

**By Email:**  
**Sec-OF-STATE.PS@education.gov.uk**

The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
Westminster  
SW1P 3BT

28 March 2023

Dear Gillian

**Ruth Perry – Caversham Primary School**

The Community Education Sector Committee met this weekend and expressed their shock and devastation at the tragic news of Ruth Perry, the Headteacher at Caversham Primary School, who took her own life whilst awaiting the formal outcome of an Ofsted Inspection, after being given the school's indicative rating.

All too often we hear teachers and teaching assistants describing the inspection process as brutal. This is a practice that needs to stop. Four simple, headline outcomes cannot possibly tell the whole story of a school and the hard work that goes on in that school on a daily basis.

It is tragic that somebody needs to lose their life before anything is done.

Yes, schools need to be held to account for their provision, but they also need support and help, not punitive measures being given to a hard-working school team. The impact of a poor outcome such as 'requires improvement' has a lasting impact, and inspectors need to take a supportive approach to ensuring that schools can function to their highest ability.

It is now reasonably foreseeable that there is a real health and safety issue, causing risks to workers in education, that needs to be addressed. It would be negligent of the Government to continue with the current Ofsted regime now that you are aware of the very real health and safety implications that the current system is causing.

Educators are suffering from stress, being unable to sleep, due to the worry and concerns about an upcoming Ofsted inspection, and need to work on Saturdays and Sundays due to the short notice that they have received of their pending inspection.

It is Workers' Memorial Day on 28 April 2023; therefore this would be an ideal time to show your support for the thousands of workers in education and show that you care for their health and safety.

Therefore, I urge the Government to act now, to put systems in place and to pause Ofsted inspections, whilst action is taken to ensure that no educator goes into work facing very serious health and safety risks.

The system needs to change. I urge you to do something positive and make this change happen.

Thank you for taking your time to read my letter. I would be happy to discuss this matter further with you, but the most important thing you can do now is act to make a difference.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Helen Osgood'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Helen Osgood  
**National Officer, Education & Early Years Sector**  
**hosgood@community-tu.org**

**Copy:** Bridget Phillipson  
Shadow Secretary of State