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Rt Hon Nick Gibb MP
Minister of State for School Standards

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Dr Carolyn Wilkins OBE
Chief Executive, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
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Your ref: Council – Youth Council - 20170712

18 September 2017

Dear Dr Wilkins,

Thank you for your letter of 25 August, addressed to the Secretary of State, regarding children and young people's mental health. I am replying as the Minister of State for School Standards.

Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people is a priority for the Government. On 9 January, the Prime Minister announced a series of measures to ensure they receive the support they need, including a Green Paper on children and young people's mental health by the end of the year. This will set out our plans to transform services in schools, universities and for families.

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the resilience and mental health of pupils. Good schools understand the relationship between positive mental health and attainment, and make it part of their ethos, alongside good teaching and strong pastoral support. Schools provide support for pupils' mental health, based on the particular needs of their pupils. This includes, lessons about dealing with exam stress and anxiety, interventions such as mindfulness and peer support, as well as offering counselling.

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The Government supports schools to promote mental wellbeing by funding the PSHE Association to publish guidance and age appropriate lesson plans on teaching about mental health issues. We have also funded the development of MindEd, a free online resource that allows all those working with children and young people to access information on a range of mental health issues.

Many secondary schools, and an increasing number of primary schools, provide their pupils access to counselling support. We have published a blueprint for school counselling services that provides schools with practical, evidence based advice on how to deliver high quality, school based counselling to all pupils. We have also recently launched a mental health first aid training programme for all secondary schools across the country, to help them identify and respond appropriately to early signs of mental health issues in children.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nick Gill". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'N'.