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**Nick Gibb MP**  
Minister of State for Schools

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Rt Hon George Howarth MP  
By email: [jonathan.woods@parliament.uk](mailto:jonathan.woods@parliament.uk)

7 July 2016

Dear George,

Thank you for your email of 10 June, on behalf of a number of your constituents, regarding teachers' industrial action.

I am both surprised and disappointed that the National Union of Teachers (NUT) proceeded with industrial action on 5 July. The Government has met frequently with the NUT to discuss its concerns, because we do not believe that the interests of teachers, or children, are advanced by industrial action. Strikes damage pupils' education, cause unnecessary disruption to parents, and undermine the public respect that teachers deserve.

We are further disappointed by this decision because we have offered a programme of talks with trade unions, including the NUT, to discuss their members' concerns. The talks are focused on policy implementation across a range of areas, including funding, pay and conditions, and academisation.

I would like to assure your constituents that we do recognise the importance of investing in our children's education. That is why we have ensured that the schools budget has been protected in real terms. As your constituents are aware, we are also proposing to replace the current system of funding for schools, which is archaic and unfair, with a new equitable and transparent national funding formula.

Schools, like other public services, must act to improve the value for money that they provide. The effectiveness with which schools spend their money is almost as important as the amount of funding they receive. Research shows that many schools with similar pupil characteristics and levels of funding achieve very different outcomes for their students. We want to help schools make the best use of the funds available, and have put in place support to help schools operate efficiently. This guidance and support can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/hutwg36>.

The Government believes that the academies programme leads to a higher performing education system which makes it easier to improve standards.

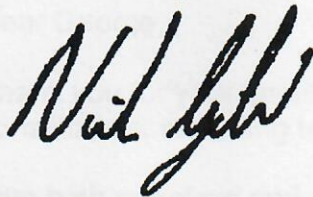


Furthermore, under the academies system, it is easier for teachers to share best practice and take advantage of new opportunities, and for heads of academies and groups of academies to recruit, train and develop high quality teachers. Schools also have greater autonomy to reward teachers for their hard work, as well as target any school level recruitment issues, such as teacher shortages.

Teachers are at the heart of the Government's reforms, and I would like to assure your constituents that we are committed to working openly, honestly and constructively with the profession to ensure the implementation of these reforms works.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

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

**Nick Gibb MP**