

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

May 2021

Dear Constituent

Thank you for your email about UK action to improve education globally.

Improving education systems in developing countries is beneficial for everyone. It supports young people to get good jobs and helps them to lift themselves and their countries out of poverty, thereby building a more prosperous and more stable future for us all. Moreover, it reduces the incentive to seek a better life in another country – which directly impacts the UK. The UK is a world leader when it comes to improving global education. We are the biggest bilateral donor to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), the largest fund in the world dedicated to improving education in developing countries. Indeed, our contribution accounts for 20 per cent of the total amount given globally. The UK occupies a prominent position in the GPE, and will this year co-host (with Kenya) the GPE Replenishment Summit 2021 in July.

I understand that no decision has yet been taken on the UK's next contribution to GPE. However, ministers have assured me that, as co-host, the UK is using every means at our disposal to help the GPE secure its five-year rolling financing target of up to \$5 billion (2021 - 2026).

Girls' education is a particular priority for the PM, and one of the seven Official Development Assistance (ODA) priorities for the UK. The FCDO will spend £400 million on girls' education in 2021, which will help achieve the global target to get 40 million more girls into education, and 20 million more reading in the next five years – an ambition now adopted by the G7 under the UK's Presidency.

The UK's flagship Girls' Education Challenge (GEC), launched 2012, is the world's largest global programme dedicated to girls' education. The GEC operates in the world's poorest nations and has supported millions of girls to receive a quality education. In Zambia, Zimbabwe and Tanzania, for example, the GEC has helped over 260,000 girls from poor communities to stay in secondary education.

Helen Grant MP was appointed as the UK's Special Envoy on Girls' Education in January, tasked with championing every girls' right to 12 years of quality education.

As part of the agenda, I welcome the PM's announcement of 13 May of £55 million for the What Works Hub for Global Education, a programme which will drive crucial research into education reforms, turbocharging efforts to get girls into school and learning.

Member of Parliament for Darlington

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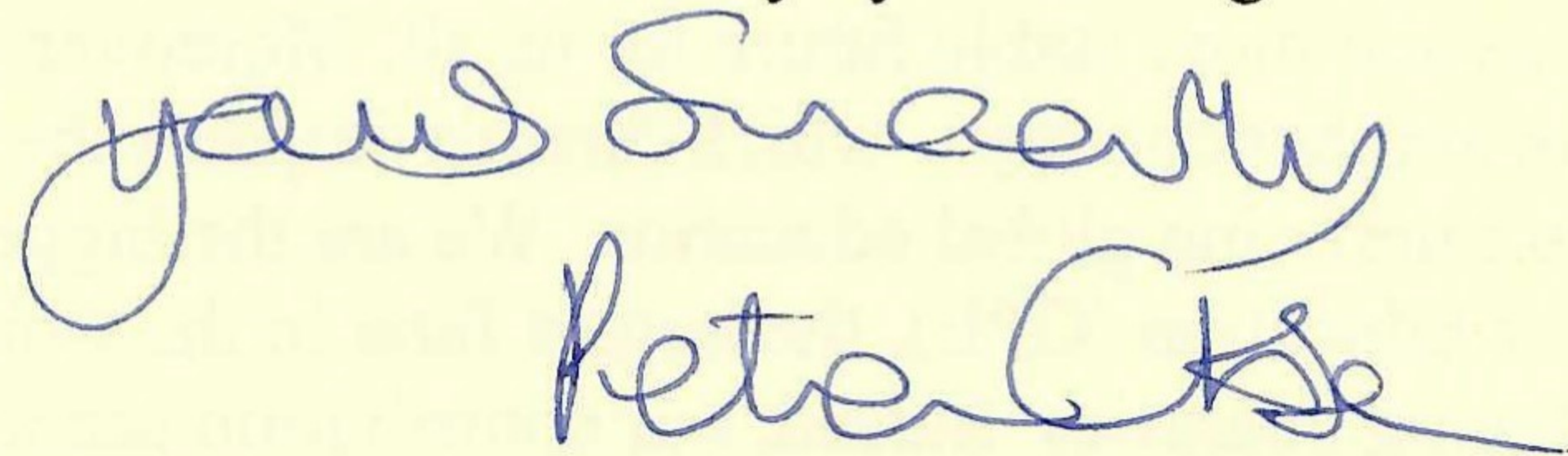
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According to the UN, the Coronavirus pandemic has been responsible for the largest disruption to education systems in history. This, it warns, risks erasing decades of progress on education. To manage the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am informed that the FCDO has adapted its bilateral education programmes in 18 countries as well as providing additional funding, including £5 million to Education Cannot Wait, UNHCR, and UNICEF.

In July 2020, the Global Education Evidence Advisory Panel was established: an independent body composed of leading education experts from around the world. Its mandate is to provide succinct, usable, and policy-focused recommendations to support policymakers' decision-making on education investments in low- and middle-income countries. It is jointly convened by the FCDO and World Bank, and its first report was released in October.

Finally, the UK has pledged to put education (and removing barriers to it) on the global policy agenda this year as part of its Presidency of the G7. Indeed, I welcome the Declaration on Girls' Education of 5 May by the Foreign and Development ministers of the G7 to this end.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Gibson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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