

Members of the Public: On February 16th. 2010, some members of **SSITA** (all Children's organisations) wrote this joint letter to Ed Balls seen below:

This letter referred only to "looked after" children and expressed the concern of **SSITA** members as to who would protect the interests of these children, and what sensible caveats would be imposed for the protection of these children, who were to benefit from the Home Access right to home computers.

To: dcsh.ministers@dcsh.gsi.gov.uk

Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2010 1:28 PM

Subject: The Children's Act-1989. Part Three. Section 17.

To: Rt. Hon. Ed Balls, Secretary of State, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

Dear Mr.Balls,

Re: The Children's Act (1989). Part Three, Section 17.

In Section Three, Section 17 of the Childrens' Act, it is stated that it is the duty of every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of "looked after" children, whose parents are not always in a position to do this for themselves. The State acts "in loco parentis" not only to children in day schools but also, to children both in foster homes, day care, state boarding schools, after school clubs and most certainly to children in residential care homes.

Whilst we support Government's laudable intention, announced recently, to spend £270,000 on internet provision for the socially disadvantaged and for children in care , we are concerned to ensure that you provide guidance to local authorities requiring that this broadband entitlement be wired not wireless.

We refer you to the BECTA document: "Technical specification. Institutional infrastructure. Version D.September 2007" which states quite clearly on Page 14 Section 1.1 that "Wired networks have become the industry standard because of their superior data rates, low cost and high degree of stability, with wired networks ubiquitous in education as the fundamental technology underlying local area networks (LANS). A wired network must therefore be used as the main network in an institution".

Please would you confirm specifically whether your Department intends to reiterate this advice to local authorities when the scheme for children in care is rolled out, and what steps the Department intends to take to ensure that it is followed?

We draw your attention to the safety concerns raised by public bodies and scientists in respect of exposures to pulsed microwave radiation from wireless devices such as laptops and wireless internet which can be found on the following websites:

[Wired Child](#)

[Wi-Fi in Schools](#)

You will see clearly that there is a real question over its safety in both the long and short term given that the current guidelines serve only to protect us from the thermal effects, not the biological effects which the scientists are warning us are occurring at levels way below the current guidelines. Indeed I would strongly urge that the precautionary principle be adopted and wired internet access be provided over wireless.

I, together with my colleagues, await your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Diana Hanson

On behalf of [CAVI Society](#) - protecting children from the effects of electromagnetic radiation.

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