



2021-0021716VFPO

Vicky Ford MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

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John Constable
Chair of Slough Schools Forum
By email: johnconstable@lgs.slough.sch.uk

21 April 2021

Dear John,

Thank you for your letter of 31 March, addressed to the Secretary of State, about the future funding of maintained nursery schools (MNS). I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

May I begin by wishing you well in these challenging times.

I agree with you that MNS are invaluable to the early years sector, not only in looking after some of our most vulnerable children, especially in disadvantaged areas, but also in sharing their knowledge and expertise in local areas in order to raise standards.

I am grateful to you for outlining your concerns and want to be clear that the government's commitment to the long-term funding of MNS is unchanged, and any reforms to the way they are funded will be accompanied by appropriate funding protections.

Like other early years providers, MNS have continued to receive early education entitlements funding during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak distributed via the Early Years National Funding Formula.

For 2021 to 2022, we have increased the hourly funding rates for all local authorities (LAs) by 8p an hour for the two-year-old entitlement and, for the vast majority of areas, by 6p an hour for the three- and four-year-old entitlement. This funding rate increase is paid for all the hours of childcare delivered by all types of providers in the LA's area, including MNS.

In addition to the hourly funding rate increase, we have also re-confirmed around £60 million, nationally, in supplementary funding for MNS for the financial year 2021 to 2022, to allow LAs to preserve MNS funding levels. Details of funding paid to LA are available at: tinyurl.com/95nccbWP.

Supplementary funding is demand-led, so the level of funding the LAs receive will follow the number of three- and four-year-olds taking up the universal 15 hours entitlement at MNS in their area.

Thank you for writing to me on this important matter. I hope this reply assures you of our continued commitment to the support of MNS.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicky Ford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small dash at the end.

Vicky Ford MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families