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13 December 2021

Rt Hon. Nadhim Zahawi MP
Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education

Amanda Spielman
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector

Sent by email to: Sec-OF-STATE.PS@education.gov.uk

Our ref: 459780

Dear Nadhim

Inspection of supporting accommodation

Thank you for your letter of 8 December 2021.

I am pleased that, following your consultation, you are proceeding with the introduction of national standards for supported accommodation for young people.

Ofsted will be very happy to develop and implement a new system of regulation and inspection in line with the timeframe that is set out in your letter. The sector faces significant challenges in making sure that all looked after children and care leavers can live in good quality, safe accommodation that meets their individual needs. We know that there is some excellent provision, but the overall quality remains far too variable. The new standards and regulatory oversight are absolutely necessary.

I agree with you that a provider-level approach represents the most appropriate way of regulating and inspecting supported accommodation, given the wide-ranging nature of this kind of provision and the need for support to be able to adapt quickly to young people's changing needs.

As we develop the regulatory and inspection arrangements, the insights of local authorities, providers and other stakeholders will be hugely valuable. We are especially committed to consulting meaningfully with care-experienced young people on the design of the regulation requirements and the inspection framework. It is essential that we focus on the things that matter most for young people, while providing the right level of reassurance for providers, commissioners, the public and, of course, young people themselves.

We will develop a system that places the interests of young people at its heart. If a child aged 16 or 17 is living in supported accommodation, we should expect to see

that this is demonstrably in their best interests and that the support they are receiving meets their individual needs.

We will continue to work closely with colleagues in the department. We are very pleased to be playing our part in this important programme of reform that I expect will improve the experiences of thousands of children and young people.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Spielman".

Amanda Spielman
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector