



Lord Nash

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

10th December 2015

Dear Noble Lords,

THE EDUCATION AND ADOPTION BILL – REQUIRING ACADEMY SPONSORS TO COMMUNICATE WITH PARENTS

You will have seen today that the Government has tabled an amendment to the Education and Adoption Bill to ensure that, when their child's school is underperforming and is required to become a sponsored academy, parents will be kept informed about what action is being taken.

The amendment requires that once the Regional Schools Commissioner has identified an academy sponsor to take over a school that is eligible for intervention, the sponsor must communicate to parents information about their plans to improve the school.

As I have already made clear during the passage of the Bill, it is already common practice that once a sponsor has been identified for a failing school, the sponsor will inform parents about their plans for the school, ensuring that parents know what to expect. This amendment to the Bill would require this in law, so parents can be confident that this will happen consistently.

Sponsors will have flexibility about how best to communicate with parents, but our intention is to provide further information in the Schools Causing Concern guidance about what this should typically look like in practice. For example, to suggest that sponsors might want to write to parents when they're first matched to the school to provide more information about them as a sponsor, their ethos, and what parents can expect to happen next, and to hold meetings with parents to share information and answer questions.

I hope you will recognise that this amendment improves the Bill by providing more robust assurance to parents that they will be kept informed. I look forward to debating the amendment next week when the Bill returns for Report Stage in the House of Lords.

I am copying this letter to all Peers who have participated in debates on the Bill and will also ensure a copy is available from the House of Lords library.

Yours sincerely

JOHN NASH