



The Office of Louie French,
Member of Parliament for Old Bexley and Sidcup,
House of Commons,
London,
SW1A 0AA.

The Rt. Hon. Bridget Phillipson MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

19th November 2025

Dear Secretary of State,

Re: Funding cuts to the International Baccalaureate

I am writing to urge you to reverse your decision to scrap funding for the International Baccalaureate (IB), which will impact pupils studying at Bexley Grammar School in my constituency. Over 600 parents, pupils, and staff signed my petition urging you to cancel your proposed cut to the Large Programme Uplift, which funds state schools to teach the IB curriculum.

The IB has long been recognized for its academic rigour, global outlook, and emphasis on independent thinking. It prepares young people for an increasingly international and interconnected world.

Bexley Grammar School is one of the few state schools in the country that focus solely on IB teaching, and is one of the 19 schools in England that will be affected by your proposed cut. Unless reversed, your decision is going to cause significant disruption to the education of these Bexley pupils as well as more than 5,000 pupils nationwide.

The budget for the Large Programme Uplift is £2.5 million, against a budget of more than £100 billion for the Department for Education as a whole. Cutting the funding for the programme will therefore result in a saving of less than 0.0025%. I do not believe that such a small saving can in any way justify disrupting the education of over 5,000 pupils.

Having met with the Headteacher of Bexley Grammar School, I know that the IB is one of the key reasons behind the decision for pupils to enroll at the school and for the school's success. It is seen by many as an opportunity to develop more well-rounded school leavers. Education from the IB goes beyond the classroom, with creativity, activity and community service a core part of the curriculum.

By cutting the Large Programme Uplift funding for the IB, without any consultation with school and college leaders, and without regard to the impact on learners, thousands of pupils are going to lose out, and thousands more will lose the opportunity to study the IB in future.

I would urge you to reverse your decision to cut the Large Programme Uplift and work with affected schools, to ensure that pupils can continue to receive their education without disruption.

I look forward to your response and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the importance of the IB, and the impact of your funding cut on my constituents.

Yours sincerely,

Louie French,
Member of Parliament for Old Bexley, Sidcup and Welling