



PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE01531

Name of petitioner

Ashley Husband Powton

Petition title

Remove Charitable Status from Private Schools

Petition summary

Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to remove charitable status, and thus taxpayer support, from private, fee-paying schools.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

I wrote to the OSCR on the 18th February 2014 querying their decision to classify private, fee-paying schools as charitable bodies, citing the inherent inequity of taxpayer subsidy for these elitist institutions whilst their financially strapped state counterparts receive no such financial support.

The OSCR's response of 5th March 2014 was unsatisfactory and made clear that they are ultimately not responsible for the guidelines by which they work, and that my concerns require to be directed towards the Scottish Government.

Petition background information

In 2011, Fettes College, a selective private school, saw its tax liability fall from £209,139 to £41,828, a taxpayer funded subsidy of £167,311.

George Watson's, another fee-paying Edinburgh school, fell from £412,649 to £83,530, a taxpayer funded subsidy of £329,119.

Gordonstoun's, whose alumni include the Duke of Edinburgh and Prince Charles, fell from £148,086 to £29,618, a taxpayer funded subsidy of £118,468.

Wester Hailes state school, where over 40% of pupils are eligible for free school-meals, paid its tax liability of £261,873 in full.

This is a pattern reproduced across Scotland and is due to the current charitable status of private schools.

This charitable status allows Scotland's elitist and privileged private schools, which serve only 4% of pupils, 80% mandatory discount on non-domestic rates, whilst financially-strapped state schools, which serve 96% of pupils, pay the full sum.

This inequity must be rectified by removing charitable status, and thus taxpayer subsidy, from private, fee-paying schools. A private, fee-paying school is understood to be a school where one pays to receive general compulsory education.

Unique web address

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/GettingInvolved/Petitions/charitablestatus>

Related information for petition

- <http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/political-news/revealed-the-10m-private-schools-save-on-rates-because-they-are-charities.18209788>
- http://www.scottishleftreview.org/li/index2.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=202&pop=1&page=0
- <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/to-educate-according-to-the-social-situation-of-the-parents-is-wrong-and-a-waste-9547228.html>
- <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/10/end-private-schools-tax-breaks-scotland>

Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website to collect signatures online?

YES

How many signatures have you collected so far?

0

Closing date for collecting signatures online

01 / 10 / 2014

Comments to stimulate online discussion

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Charitable status allows Scotland's elitist and privileged private schools, which serve only 4% of pupils, 80% mandatory discount on non-domestic rates, whilst financially-strapped state schools, which serve 96% of pupils, pay the full sum.

How can this be right or fair?