**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

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|  | **MR IAIN WRIGHT (****hARTLEPOOL):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of presumption for contact in relation to the role of fathers in the family courts; and if he will make a statement. |
|  | **(194357)** |

**EDWARD TIMPSON MP:**

Section 11 of the Children and Families Act 2014 requires courts to presume that a child benefits from the involvement of each parent who can be involved in a way which does not put the child at risk of harm. This is subject to the principle that the welfare of the child must be the courts’ paramount consideration. “Involvement” may be direct or indirect; it is for courts to determine the most appropriate way for a parent to be involved, in the light of the individual circumstances.

Section 11 of the Act will be commenced in the autumn. One of the aims of the policy is to encourage parents to resolve disputes without the need for court intervention. The Government therefore intends to consider the impact of the policy as part of wider work to assess the impact of the family justice provisions in the Act.