in building capacity across the system. We are working hard to develop more detailed proposals and will be setting out our plans to do that in due course.

Thank you again for writing. I hope that this response is useful for you, and I wish NCW and its pupils the very best moving forward.

Yours,

Catherine McKinnell MP
Minister for School Standards