



Registered Charity Number: 1160575

**Mermaids**

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Nadhim Zahawi MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

1<sup>st</sup> June 2022

Dear Secretary of State for Education,

I am writing to you from Mermaids as the biggest charity supporting transgender, non-binary and gender-diverse children and young people, as well as their families and professionals involved in their care. Established in 1995, we have extensive experience supporting this community, including in navigating access to inclusive school environments.

I wished to inquire further into the UK Government's plans to introduce guidance for schools on how to support transgender pupils, as announced on 14<sup>th</sup> May. We greatly welcome an affirming and helpful piece of guidance, and would like to offer the Government an opportunity to meet with us further so that we could support the development of this guidance, sharing our knowledge and expertise after years of working with transgender young people, their families, and schools.

I would also like to express our concerns following the Attorney General's recent comments on 27<sup>th</sup> May, stating that schools do not need to support transgender pupils. We hear on a daily basis how much of negative impact it can have on transgender pupils' mental health and wellbeing when they are not supported in school and how this can impact their long-term access to education. We also hear of the opposite, where schools have been empowered in how to support transgender pupils, and how pupils have flourished with this support. We hope the guidance produced by the Government ensures that more transgender pupils are able to experience that support and care in school, especially given the requirements of state schools to eliminate, not encourage, discrimination and harassment of those with protected characteristics.

If our offer for a further conversation is of interest, please don't hesitate to contact myself to arrange a meeting. If we can offer the Department for Education support or information in any other way to enable you to produce helpful guidance, we are more than happy to help.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Kai O'Doherty (they/them)  
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