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Nadhim Zahawi MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
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Dear Nadhim,

EU Citizens' Children who are Looked After Children and Care Leavers

At Oral Parliamentary Questions on 4 April, Emma Lewell-Buck MP raised concerns that there will be complications in the EU Settlement Scheme for EU citizens' children who are looked-after or care leavers, warning that they risk becoming part of a new Windrush scandal. Ms Lewell-Buck MP has declared that she would like to see automatic settled status and the waiving of fees for citizenship for children who are looked after or care leavers. Ms Lewell-Buck MP has argued that all looked after children and care leavers have care plans with their nationality included, so identifying these children should not prove too difficult or onerous. She believes that the numbers would be small but the impact of doing this will be significant for these children. I committed to raising these concerns with the relevant governmental departments.

I am informed that local authorities (in England, Wales and Scotland) and Health and Social Care Trusts (in Northern Ireland) will have a vital role to play in supporting vulnerable children through the application process. They will be required to ensure that applications are made on behalf of all looked after children for whom they have parental responsibility and who are EEA citizens or family members of EEA citizens. I welcome the support the Department of Education has given the Home Office to ensure that local authorities are able to discharge their responsibility to looked after children and care leavers.

I would be grateful if you could clarify the steps the Department for Education has taken to ensure that robust protections are in place that safeguard the rights of EU citizens' children, who are looked after, and care leavers following our departure from the EU.

ROBIN WALKER MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION