

16/03/2022

Re: maintained nurseries funding

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing to you as the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People for the London Borough of Lambeth. We are appealing to you as Secretary of State for Education to provide the funding needed to ensure a secure future for our local authority-maintained nursery schools.

Within Lambeth there are five council-maintained nursery schools, four out of five are rated outstanding by Ofsted and one good. They are all located in, or close to, areas of high deprivation, taking in many children who face multiple disadvantages in life.

However, despite the success of these fantastic nurseries their funding is becoming increasingly under-pressure and unsustainable. These nurseries provide high quality education led by specialists headteachers and qualified teachers, however, due to staffing requirements as legally constituted schools, this provision comes at a higher cost than private and voluntary nurseries.

Following national changes to how these settings are funded, the sustainability of this sector is being affected locally and nationally, currently Lambeth Council is having to top-up the budget annually for these five excellent schools, which serve our most deprived communities, to enable them to stay open.

The council has worked with the schools to make savings where possible, forming the schools into a federation with a single head. Further savings are becoming increasingly difficult to identify and we are becoming seriously concerned about their future.

I am calling for government funding to nurseries that is both sustainable, long-term, and sufficient without recourse to top-ups from councils whose services are stretched to the limit. We ask that as Secretary of State you please prioritise this issue and provide the level of long-term funding that these schools need to ensure our most deprived children have the best start in life that they can be given.

I would be very happy to meet with you to discuss this issue and would also like to offer an invitation to visit one of our excellent nurseries, we would be delighted to host you so that you have the opportunity to see first-hand the work that they do for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr. Ed Davie



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "e/air".

Cabinet Member, Equalities and Culture
London Borough of Lambeth