



2019-0015265NZPO

**Nadhim Zahawi MP**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families

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Benjamin Ward, Acting UK Director  
Human Rights Watch  
First Floor, Audrey House  
16-20 Ely Place  
London, EC1N 6SN

30<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Dear Benjamin,

Thank you for your letter of 12 April, addressed to the Secretary of State, about your research project on food poverty in England. I am replying as the minister responsible for this policy area.

The government wants pupils to be healthy and well nourished. We encourage a healthy balanced diet and healthy life choices through school funding, legislation and guidance.

As you are aware the National Schools Breakfast Programme is an investment of up to £26 million from this department, using funds from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy revenues. This money will kick-start or improve breakfast clubs in over 1,700 schools and will be targeted at the most disadvantaged areas of the country – including the Department for Education's Opportunity Areas – to help ensure every child gets the best start in life.

This programme will also deliver innovation project(s) that will test out new approaches to enhancing the health, education or wider socioeconomic benefits, overcoming delivery and access barriers.

In 2018, we awarded £2 million to seven organisations to deliver free healthy food and enriching activities to over 18,000 disadvantaged children. In December, we announced a further £9 million for the 2019 summer holidays for organisations to bid to take on the role of testing the coordination of free holiday provision for disadvantaged children during the 2019 summer holidays, the aim of this would be to have one local coordinator in a Local Authority area in each of the 9 English regions.

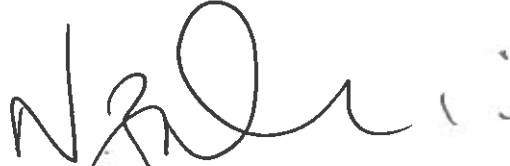
Our programme of work, which will end after the summer 2019 holidays, will focus on the best and most cost-effective ways to address the issue, with an emphasis on securing the best possible value for money.

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We have appointed an external evaluator for the programme and their report, which will be publicly available, will allow the government to consider if and how it should intervene long-term.

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Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nadhim Zahawi', written over a horizontal line.

**Nadhim Zahawi MP**  
**Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families**