



30<sup>th</sup> January 2012

The Editor  
TES  
26 Red Lion Square  
London WC1R 4HQ

Dear Sir

We are deeply concerned that the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, is considering dropping the current requirement for new and refurbished schools to meet the long accepted BREEAM 'very good' standard for sustainable buildings. BREEAM is an essential tool in helping to reduce energy demand from buildings, and critical if the UK is to meet The Carbon Plan put into legislation only last December.

The BREEAM system remains the only broad measure of sustainability, including energy consumption, used across the UK construction industry and is highly effective at delivering high performing buildings at little additional cost. A capital cost uplift of 0.7% to achieve the higher 'Excellent' BREEAM rating can deliver a potential yield of 25% in annual energy use, with associated revenue cost savings. This is the kind of value for money efficiency that the government is seeking across all areas of public spending, including education.

In addition to playing their part in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, school buildings have a role to play in helping pupils, their families and local communities understand how sustainability works in practice. If the government is not prepared to make school buildings sustainable, how can it expect other parts of society to follow suit?

The Edge is a cross-industry group of building design professionals, many of whom have long and recognised experience in school design. The Edge calls upon the Secretary of State to maintain the BREEAM standard for schools and to support and encourage the greening of the school estate.

Yours sincerely

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