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Dear Colin

Thank you for your letter of 26 September 2003 to Margaret Hodge enclosing the Brent Council report into the abscondment and death of Patrick Mullings on an educational visit. I am replying from the team with policy responsibility for the health and safety of pupils on educational visits.

I have read your report with great interest. The Department actively seeks the results of investigations which we can incorporate, in a general way, in our national guidance.

We are considering updating the health and safety guidance that is available on Teachernet. We recognise that there may be some scope to look more specifically at the guidance on including and supervising SEN pupils on educational visits. We will pursue this with colleagues in the SEN division in due course.

The Looked After Children Review has been extensively revised following consultation. The review format now supports a more detailed identification of the child's development needs within each of the seven developmental dimensions of a child's development. For example, action required for a particular child during a visit could be recorded as either Educational Needs or Emotional and Behavioural Development and the appropriate person identified to ensure action.

The Placement Plans and Action and Assessment records have also been extensively revised and reissued as the Integrated Children's System plans for implementation are currently under way.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Lunn  
Pupil Health and Safe Schools Team