



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## EDUCATION AND SKILLS COMMITTEE

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Dear Convener

I am writing to you to highlight the work of the Education and Skills Committee on school infrastructure which was published on 3 October 2017. The Committee made a number of recommendations that apply across the public sector in Scotland.

The Committee's report can be found here:

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdnep.azureedge.net/published/ES/2017/10/2/School-infrastructure/ESS052017R11.pdf>

The Education and Skills Committee's work flowed from the collapse of the wall at Oxgangs Primary in January 2016 and the subsequent independent inquiry on that incident and the subsequent school closures which reported in February 2017.

The author of the independent inquiry's report, Professor John Cole, provided evidence to the Committee. In relation to his inquiry he said:

"It is just about walls, which could be in a leisure centre, a fire station or a hospital if they are panel walls that are built to the same construction. It is nothing to do with schools. We have called it the schools inquiry, but it is about construction."

The implication of this statement is that the lack of appropriately installed brickwork accessories that caused the collapse of the wall at Oxgangs in 2016 could occur in any other similarly built structure and this may be relevant to public bodies within the remit of several committees. In our work we discovered that similar faults have caused failures in four other schools in Scotland in the last 5 years. Furthermore, inspections by local authorities of their school estates have uncovered a number of similar faults that the Committee understands have subsequently been fixed.

The Committee's report recommended that the "Scottish Government ensures that every devolved public body in Scotland studies the [independent inquiry's] Report in detail and reviews their own estates in light of its findings". The Committee also recommended that "public bodies must maintain a strong interest in the quality and safety of their estates regardless of whether or not they directly own the buildings."

As these recommendations cut across the remit of a number of committees of this Parliament, the Committee agreed that I would write to those committees to highlight our report.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Dornan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'J'.

**JAMES DORNAN MSP  
CONVENER**