



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

BW29518

Willow Class
Calder Vale St John's Primary School
Long House Lane
Calder Vale
Lancashire PR3 1SR

26 May 2024

Dear Willow Class,

Thank you for your email of 22 April in which you call for every deaf child and their families to be given free access to British Sign Language teaching.

The Government already has in place the Adult Education Budget (AEB) which targets a wide range of eligible individuals, including parents and caregivers of all newly-identified deaf children. The AEB funds qualifications in, or focussing on, British Sign Language (BSL) up to and including Level 2. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) provides funding for learners who live in non-devolved areas, which includes the Wyre and Preston North Constituency.

ESFA funded AEB qualifications include, for example, the Level 1 Award in BSL, which allows learners to communicate in BSL on a range of topics that involve simple, everyday language use, thereby giving them the basic skills and confidence in production and reception of BSL. It will depend on an individual's circumstances as to whether they are entitled to free provision or expected to meet part of the cost through co-funding.

For parents learning BSL on an AEB funded course, there is also additional support available. The AEB provides funding to colleges and providers to help adult learners overcome barriers preventing them from accessing learning. Providers have discretion to help learners meet costs such as transport, accommodation, books, equipment and childcare. Learning support funding also helps colleges and training providers to meet the additional needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the costs of reasonable adjustments as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

I hope this information is helpful and of some assurance to you. As you may know, Parliament is to be dissolved on 30 May, ahead of the General Election, and I will cease to be a Member of Parliament on that day. It has been an honour to serve the people of Wyre over the last 19 years.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Salla

THE RT HON BEN WALLACE MP