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Elizabeth Truss MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Childcare

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Your ref: CAS/061213

7th January 2014

Dear Shailesh,

Thank you for your letter of 6 December, enclosing correspondence from your constituent, Councillor Sheila Scott of 1 Westwater Crescent, Hampton Vale, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE7 8LT, about funding for children's centres.

Children's centres are at the heart of the Government's vision for supporting families with young children. We remain committed to early intervention, which is why local councils, like Peterborough, have been given the freedom to target their resources to best support the needs of their communities.

The Early Intervention Grant (EIG) was established in April 2011 to give local councils the freedom to make decisions on how best to target resources to support early intervention and other valuable services. Following the transfer in the financial year 2013-14 of the EIG into the new business rates retention (BRR) system of local Government finance, local authorities will retain this flexibility to make the most effective and efficient use of funding available.

In the financial year 2013-14, early intervention funding will total approximately £2.4 billion. This includes the EIG transferring into BRR, funding for early learning for two-year-olds from disadvantaged families, and the £150 million to support adoption reform. The total funding in the financial year 2014-15 in these areas will be approximately £2.51 billion. This represents a year-on-year increase in the funding available to support early intervention.

Local authorities continue to have a statutory duty to make sure they have sufficient children's centres to meet local need. Some local authorities are examining their provision to make sure that services are being delivered efficiently and effectively. In doing so, they are identifying ways of retaining a network that is accessible to all, but focused on making a difference to those most in need.

Please thank Councillor Scott for writing on this important matter and I hope this letter is helpful to her.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E Truss', written in a cursive style.

Elizabeth Truss MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Childcare