



Nadhim Zahawi MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

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Dear colleague,

I am writing to let you know about an important announcement that I have made today, and because you have at least one maintained nursery school in your constituency. You may be aware that we currently provide local authorities with supplementary funding of around £60m a year to enable them to protect the maintained nursery schools' funding. This is in recognition of the costs that they experience over and above other providers, and the arrangement is due to end in March 2020.

At the Greater Manchester School Readiness Summit this morning, I announced that the government would extend the supplementary funding paid to local authorities - by a sum of approximately £24 million - to enable them to fully-fund maintained nursery schools for the whole of the 2019/20 academic year. I am aware that there have been growing concerns amongst local authorities and others about the need to allocate places for this September without knowing what will happen in the 2020 summer term, and this commitment gives the assurance needed to allocate places with confidence.

I know that, while welcome, this further funding for maintained nursery schools does not resolve the wider question over their long-term future. That will be resolved during the next Spending Review, in the context of all the other issues that the Spending Review must consider. However, it provides the sector with critical stability while the Spending Review process runs its course.

The Spending Review will be informed by research that we commissioned from Frontier Economics on maintained nursery schools and that we also published today. It provides new and valuable information and insights into maintained nursery schools' services, costs and quality.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank Robert Halfon MP and members of the Education Select Committee, as well as Lucy Powell MP and the APPG on

Nursery Schools not only for their interest in maintained nursery schools but also for the importance that they place on the early years in influencing children's later outcomes.

I hope that you will join me in welcoming the announcement; it is a recognition of the important work that maintained nursery schools carry out in supporting some of our most disadvantaged children. And I hope that you will work with me as we prepare for the Spending Review to come.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Zahawi', with a long, flowing horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nadhim Zahawi MP
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