

ANNEX A - Information to be released (redactions are subject to exemptions)

OR please

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 July 2020 06:54

To: [REDACTED] maree.todd.msp@parliament.scot; Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture <CabSecEFWC@gov.scot>; fiona.hyslop.msp@parliament.scot

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Petition to Support Private Nurseries

Dear all

I am writing regarding the petition to Support Private Nurseries Through Covid19.

As parents who work full-time, having a safe and nurturing environment for our young child is the only way we can carry on working.

We are very concerned about the lack of funding for private nurseries as the lack of childcare will have a serious impact on the ability of parents to stay in work. More concerningly, this is likely to disproportionately affect women as they tend to be the primary caregivers.

We ask that you consider the huge support garnered by the petition and the impact the current situation is having on young families.

Best wishes

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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OR, thanks

[REDACTED] | Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence)

Office of Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture

Please note my work days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. If you need to contact me urgently outwith these hours, please email CabSecEFWC@gov.scot

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 July 2020 09:35

To: fiona.hyslop.msp@parliament.scot; Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture <CabSecEFWC@gov.scot>; maree.todd.msp@parliament.scot; [REDACTED]

Subject: Private Nurseries

Dear Fiona,

I am writing to express my concern about the impact the current pandemic and lack of financial support is having on private nurseries.

My youngest son still attends a school nursery for his full allocation of two days per week and a private nursery one day per week. This invaluable provision allows myself and my husband to continue to work and my child to continue to nurture and grow within a safe and secure environment.

Many private nurseries have waiting lists as they are a much needed childcare facility. If many private nurseries are unable to continue (particularly the harder hit newly established provisions) when normal working outside of the home restarts, I am concerned that there will be a shortage of this type of childcare provision.

We have continued to try to support our sons nursery as best as we can as we will need this provision as soon as it opens.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

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Micase for [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 30 June 2020 21:03

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Re opening of ELC

Hi Nicola,

I know this is probably a pointless email as you must have so many to get through, the chances of you reading it are slim.

I just want to say that you are doing an AMAZING job and doing our country proud!

I'm a early years practitioner working in a private nursery and I am extremely concerned about going back to work on the 15th of July, we are going back to full capacity on an 8am-6pm basis and the anxiety myself and my colleagues all have is indescribable, please please reconsider opening ELC centres in July and consider pushing it to august along with the schools.

Thanks for the amazing work you are doing, Kind regards [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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AO – [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 July 2020 14:49

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: 1140 hours Glasgow City Council

Dear Mrs Todd,

I write to you with regards to the recent concerning news that the proposal for 1140 hours of nursery provision for all 3-5 year olds will no longer go ahead in the Glasgow City Council area.

This year's global pandemic has had a detrimental impact on all of us, from individual households to independent businesses and I am under no illusion of the negative effect it will have had on the financial situation of local councils, including Glasgow City Council.

A large element of the Covid recovery procedure relies on a positive transition for all of us in getting back to nursery, school and work. Without the support of the proposed 1140 hours, there will be 1000's of families across the city that will be automatically disadvantaged, both from a financial and health and wellbeing perspective, when many are already managing a reduction in household income and the overbearing stress that comes with it.

My youngest daughter turns 3 in September. I am a *teacher* with a take home pay, after deductions, of £1700 per month. Covid 19 has had a severe impact on my partner's work and so, for the foreseeable future, we are down to one income. Nursery fees alone are approx £900 per month. Once you consider a mortgage, council tax, utilities, a car, after-school fees for my eldest & food you can quickly see that we are in dire need of childcare support in order to make things work. The only saving grace we could work towards was the provision of 1140 hours.

We are in no way the worst hit family. By removing the 1140 hours, Glasgow City Council has made a clear u-turn in it's commitment towards raising attainment, closing the poverty related gap and providing equity for all.

I urge you to support us by doing all you can to persuade Glasgow City Council that prioritising 1140 hours is the only way to fully support the families of Glasgow and promote equal opportunity for all during this recovery process.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 30 June 2020 22:40

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>;
soryia.siddique@glasgow.gov.uk; Dornan J (James), MSP
<James.Dornan.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: E-mail to councillors RE: funded hours for nursery places

Dear Maree, Soryia and James,

The following is the contents of a letter I have sent to my local councillors, but I believe will be of interest to you too. I would appreciate your input.

I am writing to you to voice my concern at the current situation that has developed relating to the renegeing on the 1140 funded hours for nursery places, which has been pushed back by some undefined period.

While I appreciate that the Covid-19 situation has changed the world as we know it, this does not remove the fact that for many the 1140 hours has been part of a complicated personal calculation on which the basis for many life decisions has been made. My family are also in the unfortunate position that we have to rely on a private nursery for care for our first child due to the lack of places in GCC operated nurseries, with a second child due to begin attendance at nursery in December 20. To say this has a significant financial impact on my family (and many like it) is not an understatement.

In addition to this many partnered childcare providers, ours included, have implemented measures to accommodate the 1140 funded hours (eg. altering usable space in order to increase capacity). With the post C-19 guidelines reducing the capacity of these nurseries for an unknown period, plus the spectre of parents withdrawing from nursery care when the numbers don't add up*, the private nursery sector is in peril. If the worst happens, where will our children go? There is no capacity in the GCC nurseries for this scenario.

Please consider the wider impact of this decision, and back working families by funding the hours that guarantee access to this critical

service. Other councils, including East Renfrewshire, have committed to fully funding these hours. The right thing for working families and the wider economy is to do the same.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

*I want to highlight this point. The costs of childcare in the private setting is significant. Our own situation will involve four figure costs per month when our second child begins nursery. How many families can afford this, especially when the funded hours have been withdrawn at the 11th hour? This will result in many making the decision to leave the workplace, and unfortunately this will likely be a burden predominately carried by women. This would be an unmitigated disaster.

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 July 2020 17:12
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Re: Nursery Provision EDC- discriminatory postcode lottery

thankyou for your response, however much of this would not be an issues if the scottish. goverment rescinded its cancellation of 1140 hours and made the additional funding available to ensure children , one of the most vulnerable groups in society got the best start.

while lots of grandparents/vulnerable persons/key workers no doubt gratefully recieved these services im sure they would be disgusted if they know that it had been at the expense of all childrens welfare and education. the Uk gov made additional funds available and your government should use that-not short change children.

that was a gross mistake on the part of your SNP government. Similarly the guidance regarding social distancing in nurseries needs to be removed as per schools -this is the main reason that the council is giving regarding capacity in the locations not recieving 1140 hours in EDC. ive no idea how its possible in one location and not another!????

in relation to building works yes i can see this would be a logistical issue, however, there is no committment to increase hours as these facilities come on stream, nor even a published new completion dates. Nor is there, according to the council leader, a capacity to give the 1140 to private sector locations if they cant do it the LA nurseries due to legal requirements they treat both the same. if LA centres cannot provide the care parents should be able to spend the balance via For example local childcare vouchers) with private sector nurseries supporting the local.business and economy. or councils should hire additional space...its really not rocket science. As a lot of the 3 year olds do not start til they are 3, many of the alocated spaces wont actually be there at the start...temp solutions coulfd be founnd im quite sure.

The whole things is a total foreseeable shambles made by poor Government decision making and it needs a quick resolution. Where there is a will there is a way, Question is whether the scottish government values the early years education the way it says it does.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

On Mon, 6 Jul 2020 at 14:09, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting Rona Mackay MSP regarding the 1140 hours provision.

Please find Rona's response below;

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email regarding East Dunbartonshire Council's provision of Early Years education and the postponement of the 1140 hours free expansion.

I understand how distressing and inconvenient this is for you and many other families who have been planning and organising for this to happen in August.

You will understand that I have no influence over decisions taken by the council and that 750 hours was, I understand, a decision taken by East Dunbartonshire council officers.

As you know, all local authorities received a substantial sum of money from the Scottish Government for the 1140 hours Early Years roll out. However, due to the Coronavirus pandemic the Government allowed councils flexibility to use this money to deal with the crisis if they needed to. East Dunbartonshire Council chose to do this, and the money was spent on providing hubs for key workers and supporting vulnerable families, among the many other things they deemed necessary to cope with the crisis.

In addition, as all construction was stopped during lockdown, the planned new nursery hubs will not be completed on time. I'm pleased to see building has recommenced over the last few weeks and much progress has been made.

However, many people who have contacted me have asked why Early Years providers who have been delivering 1140 hours in private nurseries, and who are willing and have the capacity to continue, cannot carry on doing this.

I am therefore writing to the Chief Executive of East Dunbartonshire Council today to ask why this ruling was made, what the criteria was for 750 hours and why providers who wish to offer 1140 hours cannot do so.

I will be in touch as soon as I receive a response.

Kind regards,

Rona

[REDACTED]

Senior Caseworker

Sent on behalf of Rona Mackay MSP for Strathkelvin and Bearsden Constituency

Constituency Office

18a Townhead

Kirkintilloch, G66 1NL

0141-776-1561

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 July 2020 12:04
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: Early Years Education

Dear John Swinney,

I'm writing because I've just seen East Lothian Council's (ELC) update on early years childcare. They only updated the website, they haven't yet directly contacted those of us impacted, which is in itself inexcusable.

Your aim now is for schools to go back full time in August, as long as the science backs that up. This is the smart course of action, however ELC are refusing to apply the same to nurseries. They are claiming that because the Scottish Govt didn't explicitly mention early years in their announcement, that it doesn't apply to them.

ELC nurseries are often within the Primary Schools, if the science is saying it is safe for primary kids to return to school with no social distancing, then it has to follow that it's the same for nursery children. These children often have older siblings so won't be socially distant from them. By August, hopefully, they won't be socially distancing from their friends outside of school. Why should it be necessary for 4 year olds to be subject to more rigorous rules than 4 and 5 year olds in Primary 1?

Preschool nursery is supposed to prepare children for going to school, sending them in for 2 full days at nursery, followed by 5 days at home is absolutely failing to prepare them for school. Also, by August they will have been at home for 6 months, two full days of nursery will exhaust them, they will be emotional and need support and at that age, that means cuddles. Are their teachers going to refuse to cuddle them when they've previously been allowed to? That will be incredibly damaging to young children.

ELC have also said that this new set up has reduced their capacity so some children who have already been in nursery may now no longer have a space. They haven't bothered to tell us who is affected by this. There's no hint of how long it's going to take them to decide either. Parents can't possibly plan to return to work with this level of uncertainty.

ELC were intending to implement a 48 week model for the 1140 hours in Longniddry, which was going to be of no use to most parents. No-one is going to send a child to nursery during school holidays when they have other children at home, so that means schools were going to be open and staff required to sign new contracts all at vast ongoing cost, for a service almost no parents wanted. ELC said early on in the lockdown that they would no longer offer us the 1140 hours in Longniddry. The obvious course of action should have been to continue with the existing set up, i.e. younger children in afternoons and older preschool children in mornings. That's what they need to be doing in August.

When ELC refused to implement the term time model for 1140 hours, which was favoured by both parents and staff, they claimed it was because they lacked the catering provisions for the nursery children. How are they intending to ensure the children are properly fed now?

I understand there will be teachers and non teaching staff who need to continue to shield and I entirely agree that they should do. However, if the science is saying it is ok for primary children to return to school full time, then the same risk assessment must apply to children in the nurseries next door. To aim for 2 full days only and disrupt preschool children by refusing to allow them to return to the nursery they've already been attending is unacceptable. To not communicate to affected parents is inexplicable.

Please reconsider the current guidance, the same sensible approach must be applied to early years children, or we'll have an entire year of children utterly unprepared to begin school and parents who cannot work effectively for another year. Nursery children must return to their own nurseries as normal, in the same way Primary and Secondary children are. This current approach is failing children, parents and the economy.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]
Longniddry

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From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Minister for Children and Young People
Sent: 01 July 2020 09:05
To: Public Engagement Unit <CorrespondenceUnit@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Letter from Cabinet Secretary - 24 June

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 10:59:31 PM
To: [REDACTED]; Todd M (Maree), MSP
<Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>; Hyslop F (Fiona), MSP
<Fiona.Hyslop.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Re: Letter from Cabinet Secretary - 24 June

Dear Fiona and Maree,

[REDACTED] set-up a petition to highlight the fact that there are no grants available to the majority of private nurseries following on from the decision that private nurseries are not deemed 'pivotal' enough to the economy to receive the PERF grant. [REDACTED] set this petition a few days ago and it already has over 2,000 signatures and this number is continuing to increase. We believe this highlights how vital private nurseries are to our local economies.

https://www.change.org/p/scottish-government-support-private-nurseries-through-covid-19?recruiter=50883947&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=share_petition&recruited_by_id=28f6c3c0-a137-0130-e44b-3c764e04873b&fbclid=IwAR0uiblX4c5kN1r8zKX0nwznCR9cs52gsbqhzFSpl5VgOUsPS1iZlcl536g

We have had no financial support to cover our fixed costs while closed due to Covid-19. There are also no grants available to support us in adapting our settings to comply with the new guidelines for opening ELC settings from 15th July. In order to make our setting safe for our children our costs will increase to adapt our outdoor space so that it can be used to its fullest potential including additional shelters, hand washing facilities etc. The requirement to operate in 'bubbles' of 8 children will also result in

increased staff costs and many other of our costs will increase including cleaning, resources etc.

We are part of the '2020 Together (we can)' group of nurseries who have been liaising with Maree on this issue and we believe are meeting on this tomorrow. Private nurseries provide vital childcare for 0-5's and allow thousands of parents to return to work. Private nurseries provide childcare for those that are not catered for in public nurseries and provide parents with vital choice in where they use their funded entitlement. We believe this petition highlights how vital private nurseries are and demonstrates that without some financial support they will be unable to survive the financial burden imposed by covid-19.

Kind Regards,
[REDACTED]

On Mon, Jun 29, 2020 at 3:20 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

Good Afternoon [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email to Fiona Hyslop.

After speaking to Fiona about your most recent email, I can confirm that Fiona has spoken to Maree Todd, Minister for Children and Early Learning, personally in parliament regarding support for private nurseries. Maree Todd relayed that she was very aware of the sectors concerns and the need for support, if possible, for the private nursery sector in order to get people back to work. We will send you any updated information, when available, from the Scottish Government in relation to help for private nurseries.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED] | Constituency Assistant to

Fiona Hyslop, Member of Scottish Parliament for the Linlithgow Constituency

Fiona Hyslop MSP Constituency Office, 59 West Main St., Whitburn, West Lothian, EH47 0QD | 01501 [749941](tel:01501749941)



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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 26 June 2020 15:11

To: Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture

<CabSecEFWC@gov.scot>; Hyslop F (Fiona), MSP

<Fiona.Hyslop.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Re: Letter from Cabinet Secretary - 24 June

Dear Fiona,

Thank you for your letter. Our response is as follows:

- With regards to the PERF grant we spoke to someone about the appeal and were told that we did not pass their 'pivotal' criteria which we still strongly dispute. We were originally told that we could submit additional information to be considered with our appeal and spent considerable time producing this to support our appeal. I was then told during my call that additional information could not be taken into consideration in our appeal which we are very disappointed about as we feel it really highlighted why our business is vital to the local economy. The person I spoke to has fed back to her superiors that a lot of nurseries are not receiving this grant and are 'falling through the cracks' in terms of grant funding to cover ongoing fixed costs.

- On the point about ELC funding we really need to stress, as we did on our phone call, that this has not provided us with additional funding to cover our fixed costs and make required adjustments to our setting. The Scottish government have issued guidance on this funding which states that ELC settings need to use this funding towards staff costs and then furlough the remainder of staff and claim through the UK Gov furlough scheme. This is what we have done and therefore it has not provided any additional financial benefit to our business beyond what the furlough scheme offers. Currently ELC funding only makes up 15% of our total income and therefore you will see that the majority of our children are under 3 and not eligible for funding. Council nurseries don't cater for under 3's and they are also limited in the number of hours/week that they provide and therefore private nurseries like our business are vital for families with young children.

- On the point about the working group who are looking at the financial sustainability of the sector we have had no communication on the work done by this group via our representative body NDNA. From the correspondence from yourself we believe you recognise the importance of private nurseries in supporting parents going back to work and therefore we would like further communication directly on this. The Scottish Government has announced ELC settings should prepare to open on the 15th July however the guidance issued have various financial impacts for us including extra staff and changes to our setting and therefore it is vital that we receive information on a support package urgently.

- The email you sent us also detailed that you would speak to Maree Todd further about the support package required for ELC settings and WLC to see what support they will offer and we would ask that we receive feedback on this urgently. I have emailed WLC and been told that no additional financial support will be offered although they have used money to invest in additional cleaning resources and adapting their own settings. They have cited the ELC funded place income while closed as being a benefit to us, as highlighted above this is not the case and I have responded to them to make this point.

We would ask that you become actively involved in supporting a financial package for private nurseries to support the vital role we play in allowing parents to return to work and opening up the Scottish economy post Covid-19. To be clear we do not currently qualify for any grants to support fixed costs or necessary changes to our setting to open in July although almost everyone recognises that private nurseries provide a vital role in supporting young children

and allowing many parents to return to work. Our sector urgently requires support from the Scottish Government.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

On Wed, Jun 24, 2020 at 8:46 PM <CabSecEFWC@gov.scot> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED] Please find attached a letter from the Cabinet Secretary

Thank you

[REDACTED]

**Private Secretary to Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for
Economy, Fair Work and Culture**

The Scottish Government

St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | **T:** [REDACTED]
| **M:** [REDACTED]

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AO [REDACTED]

To Mr Swinney

I am writing concerning the latest release of details for early years childcare in Aberdeenshire. I am a secondary maths teacher and it has come to my attention that now I will need to subsidise my child's nursery fees (she attends a private nursery) which I previously didn't have to. Then I found out that the funding that I am receiving won't begin until week beginning the 17th of Aug. So not only did my holidays get cut short by a week but now in order for me to go back to work I will need to pay for her to go. My husband is in oil and gas so can't guarantee he would be able to be there to look after her. For 2 years I paid £500 a month so I could go back to work at [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] and now after a year of having a fully funded place I now have to pay something towards her

childcare. Then yet again people in the central belt getting more advantages than those in the North East. I am from Hamilton, South Lanarkshire and know that their funding won't be starting the week later so why is this happening in the North East?

Thanks you
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 06 July 2020 17:04

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care

I have never e mailed the government before, but I feel that I must urge you to consider the position regarding blended placements for child minders before the end of July. As the schools restart on 11th August parents need to be assured that they have their childcare in place now. I've been a child minder for 30 years, and now only do blended care, and if the stance of the government remains as it is, I will have no choice but to close my business and let my families down at the very last minute, which I feel is unacceptable. I care for 2 children of key workers(one of whom has learning difficulties), and have worked for these families for 6 years.

I have been fully behind you all the way through this difficult time, and feel that you have lead Scotland exceptionally well, but I don't like letting parents down at the last minute, so can I ask you to consider the matter sooner?

Thank you for your time

[REDACTED]



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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 00:00

Subject: Urgent - blended childcare guidance

Dear Ms Todd

I am contacting you in the hope that you may be able to help on an urgent matter relating to Early Learning and childcare.

I am a childminder in Musselburgh and have been childminding for 18 years. Before becoming a childminder I was a Primary teacher for 10 years so have many years experience in providing a good service for all children and have been committed to providing the best care that I can for every single child in my care.

My business is now in jeopardy due to the guidance on “blended care”. For the past year I have been involved with the pilot scheme for the nursery expansion to 1140 hours and had 3 children who were all in nursery part time and then receiving additional funded hours with myself. 1 of these children will now go up to school while the other 2 move into their preschool year. The plan had been for the children to attend nursery part time and then have additional hours with myself for their preschool year.

My parents are now being asked to make a very difficult decision. They will hopefully be offered a place at nursery – as yet they have not received any notification from the region with what that offer actually looks like. As I understand it they will be offered 2 days but we have no details. Both these children require 3 days care a week in order for their parents to work. Both families have key worker parents. These children require care from 8am/9am to 5/5.30pm. I can provide care for the 3 days. If they choose to stay with me they will lose their right to a nursery place certainly up till December and the region have said there is no guarantee there will be a space for them at all in the next academic year so they will lose out on the pre school year completely. If they choose to keep their space at the nursery then I will lose out and given the restrictions it will be hard for me to fill the spaces. The families will then have to potentially leave work in order to care for their children as no one else is able to.

I am in no doubt that I can deliver the curriculum to these children. However, I am a small setting and therefore they will lose out on the experience of a larger group as they get ready for the transition into school. They will also miss out on socialising with friends already made whilst at the nursery.

The parents are being asked to make a decision which is not in the best interests of the child and, as they have yet to receive any notification from the region regarding places they are trying to make a decision without any concrete facts.

Given that children under the age of 12 now no longer need to practise social distancing from each other and school age children can go back to school in August without any social distancing to keep the restriction on blended care seems a bit ridiculous. As many children as you like can

play in the park with no restrictions but a maximum of 6 children are not allowed into my house despite all the extra cleaning and other safety measures have been put in place in line with Government Guidelines.

In my setting alone that is 4 families, 5 children, who may have to leave my setting and are going to struggle to get back to work in August. There are over 3000 childminders in Scotland. That's a lot of childminders and an awful lot of children and families who are going to find this hard. I know you will have seen the results of the survey from the Scottish Childminding Association. The results from that are deeply concerning for the childcare sector.

I know this is a difficult time for everybody but in order to get back to some normality this guidance needs to change NOW so that people can plan for August.

I would be very grateful for your thoughts on this matter.

[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 13:16

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Letter Template from SCMA_Blended Care Restrictions on Childminding (1).docx

Please find letter attached.

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[REDACTED]
08/07/2020

Dear Sir / Madam,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 6 children and families that I currently support in Linlithgow.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:17

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childcare Restrictions on Blended Care

Good Morning Mr Swinney

I write to you as a parent of a child who currently goes to a childminder but also in normal times has blended care with his grandparents.

My husband and I are very concerned at the restrictions on blended care that are in place and we are worried for our childminder as well.

My son goes to his childminder 1.5 days per week and his grandparents normally pick him up on his half day. While I appreciate we are running on public health guidance to suppress COVID-19, we are concerned that guidance around blended care is not forthcoming as to whether this will change when the schools return in August.

This will not only affect us as parents but also his grandparents who are desperate to be able to look after him again but and very importantly his childminder.

The statistics shown in the media today by SCMA that they think if these restrictions are not lifted that only 19% of childminding business will survive in 12 months time.

If my childminder was to decide not to continue due to the restrictions in blended care it would be extremely difficult for us to find someone else and could ultimately cost me my job as I have no one else to help look after my son. I am sure you can understand the implications of this on a household with bills to pay.

I urge you and the Scottish Government to review this urgently so that parents and childminders can have the peace of mind that blended care in all forms can return in the near future.

We as a family greatly appreciate all the hard work the Scottish Government has done in suppressing the virus and wholeheartedly support this going forward however this is an extremely important issue to so many people and could in turn have an effect of Scotland economy.

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:19

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care

Hi there as a childminder in The Highlands i am concerned about the no blended care rule. If i am unable to collect kids from nursery then that eill massively impact my business and also for my mindees parents to return to work fully. Please look at this before August

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AO [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 08:56

To: alison.cumming@gov.scot <alison.cumming@gov.scot>; Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>; Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: 1140 ELC funded hours

Hello

I am writing to tell you of my anger and upset I am feeling regarding the funding of the 1140 funded hours in my area run by the Highland Council.

My daughter [REDACTED] is 4 and currently attends [REDACTED], Inverness since last August 2019. The ELC last year was not on the pilot to offer the 1140 funded hours only 600 with the promise of the new allocation being implemented in August 2020. In February we have to submit our request for hours into the Highland Council and I submitted for 24 hours per week this allowed me to work 4 days rather than 3 at my work. I never received any communication as to if [REDACTED] had a place in nursery never mind hours allocated until the last day of term (2nd July), in this email it was explained to me that my hours requested had been approved however only 600 hours would be funded. I have my points of anger and frustration below:

- Firstly lack of communication of nursery place and funded hours availability. I have worked through the pandemic as a keyworker having to juggle childcare with my partner who is also a keyworker. My employer was looking for me to increase my hours of work in August 2020 and to only get confirmation that she has her place and 600 funded hours on the 2nd of July the day the schools close for the summer break is shocking as I can't even discuss with the school therefore can't commit to my employer who needs to know.
- Secondly I am very angry how the Highland Council seem to be using a postcode lottery system for children to access the funded hours. I have a [REDACTED]. They received the 1140 funded hours in August 2019 and continue to receive them in August 2020. I do

not want [REDACTED] hence why they are in [REDACTED] however frustratingly a colleague who I work with who lives 14 miles out of Inverness in Drumnadrochit can send her child on a school bus provided free of charge by Highland Council to send her daughter to their ELC at [REDACTED] so she can benefit from 1140 funded hours which aren't available in the ELC in Drumnadrochit.

- Thirdly private nurseries getting funded hours over Local Authority nurseries. When [REDACTED] is in her school ELC she is following curriculum and therefore being challenged academically compared to a private nursery where it is just childcare and play. Looking at the way Highland Council are distributing the funded hours it looks like they would rather me take my child out of a school nursery setting which this school year will be working on her transition to Primary 1 and move her into a private nursery where I could claim the 1140 hours. Also with the private nurseries costing more I would have thought school ELC's run by the councils would have priority.
- I have seen lots in the media about how the government want to get the economy moving again. Therefore I am puzzled as to why I would need to pay £186 a month to send my daughter in for her 4 days 9am to 3pm so I can work more hours. I can't afford to do this meaning I am going to work less and in turn spend less. This makes me angry when 50% of school nurseries in the Inverness Area are getting the full 1140 hours and it seems I am being punished because of where I live.

I would just like an answer as to why when my nursery has the capacity to offer me the hours I have to pay extra for them. Also I would like to know why Highland Council aren't giving everyone the 600 funded hours and withdrawing the 1140 to keep it fair. I read today that Lanarkshire council have committed to providing the 1140 funded hours to every child by September if one local council can do it I feel something needs to be said to the others as this has been under preparation long before the covid pandemic and it seems you are just using it as an excuse.

Look forward to hearing from you

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 13:16
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: Blended Childcare

Dear John Swinney, MSP, Deputy First Minister

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on

parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the four children and three families that I currently support in Kilmarnock, East Ayrshire.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]
Sent from my iPad

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From: Nicola Sturgeon <Nicola.Sturgeon@snp.org>
Sent: 08 July 2020 08:52
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Fwd: Childcare for children 3 to 4 in Scotland of 1140 hours

Nicola Sturgeon MSP
Glasgow Southside
Constituency Office (constituent enquiries only)
Govanhill Workspace
Unit 3, 69 Dixon Road
G42 8AT
Tel: 0141 424 1174
nicola.sturgeon.msp@scottish.parliament.uk

All other enquiries to nicola.sturgeon@snp.org

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 7 July 2020 at 07:46:28 BST

To: Nicola Sturgeon <Nicola.Sturgeon@snp.org>

Subject: **Childcare for children 3 to 4 in Scotland of 1140 hours**

Dear Nicola Sturgeon,

First thank you for all the hard work and tough decisions of our safety on your shoulders. How you dealt with covid 19 I just praise the strength you have shown.

Apologies I had to contact you as I am mum of 2 where i used to live in Aberdeen and when my daughter was 3 years old, 4 years ago she missed out the 200 hourswell not missed but due she attended private nursery she didnt get the 200 hours as fees was higher and given the free hours was less compare to my friends children who went to council or school nursery which in my opinion bit unfair.

Now my son who is due get his free 1140 hours free childcare in January and we are currently staying in Aberdeenshire council, talks and just been announced kids going to nursery 2020-2021 they are not honouring the full 1140 hours but 600 hours if school nursery and if private 900 hours due to covid 19.

Aberdeency: Council nursery 600 hours but private full 1140 hours.

But others such as further south likes of Falkirk they are honouring the full 1140 hours.

I am bit baffedd why different area different rules and also should this pot of money already have put aside?

England already introduced free childcare 2 years and to be honest especially what happened now....this free childcare means a lot to family and to take it away cause a lot of issue.

Here i tag the facebook chats we mums are having discussions and also a petition we are all signing up.

Would you be able look into this for us as we feel thats bit unfair where other area have and Aberdeenshire don't.and we all pay taxes (i work thru out my life and never claimed. money).

Thank you for your time reading this.

[REDACTED]

https://www.change.org/p/aberdeenshire-council-funded-childcare-hours-aberdeenshire-council?cs_tk=AnmWNSEobSwbQ7yU_V4AAxicyyvNyQEABF8BvDDIDVEUefTLBGL3TWfTp6E%3D&utm_campaign=7528830359414c218649c84b60619556&utm_content=initial_v0_0_1&utm_medium=email&utm_source=petition_signer_receipt_welcome&utm_term=cs

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: Marion Ronald <marion.ronald1@gmail.com>

Sent: 08 July 2020 14:44

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Dear Mr Swinney,

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on

parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 5 families that I currently support in East Kilbride.

As my local representative, I would ask that you urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Marion Ronald
Marion's Perfect Angels Childminding Service

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MR please

From: Katie Robertson <nurturenurserybathgate@gmail.com>

Sent: 12 July 2020 14:26

To: Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture <CabSecEFWC@gov.scot>

Cc: Hyslop F (Fiona), MSP <Fiona.Hyslop.msp@parliament.scot>;

Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot

Subject: Re: Correspondence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture - 202000052914

Dear Fiona

I refer to your letter dated 7 July in response to my letter dated 26 June 2020.

We fully appreciate this is a very difficult situation to face in terms of health and financial matters but all we are trying to achieve is equality of

treatment which is not the case for private nurseries. I will illustrate this clearly in the rest of this letter.

I want to focus on the financial aspects initially. These are covered in paragraphs 5 and 6 of your letter.

In your paragraph 5 you outline how support can be provided through the job retention scheme. We are following this guidance but the offset of funded income does not help us significantly. In the example used in paragraph 6 your percentages are correct. Using the percentages 15% of our income is from funded places. This amounts to £3,300 per month. You state 85% can be claimed through the Job Retention Scheme. This means that 15% needs to be offset. Our total salary costs are approximately £18,000 therefore 15% is £2,700. This setting off provides a benefit of £600 per month (£3,300 - £2,700). I should add that we do not pay £2,700 in respect of funded care as staff ratios are 1 to 8 for 3-5 year olds 1 to 5 for 2-3 year olds and 1 to 3 for under 2s. Basically staff costs for children under 3 are much greater. All the guidance and rules are focused on 3 to 5 year olds and children and their parents where children are under 3 are ignored.

£600 per month is clearly a very small benefit and contrary to the recent letter issued by the ELC minister. Basically £600 per month will cover very little in terms of current fixed costs and the cost of modifying our setting and increasing staff costs to adhere to current guidance. Other businesses of various sizes and importance have received £10,000, £25,000 and various grants through the Pivotal Resilience grant scheme however private nurseries where rateable values are above £18,000 are ignored from any of these schemes. In various correspondence we have been described as vital but in applying for the Pivotal Resilience scheme we have been advised as not pivotal. This seems to be a contradiction.

Basically the offsetting of funded income does not make sense. A variable benefit is being used to contribute to overheads which are in the main fixed. If you had a large number of funded places there is a much larger benefit but should you receive no funding you receive absolutely no government assistance.

We are a young business with first class Care Inspectorate scores and report however although we are well regarded and have partnership status with the local council our allocation of funded places is relatively small compared to more mature nurseries.

In terms of operational concerns we fully understand the guidance but to be clear it does not work particularly in private settings. Basically it is impossible to follow the bubble guidance. To get close to the guidance requires a significant number of extra staff which we do not have. It would also be financially crippling. This sounds very much like the schools debate when plan A became plan B because the original plan A was very restrictive and an effective solution would have been very expensive – significant extra

staff and premises costs It is interesting that council nurseries appear to be opening when schools open in mid August but the Scottish Government have given the go ahead from mid July. I imagine the mid July date was to help parents go back to work as soon as possible.

The current guidance is also contrary to the First Minister's announcement on 9 July that under 12 year olds can meet indoors as well as outdoors with no social distancing. All our children are 5 and under so why do we need to maintain rigid bubbles. This does not make sense and we suspect councils know that the rules will change when schools reopen to full capacity on 11 August. This suggests councils will not open before this date and avoid most of the additional costs current guidance requires.

I have also attached a report in yesterday's Herald in which a reporter interviewed [REDACTED]. The article also includes the response from government which is flawed as follows:

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18576365.plea-private-nurseries-vital-funding-support/>

The response initially states that early learning and children "has a vital role to play" in the country's economic recovery " but then added private nurseries are not being "treated unfairly". The statement on how much has been spent on the pandemic, £2.3Billion, is really helpful to the economy but not to private nurseries such as ours. The next quote is disingenuous as you stated above funded income goes towards the payment of salaries. The surplus for us is £600 per month with is a 'drop in the ocean' compared to any of the grants being distributed. How can we be vital but receive a paltry amount while other less vital businesses receive much more. This is not equitable.

The information on exemption from business rates is another inappropriate comment and completely out of context. Nurseries have not paid any business rates since we set up our business so it is not an additional benefit attributable to the pandemic. This paragraph also mentions the Small Business Grant as if it applies across all private nurseries. It does not. You only qualify if your rateable value is below £18,000 which rules out a majority of private nurseries including ours.

We are always very supportive of the Scottish Government and all the financial support provided across the economy but we clearly need more financial support in our sector. As I mentioned before the offsetting against funded income is inappropriate because it is variable when grants are fixed amounts and address overhead costs which are mainly fixed costs. I realise this is a UK Government issue but the solution would be to include private nurseries in the over £18,000 rateable grant scheme, pay the grant but deduct funded income and credit back salaries paid out. This would result in private nurseries being treated in line with other businesses and address the inequality.

We are due to open soon but without real financial support we may not be able to which would mean making staff redundant and letting down many parents and children.

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

On Wed, Jul 8, 2020 at 11:17 PM <CabSecEFWC@gov.scot> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached correspondence from Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Assistant Private Secretary (Correspondence)

Office of Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture

Please note my work days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. If you need to contact me urgently outwith these hours, please email CabSecEFWC@gov.scot

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 19:11
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject: Restrictions on blended care

Dear Maree Todd, MSP,

I am writing to you to express my concern at the lack of clarity relating to when restrictions to blended care will be lifted.

My son is five years old and due to start school in August. Both my wife and I work full time and will need our son to go to his childminder after school. It is not possible for one of us to take time off work to look after him every day and we have no one else to look after him. I am sure we are not the only people in this position.

While I understand the need for preventative measures to limit the risk of a second peak in the Covid 19 pandemic, the continuation of blended care restrictions risks putting us, and many other parents, in an impossible position. Can you confirm that the restrictions will be lifted in time for the return to school in August?

Regards,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 14:07

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Keith.Brown.msp@parliament.scot

Subject: Restrictions of Blended Care.

To all it may concern.

I have been a childminder for over 14 and have built up a well established and vibrant business. I take pride in my work and care very deeply for all the families which I have the privilege to work with.

Blended care in my environment is absolutely essential. The parents that use my service would not be able to return to their work full time if I was unable to deliver this service to them. Some of my children arrive at 7:30am, I look after them, give them breakfast and then take them to schools and nurseries. At the other end of the scale, I collect from school, we do homework, we play at the parks until parents collect after 5:30pm. So if I cant provide this to them, where do they go? A relative perhaps?

Same applies with children that would attend nursery. I was very fortunate to work through the endless hoops and obstacles to become a funded member and provide shared care for the 1140 hours. But now, a parent would need to choose whether they send to me, or to the nursery, a decision which is really not fair on the parents.. At this

moment, one of my mindees has been offered 2 full days at nursery, what is mum to do with the other 3 full days that she would need to find care for? She works full time, as does dad. According to the council, she cant send him to me for the rest of the time, its one or the other!!!

I have been open throughout this pandemic, I have followed every rule and regulation that the government has put in place. My house has so many new rules for the children to follow, and they have all adapted amazingly. I have had to put trust in the parents that they are also following the guidelines, so as to keep myself and my family safe and well. I really don't think you could find a safer environment for the children to be cared in. So to be told that come August, you don't think my home is no longer viable for to look after these children after they have been at school is completely beyond me. Is my home more of a risk than say their grandma's house, or perhaps a neighbour, which in all likelihood, is exactly what parents will have to resort to doing.

As you can imagine the effect that this would have on my business. If this was to come into effect, what is at the moment a full time job, caring for 10 children, servicing 5 families, I would be left with 1 child. Yes, 1 child. And even at that, this 1 child that I would have been left to look after, has 3 brothers and sisters, that attend school. What happens then? Are parents still going to send her, when I cant look after her siblings. You can only imagine the dramatic effect that this would have on my financial being. I wouldn't have a business. All those years of hard work, gone.

Waiting until the end of July for a decision on this ridiculous suggestion is beyond me. Parents need to know now, I need to know now. My Life depends on it...

I really hope that since we can now all spend time in pubs and beer gardens, go on holidays abroad, meet up with families, go shopping, that the government will overturn this ruling as soon as possible.

I really hope that you do read this email, along with no doubt the countless ones you will receive in the next few days. And let you understand the major impact that this would have on the lives of childminders and their families they care for.

Thank you
[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 20:07

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot

Subject: 1140 promised hours of nursery funding

Dear Mr Swinney,

I am writing to let you know how I will be impacted by the proposed failure to deliver the 1140 hours of childcare funding to private nurseries.

First of all I planned my children and the age gap based on nursery funding. If I am to work part time and pay for 2 children in nursery then the majority of my salary as an NHS psychologist (with 2 PhDs !) will go to childcare. This would then impact on my ability to pay my mortgage and other bills. It also makes working at all seem pretty pointless as there would be very little financial incentive. I am aware others in my profession feel the same outrage. This may negatively impact on psychologists (a mostly female profession) taking up employment, and further impact the already long waits for mental health treatment.

I have heard council funded nurseries may be getting the 1140 hours. This would discriminate against those who work and have no extended family for support. We need private nurseries offering 50 hours a week and with early opening times in order to work. It would be a luxury to be in a position to be able to only put our children in term time council nurseries with later opening times, but sadly this is not a reality for the working mother without support. It would seem very unfair if council nurseries were prioritised over private nurseries and would add further stress to the working mothers who already are trying to manage with limited support.

If we want women to contribute to the economy in valued employment then we need childcare support and funding.

Thank you for considering this email.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]
Sent from my iPhone

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AO [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 23:25
To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Nursery 1140 hours

Dear Maree,

I hope you are well. I read the BBC news article regarding the 1140 hours and I wondered if you could clarify what this means for me and my daughter? If nurseries already have provision in place, will the hours still go ahead? Or is the funding now to be used as part of the COVID recovery for schools and ELCs?

My daughter is now on a waiting list to return to her nursery setting for her pre-school year so I would be very pleased if nurseries were able to return to 600 hours and take more children in. She is devastated she can't return to her setting and I think using the funding to support ALL children would be hugely beneficial as a recovery strategy rather than forging ahead with extended hours. We are in Fife.

Thank you, and I look forward to your reply.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 15:30

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; keith.brown.msp@parliament.scot; louisenimmo@sky.com

Subject: Blended Care Decision

Dear All

I was hoping that I would not need to write this email however, due to the restrictions that have been put on "Blended Care" by the SCMA I feel that I need to voice my concerns.

I have today been contacted by my childminder to advise me that the decision has been made that at this moment she will no longer be able to take children before and after school, and that I will also need to make the decision whether to send one of my children to either nursery or remain with my childminder as I cannot have both options.

This is ludicrous considering that my childminder like many others have stayed open and provided essential care to children of key workers and vulnerable children! what is the difference now?? These childminders probably have far better PPE and cleaning procedures in place as they have been doing this for the last 12 or how many weeks its been now.

To give you an insight to the situation I now find myself in due to this decision, I am and currently have been working 9-5 Mon-Fri from home since just before lockdown my husband has remained at work so I have had sole responsibility of running a home, childcare, schooling and holding down a management job which I must admit has been so difficult and has resulted in numerous nights in tears wondering how on earth I would get through this. To add further complications my older son who is

7 was diagnosed with ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) during this period. Since lock down started it has been so difficult for him to understand why his routine has changed and why he cannot do what he is so used to doing causing distress and problems coping for him. A major part of his routine is with my childminder who has helped me nurture and care for him since he was 6mths old and also helped and supported me whilst waiting for his diagnosis. I have never been so glad when [REDACTED] told me that once he had his diagnosis she would be able to take him again as he was now classed as vulnerable, since he has been back with [REDACTED] and back into part of his normal routine his behaviour within the home has gotten easier and he is much happier.

Now this decision will again upset him and his routine and how do I explain this to him? How do I decide whether to put my 3yr old to nursery where he should be meeting friends and learning in order to make the transition into Primary one easy? How is my childminder meant to run a business which she has done for 14yrs if my children and others are no longer allowed to be cared for by her? How am I meant to continue to be a mum, homemaker, nursery teacher, before and after school carer all whilst continuing to work 9-5 full time? We are not in a financial position to allow me to reduce hours or become a full time mummy who doesnt work, I work because I need to!

What is the difference between "blended care" and children under 11 being allowed to play without social distancing and a child being able to go to a child minder and or nursery or school when we can now go to pubs where clearly social distancing has went out the window as you have seen in the news this week??

This decision clearly needs rethinking and I await with anticipation that you see sense and retract this ludacris decision!

Yours a very angry parent

[REDACTED]

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Dear Mr Swinney,

Over the past 4-6 weeks I have copied you in on various e-mails that I have sent but in this instance I am e-mailing you directly and copying in people and organisations who have an interest in my e-mail. I feel that everything I have done up until now has been viewed as an inconvenience and I now need to be taken seriously by someone who can actually help me and make a difference.

I am writing with regards to the Early Years 1140 Funded Hours policy.

I have a 4 year old son who attends a Partnership Nursery within the boundaries of Glasgow City Council (GCC). We also live in [REDACTED], within the boundaries of GCC.

In April of this year I heard a rumour that it would no longer be a statutory obligation for the Local Authorities (LAs) to implement the Early Years 1140 Funded Hours in August 2020. I therefore contacted the Glasgow Family Information Service (GFIS) who responded by e-mail stating:

“GCC will provide 1140 funded hours to Partner Nurseries if they can deliver these hours from August 2020.

However Partner Providers will determine their own service delivery models, which in some cases may be for less than 1140hrs.

Therefore can I suggest you discuss funding for your son with your Partner Nursery and if they can provide you with 1140 hrs funding wef August 2020.”

My son’s nursery is able to provide the 1140 hours in August 2020. I, and many other families, have based my plans for work and nursery attendance for the 2020/21 academic year on this e-mail.

I have now heard that GCC is planning to renege on the contents of their April e-mail.

I understand that in light of Covid-19, Central and Local Governments across the world are facing challenges BUT we need to find a way around these challenges so as to provide the very best for our children and families now. I work from home and to be brutally honest, I can’t get any work done when my son is at home. I live in a 2 bed flat and have no separate work space. This means that when he goes to bed at 9pm, I need to start working. This is physically and mentally exhausting and is unsustainable in the longer term. Financially, Covid-19 has impacted my family badly and we were looking forward to my son attending nursery for the 1140 hours so as to allow me to increase my working hours and therefore try to get us back on track financially.

Since March, the Early Years children have experienced an unbelievable amount of disruption and confusion. This age group is not able to participate in a Zoom class and as such their formal education as well as the social and interpersonal skills learned whilst in the nursery setting have not progressed and in some cases they have actually regressed. Their ability to work with routine has also been negatively impacted. These children *need* to be awarded the 1140 funded hours starting in August 2020 so that they can catch up and be school ready in August 2021.

I am aware that not every LA Nursery and not every Partnership Nursery is prepared for providing the 1140 funded hours in August 2020 – this would have been the situation with or without Covid-19. From a personal perspective, my son's nursery is able to deliver 1140 hours from August 2020 even taking into account the fact that the children may now be working in "bubbles" rather than larger class groups. The fact that some nurseries will not be ready for 1140 hours in August 2020 should not mean that all children and families miss out. We need to think bigger/plan for the future! Start with the nurseries that can safely offer 1140 hours and other nurseries will then be forced to strive for this. If we set our standards by the lowest rung in the ladder, we are doing a disservice to all children and families.

The argument that the nurseries can't provide the 1140 hours because of safety doesn't stand when children under 12 are now allowed to play indoors without social distancing. On this basis, it would seem necessary for the Government Guidance issued on 15th June to be reviewed and amended. In addition, why are outdoor nurseries able to provide 1140 funded hours in August 2020 when children under 12 are now allowed to play indoors without social distancing, this funding shouldn't be given on the back of being "safer". In fact whilst these nurseries are a fantastic concept, they themselves state that they are not ideal for more than 1 or 2 days per week for children as the children who attend more than this find it very difficult to adjust to being in a school classroom 5 days a week when they start school. This means that they are actually going to be detrimental to children as blended placements are not allowed according to the aforementioned Guidance from 15th June. In addition, the Hubs and NHS Hubs that have been operating throughout haven't been using bubbles or social distancing for the children (and none have had to close because of any Covid outbreaks). So again, and with this further backing up everything I have already said, how can it be said that it is not safe to offer the 1140 hours in August.....

The argument that there is no money doesn't stand – I understand that extra funding is coming to the LAs because of Covid-19. Some education services have been suspended which has created cost savings. Please don't let the staff in Education Services use Covid-19 as an excuse in this instance. I understand that three years ago the Scottish Government (SG) provided the LAs with money for the 1140 hours. What have the LAs done with this money? Was this money provided without the stipulation that it was ringfenced for the 1140 hours?

Whilst I am aware that some LA nurseries have been running as hubs during the lockdown period, the majority of nurseries have not. Therefore I am unsure what GCC et al have done with the money that they have saved? The nursery running costs haven't been incurred as normal, the staff will have been put on furlough which is paid by Westminster, so I envisage a lot of money has been saved - this could be spent on the 1140 hours.

From the correspondence I have had with GCC, it feels that they have been trying to sneak this change in policy out through the back door – the policy has not been open to scrutiny by the elected members and neither service providers nor parents have been consulted on this. This is simply

not right! In fact, my Councillor was told that this was an operational rather than policy matter and as such no one needed to be consulted on it!

GCC has stated that their education team have done sterling work “since lockdown to establish, sustain and indeed enhance the level of service being provided for key workers’ children and our most vulnerable families”. This is great, but that said, we are now in the recovery phase and need to look to the future rather than simply on the admirable achievements of the past few months. We need to work to provide what is best for **all** children, not just the vulnerable and those of key workers. In providing what is best for all children, key workers’ children and the most vulnerable families will be encapsulated and will as such benefit. The way things have been, the children of vulnerable families and those of key workers have actually been advantaged because they haven’t had an enforced break from education since March.

From the perspective of the Partnership Nurseries who are prepared to roll out the 1140 hours in August, it is clear that they have made capital investments. Many are concerned that if the 1140 hours aren’t rolled out in August, they will have to close their doors. We all know that there aren’t enough nursery places within the LA nurseries to meet the demand of all children so what will happen when there are less Partnership facilities available – we go into a downward spiral.

I hate to compare our Education system to that of England but in this instance it is apparent that we are playing catch up. In England their reception year is the equivalent of our pre-school year. The children in their reception year attend full time (the equivalent of our 1140). So, from the outset of our education, we are settling for being second best. To make it worse, the fact that the SG has devolved education to the LAs means we have a postcode lottery within Scotland. This is a double whammy for some children.

In summary, there are a few aspects to be considered here:

- Providing the 1140 funded hours to the service providers who have capacity allows as many parents as possible the opportunity to go back to work in August – this is a necessity for our economy. Without this one parent (usually, but not always, the mother) has to stay at home. So much for equality!
- Providing the 1140 funded hours is the *right thing* to do for children in this age group. It will enable them to go to school prepared both academically and socially – they will be more rounded children who will be better prepared for the big world of school, away from the small family bubble that they have been trapped in since March. Bear in mind that children of this age have suddenly had a lot of things (including their extended family) taken away from them. My son is an only child and as such hasn’t interacted with another child since mid-March (that’s 4 months - he had his first play with his friends last night). The 5 months running up to August 2020 have been life changing for these young people. They need to go back to nursery full time so as to rectify the damage the past few months have caused them. These children have missed months of

education and double the efforts are going to be needed in the coming year to ensure they are back on track for being school ready in August 2021.

- In August 2020, some LAs are planning to introduce the 1140 funded hours, some are not and others are undecided. This really does create a postcode lottery. At the point when children start primary 1 in August 2021, some will already be disadvantaged because the SG is allowing this to be devolved to LAs. We are going to be in a situation where children in some LAs are awarded the 1140 hours in August 2020 and children in other LAs lag behind. Schools can only build upon the foundations that are put in place in the pre-school years. The implications of delaying the start of the 1140 funded hours will be long lasting – it will create further division between the haves and the have nots in Scotland, an already very divided country. The SG put this policy in place for a reason and that reason has not gone away, if anything the need is more. At a grassroots level, I am deeply concerned by the way this policy is panning out - My nephew and my son are the same age and both attend the same partnership nursery within GCC. My nephew lives in East Renfrewshire and my son lives in Glasgow. My nephew will receive 1140 funded hours and my son will receive 600!!!! If this isn't a prime example of a post code lottery, I don't know what is.

I really am unsure as to why it is unavoidable that the 1140 hours policy has to be paused!

I apologise if this is a long e-mail and a pain to read, but this is so important to me and the country as a whole for years to come – everything stems from education!

I look forward to hearing back from you with regards to the above at your earliest convenience and ideally within the next 7 days.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Swinney J (John), MSP
Sent: 08 July 2020 22:32

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Restrictions on blended care/placements

[REDACTED]

Personal Assistant to John Swinney
MSP for Perthshire North / Deputy First Minister / Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

Tel: 📞

[REDACTED] www.johnswinneymsp.com / www.scottish.parliament.uk



Before you print think about the ENVIRONMENT

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 21:08
To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Restrictions on blended care/placements

Dear Mr Swinney

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my family and our ability to plan for work in August.

With one child in primary school requiring wrap around care and another starting their preschool year and requiring childcare on my work days as her nursery bubble has been allocated days which I do not work we need to be able to access childcare in addition to school and nursery hours. We do not have family local who can help so our work roles (as an [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]) would suffer.

(It seems excessive that nursery children will remain in bubbles with the nursery operating at 50% capacity until the new building is completed, potentially the end of this year or longer and my daughter being allocated space on days which I had never applied for; but that is a separate issue from the one at hand).

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, the childminding service we use will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on our childminder, our families and the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of childminding services and to give families choice and flexibility in the childcare options they have.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This has been a stressful time for many families and the uncertainty of waiting for an announcement on 30 July is unfair and causing unnecessary anxiety for families, please let us know the intentions sooner so we can plan.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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AO [REDACTED]

From:

[FirstMinisterWebsite@gov.scot][SMTP:FIRSTMINISTERWEBSITE@GOV.SCOT]

Sent: 09 July 2020 13:06:12

To: First Ministers Website Mailbox

Subject: reduced childcare in Glasgow

Auto forwarded by a Rule

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: reduced childcare in Glasgow

Message Body:

Dear First Minister,

Different council regions have reduced the early years free hours from August 2020. In Glasgow that's 1140 now reduced to only 600. In other regions, Lanarkshire for example, no reduction has been made and in others (East Ren) reduced to 750. This effectively means children are being unfairly discriminated against based on postcode. My son is almost 4 but Autistic and depends on the support our wonderful Nursery [REDACTED], offer him. My husband and I work full time and this new change will have a devastating effect financially and on my son's well being as now having to source a private childminder and pay private fees for our 16 month old also. Surely this should be a nationwide agreement as otherwise it's so unfair for some. Many children access nursery with parents who don't work whereas I work (full time NHS public dentist) and have worked solidly in dental UDCs all throughout this crisis. This is a huge blow for us and I would implore you to pressure the councils to make one rule for all and to appreciate the huge impact retracting this promise will have. Please consider reversing this decision prior to term starting in August. This will make working parents trying to hold down jobs in times of crisis, significantly worse off and more stressed and can negatively impact upon vulnerable children such as my wee boy. Kind regards and thank you for all you do, [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 10:12

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>; Alex.Cole-Hamilton.msp@parliament.scot

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Childminding Placements

Dear Mr Swinney, Ms Todd and Mr Cole-Hamilton

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

I am a parent of the 3.5 yr old who, pre-lockdown, attended a local authority nursery for four mornings a week and a childminder for four afternoons. We live in South Queensferry.

I am deeply concerned about the current plans to not allow blended childcare when the school terms resumes in August. It makes no logical sense at all, given the intention is for school age children to return to school full time (subject to infection rates remaining low). Let's be honest, if these restrictions are imposed, then the result will be that pre-school children are likely to end up being looked after by grandparents, other relatives or other parents, and I don't understand why that is considered a 'better' or 'safer' alternative. (Or alternatively, it will mean that parents are not able to work – I know of several *mums* who handed their notice in as a result of the initial plans for blended education at primary and secondary level.)

Our nursery wrote to us at the end of June to advise that they would continue to offer our daughter four mornings a week. This week, they sent a revised offer of Monday and Tuesday for the full day. Absolutely no reference was made in that letter to there being a policy in place which does not allow blended childcare, which I find bizarre. I emailed our local nursery to ask them to confirm their position, but I have not received a reply (which I suppose is excusable given it is now the summer break). It is only through doing my own research that I am aware of the proposed restrictions. I do not believe the proposed restrictions are well understood by parents who use local authority nurseries – what steps are being taken to raise awareness?

I and my partner work full time. We do not have family close by to pick up the slack. Nor are there any local private nurseries with any capacity (the nearest one

has a two year waiting list). We depend on our childminder being available to provide cover. As you will appreciate, it is extremely difficult to make plans when the goalposts keep shifting.

I agree entirely with the position which the Scottish Childminding Association has taken on this - local authorities should be working towards accepting blended childcare come August (if the infection rate continues to decrease) as their **Plan A**.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, then the result will be that we will have no option but to put our daughter to our childminder full time (if she remains in business...). Our daughter will not be able to take up her nursery place (because we cannot blend her care but we still need to work). This will mean her nursery place will be 'empty'. Will we lose our nursery place as a result? I am also concerned about the long term impact that being away from nursery will have on my daughter, *especially* as she will start school in August 2021 and attendance at nursery is so important in terms of preparing her for this. It seems GIRFEC has been lost sight of in all of this.

I have broadly supported the approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses, on parental choice and on the development of our pre-school children. It could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government did eventually step up by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of the restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of the childminding service we use, and *everyone's* well being.

I would ask that you (or urge the Scottish Government to) provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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AO – [REDACTED]

Can this be added as an OR

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 14:09

To: jamie.greene@parliament.scot; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: 1140 August 2020

Dear sirs,

I am writing to you to request serious consideration for the 1140 hours to be given the go ahead to my local private sector nursery. [REDACTED] My 3yr old son has attended this nursery for 2 years and as a single parent the financial burden this has had has impacted the way of life for myself and my son as i continue to work full time to provide for us and to allow him the best pre school education and experience he can have.

The relief of hearing the government was allocating 1140 to 3yr olds was phenomenal. The money that i spent on childcare fees would be freed up to allow me to live less hand to mouth daily and to give my child experiences and memories that he hasn't been able to get due to the financial situation.

[REDACTED] are a private sector nursery based in [REDACTED], Glasgow. They have worked tirelessly to provide first class childcare to my son and provide support and learning experiences to help him develop.

This nursery is fully ready and able to commit to its children and families the 1140 hrs. By denying them this opportunity, you are also denying the children the right to learn, to play and to develop before they reach primary school. The lack of these funded hours results in a lack of education to our children as the cost to provide full time childcare is more than i earn by working.

I shouldn't have to choose between working to provide for myself and my child which leads my son to have less of preschool education than those who are financially better off than me. Or to succumb to the benefit systems in order to give my child the best start in education.

I urge you to reconsider the private sectors position and willingness to provide the 1140 hours to children like mine. Failure to do so, is failure to help struggling families and most importantly failure to provide our children's right to a fully comprehensive pre school education.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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From: Ruth Maguire MSP <ruth.maguire.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 09 July 2020 19:51
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: Enquiry from Ruth Maguire MSP (Case Ref: [REDACTED])

Dear Maree Todd

Ruth has been approached by a constituent, [REDACTED] who has concerns about her child care business. She has written a concise letter which I have copied below.

Ruth would be grateful if you could consider the points raised by [REDACTED] in order that she can respond to her constituent.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

Constituency Assistant Ruth Maguire MSP (Cunninghame South)
14 Eglinton Street | Irvine | KA12 8AS
t: [REDACTED] | ruth.maguire.msp@parliament.scot

Dear Ruth,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they

will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in Irvine.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 15:37

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care for childminders

Dear First minister / Deputy first minister,

I am a local childminder in Aberdeen and have great concerns for the future of my business!

Please find attached On going petition to support Childminders and families to use the blended care for when schools return in August. As you can see in less than 24hrs we have had a great response.

This is going to have a detrimental effect for everyone involved if childminders cannot accommodate parents on their return to work. Collecting and dropping off children from schools and nursery is 90% of a childminder role. All we ask is for clarity on how things will be for childminders for when schools return.

Thank you for your continued support through out these hard times.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Thu, 9 Jul 2020, 14:26

Subject: Blended Childcare

To: <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>

Hi, i'm so sorry to bother you at this really busy time but i'm wondering if you could clarify what is classed as blended care as I am getting mixed messages regarding this.

Is it between 2 professional childcare settings on the same day? Or is it even if its on different days to each other?

Is it between a childminder and grandparents on the same day? (as parents are working) Or even if its on different days of the week?

One of my own situations is the grandparents would have child 3 days a week and I would have child the other 2 days, but I am unsure if this would be allowed as i would be the only professional childcare setting.

Once again, so sorry to contact you at such a hectic time,

[REDACTED]
Childminder.

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 14:06
To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Childminder- blended care

Good day.

I am a childminder based in [REDACTED] and I'm emailing you today with my concerns about my childminding business.

I have been childminding for 7 years, my business has always been full with a waiting list. I have family's that I have cared for the whole seven years as well as new families and those who have moved on to school.

I enjoy my job, taking on courses and training so that I can provide an excellent level of care for the children I have but all of that is threatened with the current restrictions involving blended care.

I would go from having 11 children across 8 families down to 2 children (2 families) because the blended care restrictions would not allow me to care for nursery age children on the days they don't attend nursery and also to drop off and collect from school for my school age children. This is not only devastating for my business but also for all my families who will not be able to go back to work.

Please help childminders around Scotland by voicing your support to allow blended care as long as it's deemed safe.

I have worked for keyworker families throughout lockdown in order to do my part to help but now it's me requesting the help.

I hope you will show us your support.

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 14:18
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice Inbox x

Dear Deputy First Minister John Swinney, Minister CYP Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends our childminding services and another settings such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families we support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, our childminding services will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on the Childminders of this Forum Area, the families we support and on the local economy.

We have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

We believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the children and families that we currently support in the North/East Forum area of Glasgow .

As Ministers, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 15:17

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Fwd:

Dear Maree

On 8th July we asked why local authority funding is a vital source of support, but have not had a response at a time when we are expected to open very soon.

The Scottish Government continually say that private nurseries have received vital funding through the continuation of the payment of funded places. There is no doubt that the continuation of this funding provides some support but it cannot be highlighted as vital. I can demonstrate this through the real impact it has on my business.

15% of our income is from funded places. This amounts to £3,300 per month. Therefore 85% can be claimed through the Job Retention Scheme. This means that 15% needs to be offset. Our total salary costs are approximately £18,000 therefore 15% is £2,700. This setting off provides a benefit of £600per month (£3,300 - £2,700). I should add that we do not pay £2,700 in respect of funded care as staff ratios are 1 to 8 for 3-5 year olds 1 to 5 for 2-3 year olds and 1 to 3 for under 2s. Basically staff costs for children under 3 are much greater as you will

be aware. All the guidance and rules are focused on 3 to 5 year olds and children and their parents whereas children under 3 are ignored.

£600 per month is clearly a very small benefit and contrary to the recent letter you issued. Basically £600 per month will cover very little in terms of current fixed costs and the cost of modifying our setting and increasing staff costs to adhere to current guidance. Other businesses of various sizes and importance have received £10,000, £25,000 and various grants through the Pivotal Resilience grant scheme however private nurseries where rateable values are above £18,000 are ignored from any of these schemes. In various correspondence we have been described as vital but in applying for the Pivotal Resilience scheme we have been advised as not pivotal. This seems to be a contradiction.

The offsetting of funded income does not make sense. A variable benefit is being used to contribute to overheads which are in the main fixed. If you had a large number of funded places there is a much larger benefit but should you receive no funding you receive absolutely no government assistance.

I realise this is a UK Government issue but the solution would be to include private nurseries in the over £18,000 rateable grant scheme, pay the grant but deduct funded income and credit back salaries paid out. This would result in private nurseries being treated in line with other businesses and address the inequality. We keep being highlighted as vital but the lack of financial support does not suggest we are.

We are due to open soon but without real financial support we may not be able to making staff redundant and letting down many parents and children.

In terms of the 1140 hours which the Scottish Government is now back tracking on it should be noted that the grant to local authorities has not changed however the cost of supporting key parents, the cost of modifying council properties and in some cases the delay to increasing capacity has negatively impacted the 1140 hour provision. Given the financial impact of the pandemic it is the parents who are effectively paying for the extra costs as the Scottish Government have not provided any additional funds. Rather than receiving increased funded childcare parents are supporting the cost of key workers and the costs of modifying

council nurseries even when many parents do not use council nurseries. None of this additional cost is paid by the government.

In a recent government response to a newspaper article about the lack of additional funding to this 'vital' sector one of the government defenses was the continuation of the statutory ELC entitlement worth £220 million. As outlined before this is a variable benefit and it is also an existing allocation and not an additional benefit as a result of the pandemic. Rates relief was also used in the governments defense however this is not an additional benefit and is really a 'red herring' to obscure the truth that private nurseries like ours have had very little additional support. The term 'vital' has been used liberally by the Scottish Government but the lack of additional financial support suggests otherwise.

This matter is now urgent therefore I look forward to a quick response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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AO – [REDACTED]

Can this be added as an OR

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 14:50

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Reduction in Childcare Hours

Good afternoon,

I hope you do not mind me getting in touch.

Please see the below email I have written to John Swinney. On the advice of my nursery, I had tried to copy you in but unfortunately misspelt this email address.

If I can be of any further help or support please do not hesitate in contacting me.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 10 July 2020 at 14:31:36 BST

To: john.swinney.msp@parliament.scot

Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot, DFMCSE@gov.sco

Subject: Reduction in Childcare Hours

Dear Mr Swinney, MSP,

I am writing to you with regards to the change in provision of the proposed 1140 hours for childcare in Scotland.

I was incredibly disappointed to hear that this funding is no longer going ahead in Glasgow City council and children may be granted 600 hours instead.

As a mother of two children, currently on Maternity Leave and receiving Statutory Maternity pay, this news is devastating to myself and my husband. We waited and specifically planned our second pregnancy relying on the funding to help pay for our nearly three year old son to attend nursery during my maternity leave and to be able to afford for both our children to attend nursery when I return to work.

My husband and I both work full time and have no relatives nearby to help with childcare so have to send our sons to nursery full time. The impact of this change in funding will

mean real hardship for myself, my husband and our sons for the next few years. It is simply a budget issue that we could not plan for and will impact our lives severely.

I also find it so frustrating and disappointing to hear that several councils will still be able to provide this funding, effectively depriving my child from the same provision and advantages as other children in Glasgow. It is making education a postcode lottery and as a Primary Teacher I find this disgusting. It goes against everything GIRFEC stands for and is depriving children of the same, safe start in Scotland. The early years curriculum is the foundation of learning and its importance should not be devalued in this way.

I absolutely understand that it can be argued that the current pandemic could not have been predicted, however surely the funding was allocated to education services and childcare and the council should be held accountable for spending this money outwith what it was intended for. The SNP have over-promised and underdelivered on what was a key part of their campaign. We accept a postponement of funding is unfortunately inevitable but an indefinite postponement is simply not acceptable. How are we supposed to be able to budget and plan for our children's futures without knowing when they will receive the education they are entitled to?

We do not claim state benefits or ask the council/government to provide for us. We both work full time and pay our National Insurance and taxes. We had responsibly planned our pregnancy around being able to budget and provide for our children in a responsible way. I now feel incredibly let down that we are going to struggle to provide the childcare our children will require and the education they are entitled to in Scotland.

I have already had to give birth during a pandemic with severe restrictions in place, effectively depriving my new baby from the experiences he deserves and now feel the Scottish government are depriving his three year old brother of the education he deserves. The government have let the children of Scotland down.

Children are the future of Scotland and they are being pushed aside and forgotten. The incredible hard work carried out by early years staff, in particular the nursery our child attends [REDACTED] is being devalued and they will inevitably be effected financially by this indefinite postponement of funding.

I would be extremely interested in hearing when the funding will be reinstated and how the council plan to address the imbalance in provision. Simply put, the children of Scotland all deserve the best start and in line with GIRFEC there should be equal access to this, no matter which council the child lives in.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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AO – [REDACTED]

Can this be added as an OR

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 13:54

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: 1140 hrs - early years

Hello,

I'm emailing in response to the announcement that the flagship policy for SNP, 30hrs of childcare will be postponed for at least a year, just one month before it was due for delivery.

I understand that Covid has caused severe challenges for all sectors, and, in particular, preparations for the delivery of the [1140](#)hrs but I can't understand how a delay of this magnitude, with no new date can be justified. Once again it feels like working parents have been completely ignored in this pandemic and is evident in the reopening of

industries such as hospitality, before nursery provision is available to allow working parents to go back to work.

My children attend a partnership nursery in Glasgow and my son should have been getting [1140](#) hrs in December when he turns 3. I was intending to increase my part time hours to benefit from these changes and I'm sure many others will have to change plans to return to work/education.

The current communication is that Covid has affected the ability to deliver the hours. My understanding is that the councils have been provided the funding for [1140](#) but they are no longer required to deliver it. I've been told by GCC that I will be given 600 funded hours instead. My partnership nursery is able to provide the [1140](#) hrs (following the current guidance) as originally planned but I will have to top up the difference because GCC won't pay for the [1140](#)hrs. There has been some communication that [1140](#)hrs will be funded in some council nurseries but it will not be partnership nurseries.

I don't understand if retracting the commitment is to do with money or social distancing. If it's money then where has it gone? I think there needs to be clarity of where the money has been spent, especially there is a commitment (repeated in the letter) for funding to follow the child. I'd like an explanation of where the money is?

as This pandemic is disproportionately affecting women. Often women work in lower paid, less secure workplaces and removing the funding for early years will just make the world of work even more inaccessible for women. We are also falling well behind England who have had 30hrs for a number of years and will be addressing attainment gaps in early years education. I'm in the fortunate position to be able to pay for extra hours to ensure early years education and a return to work but many others can't. An SNP MSP assistant told me that the council and SG are desperately trying to save jobs and businesses and we're lucky to be getting 600hrs as budgets are so tight, and of course I understand the economic impact, but the early years funding is also about jobs. The jobs of women trying to get back into the workplace and the future attainment of our children. Childcare, once again, has been pushed to the bottom and somehow saving pubs and restaurants is more important than our children, the people who look after our children and the aspirations of parents for themselves and their children.

There needs to be clarity about why this decision has been made, what are the reasons behind it, where is the money and why can't hours be funded if nurseries can deliver them? There are also issues about postcode lotteries. Some councils will deliver the [1140](#) and there will be issues where children travel cross boundary for nursery provision (my nursery is in [REDACTED], Glasgow and has a lot of EDC children attending and they're committing to more funded hours than GCC). Even within councils there will be postcode lotteries if council nurseries continue to offer the [1140](#) pilot hours.

Parents need to be given clear answers and also firm timescales to manage work and finances. I appreciate the Covid crisis makes that challenging but it feels a lot like this is an easy commitment to sweep under the carpet as it's mainly women who will be affected.

I have been so proud of Scotland's response to this pandemic but I cannot support this decision and it needs to be reconsidered and fully communicated.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

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Can this be added as an OR

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 10:22

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot

Subject: 1140 EYC Provision

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my concern over the withdrawal of the 1140 nursery/childcare hours for three and four year olds in Scotland, and specifically in my local authority of South Ayrshire.

My three year old was first of all not accepted to her first choice nursery due to the new building not being completed on time (a building that was agreed in 2017 so can't really let COVID-19 take the entirety of the blame

for the delay) so the nursery therefore were only able to offer 40 places rather than 140. She was accepted into our second choice, however they have not been able to provide any other information other than that she has a place. As you can imagine, as working parents with another younger child to arrange care for this has left us in a bit of a dilemma when arranging childcare from August onwards.

To now hear that the 1140 hours do not have to be provided by local authorities is a further blow. Financially we will be out of pocket almost to the point where there will be no financial benefit to both parents in the household working their current contractual hours. Logistically as well the sessions we are likely to be provided with are not working-parent friendly. In our circumstance, I will more than likely have to change my working hours to accommodate and know several other parents in the same position at my workplace alone. Not that it should matter but we are third sector youth justice workers so this would then affect the service delivery.

The 1140 hours is an excellent provision by the Scottish Government and was welcomed and revered amongst all parents I know for its recognition that free or subsidised childcare is needed for working parents to continue working and for other parents to either be motivated into working or studying. The fact that there was a degree in flexibility around the hours at most local authority nurseries was the icing on the cake. This has now all been taken away and left parents in financial and logistical quandaries. Not to mention disappointed for the children who are in desperate need for some socialisation, particularly after lockdown.

Lastly, I am disturbed to read that some local authorities will in fact be providing 1140 hours. Some have committed to less, and some (like mine) have not committed a number which has led to a huge discrepancy across the authority (I have some friends who have been offered 8 free hours per week and some who have been offered 20, the nurseries less than a mile from each other). So apparently children are now being treated differently dependant upon postcode. Personally, I think Scotland can do better than that.

I understand that COVID-19 has had a huge impact on what can be provided, I cannot understand though why the entire policy has been effectively put on the back burner for the foreseeable. Surely it's a case of picking up where we left off at the beginning of March, resulting in a few months delay at most (for nurseries require building works and recruitment). I (and most other parents) would probably be fine with a short delay, as long as this is communicated.

I am not expecting a response to this email, more so that it is noted and added to the (I expect) hundred of others you will receive along the same vein to give the Government food for thought and action for change.

Of course I hope this finds you well, I look forward to hearing updates on the 1140 hours in the next few weeks hopefully.

Kind Regards
[REDACTED]

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Can this be added as an OR

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 09:48

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; jamie.greene@parliament.scot

Subject: 1140 hours

Hello,

It has come to my attention that the 1140 childcare hours promised by the Scottish Government will not be available to residents living in Clackmannanshire.

I was advised by a friend who spoke to our MSP to write to the above email addresses to express my outrage and anger over this situation in the hopes that the Scottish Government can do something about it!

I work for myself from home. I have one child due to receive the 1140 hours as of January 2021. The 1140 hours of childcare would be extremely beneficial to my income so that I could work and earn while my child is at nursery.

The government cries out for women to return to the workplace after having children but only offers help to those on benefits or it's only affordable to those on really good wages

Those of us in the middle - those earning but not making mega bucks - are left stranded. There is no help. Now my husband and I scraped together funds so that my son could go to nursery as of October 2019 so that I could work and so that I could have some much-needed mental health breaks from the intensity of looking after a small child. My son also is non verbal so the impact of looking after a child with ASN is hard.

I was very much looking forward to my son receiving additional nursery hours funded by the government in January 2021. It would mean I could

work more, save more, move put of our first time buyers house and into a home in a better area. It meant better financial stability and crucially the additional care and help my son needs to speak.

To find out that Clackmannanshire council will not be offering 1140 hours but only the original 600 is a slap in the face. More so when I discovered that Stirling Council - a ten minute drive from my house - WILL be offering the 1140! Why one rule for one county and one for another? Where is the equality?! Where is the fairness?! What makes one county or area more deserving than another? Or one person more deserving than another?

This will disproportionately affect women as the primary child carers and I think the move is really poor decision-making.

I'm so angry and upset that due to where I live that my life will be impacted unfairly financially, in terms of childcare, educationally as my son will not receive the same help he would if we moved ten minutes away, and it will drastically reduce the hours I can work for myself to further my own business.

Absolutely furious!

So I hope that this email will be one of many arriving in your inbox so that you can alter this really poor show in decision making. What a complete farce.

If the Scottish Government is offering 1140 hours it should be to EVERYONE. Not cherry picking the counties they think most "deserving"

Regards

[REDACTED]

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Can this be added as an OR

Thanks

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 08:43

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot
Subject: 1140 hours ELC in Clackmannanshire

Hi

I'm writing to you to raise my concerns over the reduced ELC hours and would like to raise a few issues from both a parents point of view and my child's.

My son is going into his preschool year of nursery and attends a local authority nursery in Clackmannanshire that piloted the 1140 hours scheme last year so he has a full year's experience of attending nursery this way and has loved every second of it. Before he started nursery he was being assessed by speech therapists and health visitors and he was very delayed in all aspects of language, however after a year of full time nursery his speech and understanding is fully developed and he is learning so much on a daily basis. One of the publications issued by the Scottish Government during lockdown specifically states that ELC aged children are the ones being impacted the most as the things they learn in the nursery environment can not be replicated at home and I completely agree with this. As a parent I give my child everything but at home he does not have the experience and learning journey he has within the nursery. He loves his teachers and friends and will be very disappointed to only be there two days a week.

From a parents point of view, I work full time but now I can only be in my office 2 days a week between the hours of 9am and 3pm as I can't use additional childcare, as stated in the letter I received from the nursery and my husband has already been told by his work they won't be flexible as business needs come first and this therefore is a prime example of the responsibility landing with mums and leading to further gender equality in workplaces. I understand why the deadline of August 2020 was removed but I'm now hearing that some local authorities are still providing this however Clackmannanshire is not and this means our kids are at a disadvantage due to their postcode. Clackmannanshire had a few nurseries in the pilot scheme that have been set up for these hours for the past year and this is therefore even worse that they have decided to pull it from all nurseries.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and I really hope you can do something about this.

Thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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AO – [REDACTED]

Can this be added as an OR

Thanks
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 July 2020 09:56
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot
Subject: From 1140 to 425 hours

Dear Mr Swinney,

After following recent developments in the ELC plans I feel compelled to write to you and express my dismay.

My child attends [REDACTED] in Troon, South Ayrshire. Instead of returning to the planned 1140 hours in August, he has instead been offered 2 mornings of 4.25 hours (8am until 12.15pm) for 50 weeks. This equates to 425 hours over the year. The reason for this is limited space for as long as cohorts of 8 are required.

However, even if the cohorts should be removed from the guidance I am completely unclear on how many hours he will be entitled to. Just a mile away in the same town we have one nursery offering 1140 hours and another offering 600 hours. The postcode lottery across Scotland is one thing, but to have such inconsistency within one small town is ridiculous.

How is this getting it right for every child? The unfairness is a bitter pill to swallow. I implore you to do the right thing and make sure every child in Scotland receives the same entitlement - from when nurseries reopen next month, not several months down the line.

Regards
[REDACTED]

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AO - [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: noreply@parliament.scot <noreply@parliament.scot>

Sent: 13 July 2020 14:18

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Message from Scottish Parliament website

name:

[REDACTED]

address:

[REDACTED] Inverness

postcode:

[REDACTED]

email:

[REDACTED]

telephone:

[REDACTED]

message:

Dear Ms Todd

I contact you with regards to the very recent announcement from the Scottish Government regarding the Early Learning and Childcare expansion of funded hours. I was very disappointed to learn that this will no longer be introduced in 2020/2021 and as an extremely concerned parent I would like to request some clarity around the reason for this.

I appreciate Nicola Sturgeon has stated that it was inevitable due to the impact of Covid19 however I feel this statement is rather ambiguous and would like to understand better the direct impact it has had on being able to provide the 1140 hours and why a postponement of an entire academic year is required?

Whilst I understand that some local authorities were expanding estates and staffing resources to accommodate the increase in hours, which of course may have been delayed due to the impact of the pandemic, this is not the case for a large number who have already been operating this model for some time or those who worked extremely hard over the three year project implementation to have this in place for the start of 20/21 academic year.

The Scottish Government pledged this increase back in 2014 and it seems astonishing that events in early 2020 would prevent this from being achievable for an entire academic year. Having personally worked on this expansion project I understand the magnitude of what was being expected of local authorities however I also fully understand and support the principles of the policy.

My daughter is directly impacted by this announcement and I am hugely concerned as I understand the vital importance of early years education. I attended a seminar in the summer of 2018 where you personally spoke in detail about the importance of education at this age and I am saddened that due to unfortunate circumstances my daughter has only experienced a very limited number of weeks in ELC education to date and is now unable to benefit from the increased hours in her final year before school.

The impact this decision has on our daughter's education and our family as a whole is huge. I recently returned to full time employment on the basis of this assurance from the Scottish Government and now face the difficult decision of having to reconsider my employment position. Unfortunately in line with the current guidelines we can no longer utilise our childminder as this would be a second childcare provider and due to the timing of this unexpected announcement it has not left families with sufficient time to make contingency plans for August.

Whilst I feel extremely disappointed I am also keen to understand better how the pandemic has directly impacted on the expansion of hours and why the delay could be for the entire academic year. Whilst I acknowledge the huge turnaround from the Scottish Government to support primary and secondary aged children I do feel that ELC aged children have been let down badly by this decision.

Many Thanks

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 20:04
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>; jamie.greene@parliament.scot
Subject: Early Years Provision Scotland

Dear Mr Swinney,

I am emailing you to share my many concerns given the decision to postpone the introduction of the 1140 hours with no set implementation date for the future.

As a parent of an only child the past three months in lockdown have been an especially lonely time for her and a return to the normality of her nursery education and her peers was one that I know is crucial to her healthy social development. However given the recent announcement of the pull back of the 1140 and the restrictions placed upon us financially this means that she will only be allocated one funded day a week at nursery which I feel is not enough for her to gain back her friendship group and her confidence around other children.

I will not be able to afford to pay for her to attend additional hours at the setting and therefore I will have to rely heavily on vulnerable members of my family to care for her on my return to work. This was something that I had hoped to not have to happen as the thought of exposing those family members to my child who is also mixing at nursery is a very scary one.

I may have to delay my return to work as a college lecturer which will negatively impact my whole team and myself financially. I had planned my year financially on the basis that I would not have to pay for childcare which absorbs 31% of my salary – rightly so given the level of care and education that my child received. However I was relying on the relief that these funded hours would have given me.

Given the announcement from yourself that schools will return to buildings in August 'as normal' I was expecting more support from the Scottish Government with regards to Early Years Education.

Blueprint 2020 sets out the crucial impact that the earliest years have on our children for their whole lives and we know from prior research that early intervention is almost always crucial to aid a child's holistic development. I was delighted when Blueprint 2020 was published in 2017 as I felt that finally a precedent was being set to finally put the child at the centre and get it right for every child and I really feel that the pull back on this really makes this document seem only words.

Another aspect of my argument to reinstate the start of the 1140 hours to August 2020 is the impact that it will have on the PIV sector. As my child attended a partnership nursery (and that is where her allocated funding is for August 2020) I know of the huge infrastructure they have put in place to support the local authority with the implementation of the 1140 hours, including employing more staff, increasing their resources and expanding their outdoor learning space. This money had clearly been spent on the anticipation of receiving the funding in August 2020. I fear that staff will be made redundant and PIV settings will suffer even more so than they have during the pandemic.

I know that across Scotland there is huge disparity in what hours are being offered in each authority. Some I am aware are sticking with the 1140, some are able to offer 1000, 800 or 750 as opposed to the 600. Even in my local town there are differences in provision. Had I applied to the local authority early years centre I would be receiving 20 free hours a week as the local authority have chosen to grant them funding, yet the PIV setting that my child attends, even though they have the capacity, have not been granted that funding. I find the inequality here extremely unfair and do not understand why the local authority has favoured their own setting over one that they are in partnership with.

Please take time to consider my email and the impact that the removal of the 1140 will have on families and children in Scotland.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 11 July 2020 11:17

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Early Years provision 2020-21

Dear Mr Swinney

I am writing to express my concerns and ask some questions about the plans for early years provision starting in August 2020.

I am a [REDACTED] in South Ayrshire with two sons aged 1 and 3. In August I will be returning to work 4 days a week and am very concerned about how I can manage this with the changes to childcare provision in Scotland and the discrepancy between school hours and EYC hours.

Specifically, I am disappointed that the plans for 1140 hours have been cancelled even though some nurseries, including the private nursery my son previously attended for funded hours in partnership with SAC, feel that they are able to safely accommodate the children for 1140 hours if they were to get the funding to do so. My 3 year old son is now enrolled at a local authority EYC, however I had only decided to move him here from a private/partnership nursery on the understanding that he would be able to attend for 1140 hours, so I would not need wraparound care from a private nursery any more.

The reduction to 600 hours will make my return to work very difficult as private nurseries and childminders are now mostly unable to take more children for wrap-around care due to reduced capacity and increased demand. There does not seem to be any alternative provision available for young children, except for one parent leaving a job to take care of children. This would put my family in significant financial hardship [REDACTED]. We will also experience some financial difficulty if we do manage to find private childcare as we will then be paying for 2 children to attend a private nursery or childminder, which is a significant expense.

I know there are many more families in a similar situation to mine and there are certainly more education staff who will have difficulties or find it impossible to return to work in August without childcare in place.

I of course understand that decisions have been made with the safety of children in mind, however I am confused as to why it will be considered safe for primary school pupils, including the 6 year olds I will be teaching, to return to school full time with no social distancing but unsafe for 3 and 4 year olds in Early Years Centres. EYCs have the adult to child ratios to ensure physical distancing and increased hand washing and cleaning are in place and are in fact much better equipped for this than schools are.

I am also disappointed that although childcare hubs were available for children of key workers throughout school closures, nothing seems to have been planned for pre-school children when their parents are expected to return to work. Does the government have any plans for

provision of childcare hubs for children of key workers? If not, is this something that they would consider?

My final concern is specific to my 3 year old son and his development. [REDACTED] and although he has been on a waiting list for some time, has not yet had any intervention. I have been working with him at home during school and nursery closures, however he has suffered from a lack of interaction with other children in an early education setting. I am worried about the ongoing effects of this when nurseries reopen with 600 hours provision as he had been used to having more time when he attended a private nursery.

Thank you for your time and I hope to hear from you soon.

[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: First Ministers Website Mailbox <FirstMinisterWebsite@gov.scot>

Sent: 11 July 2020 18:40

To: Public Engagement Unit <CorrespondenceUnit@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Nursery children

From:

[FirstMinisterWebsite@gov.scot][SMTP:FIRSTMINISTERWEBSITE@GOV.SCOT]

Sent: 11 July 2020 18:37:53

To: First Ministers Website Mailbox

Subject: Nursery children

Auto forwarded by a Rule

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Nursery children

Message Body:

Would like to ask when nursery children will be back full time the same as schools as my grandson age 6 will be back full time and his brother age 4 will be back 2 full days a week his mother works part time and can not

put him to a child minder for the other 3 days they live in the east coast and grandparents live on the west coast .

Looking forward to hearing from you

[REDACTED]

--

This e-mail was sent from a contact form on the First Minister of Scotlands website (<https://firstminister.gov.scot>)

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AO – [REDACTED]

For Micase for OR

Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Deputy Private Secretary
Private Office to the First Minister
5th Floor| St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG |
[REDACTED]



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From: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP
<Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 13 July 2020 09:16
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Fwd:

Nicola Sturgeon MSP
Glasgow Southside
Constituency Office (constituent enquiries only)
Govanhill Workspace
Unit 3, 69 Dixon Road
G42 8AT
Tel: 0141 424 1174
nicola.sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot

All other enquiries to nicola.sturgeon@snp.org

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 9, 2020 1:32:26 PM
To: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject:

Hi there,

I have just received an email this morning from the nursery my child attends to tell me it is not at all reasonable or feasible to introduce the 1140 hours before August 2021. Can someone explain to me why east Renfrewshire which is 5 minutes from me are still able to roll this out within their nurseries but Glasgow City are not? It's totally unfair that other parts of the city are able to put these in place others aren't because of their postcode. I am currently a staff nurse on maternity leave who was relying on the 30 hours childcare to enable me to return to work. Now I have had my whole maternity leave in lockdown, and having to take unpaid leave for the remaining 3 months and I'm unsure of what to do after that as childcare for my now 3 year old and 6 month old will be more expensive than my actual wages that I get paid for being a professional health care worker.

Regards
[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 16:27

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Cc: Jamie Greene <Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot>

Subject: ELC 1140hrs non-delivery

Dear Mr Swinney,

I am writing to you today to express my many concerns at the recent announcement by the Scottish Government of the postponement of 1140 hrs with no set date for its re-introduction.

The last few months of lockdown have made it very apparent to me as a parent just how vital the nursery environment and it's nurturing of key aspects such as social development is to pre-school age children.

With this in mind I am very upset that my daughter will now only be able to attend nursery one day a week when other children in my hometown and across Scotland will still be provided with 1140 hours.

I have another child about to start nursery and as a family we didn't budget for and are unable to afford to pay the additional days for my 3 year old.

I am an NHS key worker and a Physiotherapist working within [REDACTED]. I am about to go back to work [REDACTED] and had re-arranged my working days in order to best support my colleagues and patients in what will undoubtedly be a challenging few months ahead. This will now need to be altered due to the change in childcare provision.

On returning to work I will be faced with the challenge of the [REDACTED] in the community, many struggling with the long lasting effects of COVID-19 and the reduction in [REDACTED] during the pandemic. This will now be within a team, comprising of many colleagues who now have massive worries regarding childcare as a result on the staggering U-turn on the provision of 1140 hrs childcare. This will put a massive strain on NHS staff who are already suffering major fatigue, both mentally and physically, as a result of the pressures of the last few months.

Another concern is the long term impact on the PVI sector. Our local private nursery, along with many others across Scotland have spent money increasing capacity and staffing levels and now won't be funded. This may now lead to redundancies which in turn will cause concerns for the future provision of 1140 hrs, whenever that may be.

I find it so disappointing when on a day it has been announced that there will be a £230 million package to assist return to work, working parents are being disadvantaged yet again.

For a so called 'flagship policy' it seems that 1140hrs has been one of the first things to go. So much for 'Getting in right for every child'.

I hope you will give these concerns due consideration as I believe that investment in our children should always be the priority.

Kind Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 16:52

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Cc: jamie.greene@parliament.scot; alison.harris@parliament.scot;
john.scott@parliament.scot

Subject: 1140 early years childcare hours

Good afternoon

We recently received word from our child's nursery to say that the planned increase in childcare hours from 600 to 1140 hours would no longer be going ahead in August, with no indication as to when this would go ahead.

As you can imagine, this is extremely disappointing and late in the day for this decision to be made. Whilst we appreciate the difficulties that have arisen out of the COVID-19 crisis, there has been no substantial reason given as to why this has led to this particular impact.

During this time of adjusting to COVID-19, our government has asked us to not go to work for the good of our own health and many of us have been furloughed on reduced wages. Whilst the furlough scheme indeed has its merits it means that most families' incomes have been reduced and the monies otherwise saved and spent on childcare for those of us with no other option have been compromised. Families are already struggling, our children have suddenly found themselves in situations where they cannot see friends and family or attend trusted and loved nurseries. The sacrifice has been huge for some of us but we did this for the good of our own and other's health.

For those of us not furloughed, working from home with our children there has taken a tremendous toll on the wellbeing of the family. Parents have had to sacrifice precious time at home with young children by taking phone calls, responding to emails and dealing with additional pressures from work as well as our children who do not understand.

It feels like a punitive measure to parents, children and early years providers to withdraw this planned increase at this time when so many of us have made sacrifices our government has asked us to make and for something that was no fault of our own.

Additionally, there appears to be consistency between nurseries within the same local authority with some still offering 1140 hours and rather arbitrary as to which providers the hours are being allocated to by the council. This is simply unfair and not good enough.

I trust this issue will be given the due consideration that it deserves and hope for a positive outcome very soon.

Regards
[REDACTED]
Sent from my iPhone

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 08:15
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: early years provision

i and most other parents are disgusted at your announcement today about early years.

you are not sad or regretful. you are completely devoid of understanding on the issues. Some of us were relying on this to not only provide our children with much needed preschool education after only getting 8 wks of ante preschool , but to enable me to return to work, to supplement our family income after paycuts and job changes for my critical worker husband.

you have prioritise key workers the last 6months giving them free childcare but we didnt get any help as only 1 parent in that category. i have struggled effectively on my own for months with 3 kids aged 6 and under. But now when there is no real risk you cannot bring yourself to place children at the centre of your thinking. You should be ashamed. A policy that you announced 6 years ago!!!! 6 years!!! and now you say you cant do it for another year at least. Is that not embarrassing!!

Pull your finger out. Give vouchers to parents to use in the private sector if councils dont have the facilities.TRY FOR HEAVENS SAKE. THERE IS A SOLUTION IF YOU CAN BE BOTHERED. To not do so suggests an unwillingness and a relief you can hide incompetence at all levels of gov on something you clearly were not going to deliver. On some levels you must have loved the arrival of covid.

you told councils to spend the childrens money on covid rather than spend the uk funds- and you claim others play politics!!!

if you had been given the opportunity to have children you would understand how disgusting and self serving your policy and handling of childrens education is. You are descriminating them and women who are

the ones who's financial freedom and economic future you have just trashed.

As a woman in leadership, you should be better placed to support children and women, but you have just proven yourself to be worse than a man, as you cant even pretend to not know the issues facing women and work.

Shame Shame Shame on you.

[REDACTED]

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 13 July 2020 12:48

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot

Subject: Nursery Hours

Dear Mr Swinney,

I hope this email finds you safe and healthy. I am writing to you in hope that you can explain to me and help me understand why the SNP and the Scottish Government have not fulfilled their promise of 1140 free nursery hours for all 3 and 4 year olds?

I have recently returned to Scotland after living overseas for many years. I returned to settle back here, to work here and to raise my son here. I am a single parent and the only way I am able to work in Scotland was because of the promise of 1140 free nursery hours for my 4 year old son. Now I am having to move overseas again because I cannot afford childcare as a single working parent. I will need to give up my job and my plans of raising my son here because my government cannot stick to any promises that they make. I really need a proper explanation of this sudden change, an explanation that does not use COVID-19 as an excuse. My whole life has been turned upside down now because of this.

I know I am not alone in the shock and disgust of this sudden change in policy. The First Minister, is forever claiming she understands the importance of early years education and how vital it is in the development of children. How on earth is this policy reflecting her understanding?? Many children of the vital pre school age will be now spending more time in unstructured settings - child-minders, grandparents etc - and not in

environment they should be because parents cannot afford to send their children to nursery.

Quite frankly it's disgusting.

Regards,
[REDACTED]

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AO [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 10:22

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Childcare Provision

Dear Ms Todd

I have been listening to your apology for local councils on Radio Scotland this morning regarding their renegeing on their commitment to the extra hours of nursery provision previously pledged, and I do not accept your reasons. It is clearly unfair that some councils are honouring their commitment while others (namely South Ayrshire council) are not. These councils have already been given the funding for the extra hours of nursery provision and it is disgraceful that they are backing out of their responsibility, thereby creating a postcode lottery. My grandson's nursery have been working hard to comply with all the safety regulations in preparation for reopening in August, but now my daughter and her partner will not be able to take advantage of the extra hours they had budgeted and planned for. The other grandparent is shielding, and my husband and I live on the other side of the country so it's not practical for us to provide childcare on a daily basis, thus my daughter's family have been left high and dry. Without adequate childcare there can be no economic recovery.

I am a long-time SNP supporter but I must say I am really disillusioned by your lukewarm and half-hearted response to this crisis, and it will surely influence my vote in next year's elections.

Regards
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

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Dear Minister,

I have forwarded on correspondence from my constituent, [REDACTED], regarding the following issues:

"However the reasoning behind my email is back in January this year myself like many other parents in Scotland were promised 1140 of childcare for 3 & 4 year olds. Due to the pandemic this was revoked and we were then offered 600 hours. Now that the school children are on track to return full time in August and the social distancing has been relaxed for children under age 11 are you able to ask the SNP why the plans for 1140 hours are not back on the table.

[REDACTED]at my children's school and this has become a concern for many parent's that had planned to return to work more hour's, some in a predicament about whether a return to work will be feasible given lack of childcare."

A return to schools must go hand in hand with childcare, and ensuring 1140 is implemented as soon as possible is key. I would be grateful if the Scottish Government could update me as to their progress on ensuring this goes ahead, so that I can inform my constituent.

Regards,
Daniel

Daniel Johnson MSP
0131 541 2145
danieljohnson.org.uk
Constituency Office
134 Comiston Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5QN

Daniel would like to keep you up to date with his activities in Parliament and in the constituency. You can sign up to receive regular updates and his eNewsletter [here](#).

Your data privacy will be taken seriously. Read Daniel's privacy notice [here](#).

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 July 2020 20:38
To: Murray, Ian
Subject: Nursery hour's

Hi Ian

I hope my email finds you well. I have been following you on Twitter and I agree with what you post. Lately I have found SNP are constantly trying to wage a gap between Scotland and England and I find it extremely disheartening at a time like this the the daily briefings become a podium to leave snide and unnecessary remarks.

How ever the reasoning behind my email is back in January this year myself like many other parents in Scotland were promised 1140 of childcare for 3 & 4 year olds. Due to the pandemic this was revoked and we were then offered 600 hours. Now that the school children are on track to return full time in August and the social distancing has been relaxed for children under age 11 are you able to ask the SNP why the plans for 1140 hours are not back on the table.

[REDACTED] this has become a concern for many parent's that had planned to return to work more hour's, some in a predicament about whether a return to work will be feasible given lack of childcare.

Is this something you would be able to help further with?

Thanks [REDACTED]

From: Daniel Johnson MSP
Sent: 13 July 2020 14:05
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: (Case Ref: IM66806) (Case Ref: DJ9029)

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

I would be grateful if you could send over the original email from [REDACTED] as it doesn't seem to be attached to this thread. Thank you!

[REDACTED]

Daniel Johnson MSP
0131 541 2145
danieljohnson.org.uk<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fdanieljohnson.org.uk%2F&data=02%7C01%7Cdaniel.johnson.msp%40parliament.scot%7Cb9f0861703e64914136808d8273912ad%7Cd603c99ccfdd4292926800db0d0cf081%7C1%7C0%7C637302473364924772&sdata=UEfo3V5yIG8gn6267H7%2F%2BuOcWyLOyaK94Pe1BG1Dmn0%3D&reserved=0>
Constituency Office
134 Comiston Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5QN

Daniel would like to keep you up to date with his activities in Parliament and in the constituency. You can sign up to receive regular updates and his eNewsletter here<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fdanieljohnson.us3.list->

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L4%3D&reserved=0.

Your data privacy will be taken seriously. Read Daniel's privacy notice
here.<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fdanieljohnson.org.uk%2Fprivacy-policy&data=02%7C01%7Cdaniel.johnson.msp%40parliament.scot%7Cb9f0861703e64914136808d8273912ad%7Cd603c99ccfdd4292926800db0d0cf081%7C1%7C0%7C637302473364934768&sdata=Aih1gLtQ4TdnI8gh%2Fe2UTO7mFok6U4etaL4RFM4BFLg%3D&reserved=0>

From: Ian Murray
Sent: 13 July 2020 10:38
To: Johnson D (Daniel), MSP
Subject: FW: (Case Ref: IM66806)

Hi, would you mind looking into this on behalf of [REDACTED] please?

Thanks, [REDACTED]

From: "MURRAY, Ian"
Sent: 13 July 2020 10:27
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: (Case Ref: IM66806)

Ian Murray MP

Labour Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South

Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland

Constituency Office: 0131 662 4520

House of Commons: 0207 219 7064

Write: 31 Minto Street, Edinburgh, EH9 2BT

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 July 2020 10:57
To: MURRAY, Ian
Subject: RE: (Case Ref: IM66806)

Hi Ian

Thanks for your response. I'm shocked at hearing this as our school had assumed it would be introduced in as little as a few weeks when the children returned. (Coming from school staff).

I would be happy for this to be passed on as if it will not be introduced I'm left wondering if my daughter will benefit at all from it.

Thanks [REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

----- Original message -----

From: Ian Murray

Date: 10/07/2020 17:49 (GMT+00:00)

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: (Case Ref: IM66806)

Dear [REDACTED], thanks for getting in touch and your kind words. This week the Scottish government confirmed that plans to offer 1,140 hours of free early years childcare will not be introduced during the 2020-2021 school year. The First Minister did however promise to get the policy back on track as quickly as possible.

I know this delay is a bitter disappointment and how vital childcare is to working parents and in particular working women. Many parents will have planned their return to work based on the expectation of 1,140 hours and some will be left wondering if they have sufficient childcare to return to work.

My colleagues Daniel Johnson MSP and Iain Gray MSP have consistently held the Scottish government to account on this issue for a number of years and will continue to do so. As the delivery is entirely devolved to the Scottish government can I ask your permission to forward your email to Daniel as he is better able to press the government for a response and to ask questions in Holyrood.

With best wishes

Ian Murray MP

Labour Member of Parliament for Edinburgh South

Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland

Constituency Office: 0131 662 4520

House of Commons: 0207 219 7064

Write: 31 Minto Street, Edinburgh, EH9 2BT

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AO – [REDACTED]

From: Private - Russell MW (Michael), MSP
<Michael.Russell.msp1@parliament.scot>
Sent: 15 July 2020 16:47
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Free Childcare Delay

Dear Maree

I append an email from a constituent about the delay to the provision of free childcare. I am also copying this to [REDACTED] to see if there is any updated information you can give me, and perhaps from [REDACTED] anything about [REDACTED] in particular .

Regards

Michael

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tuesday, 14 July 2020 at 15:14
To: "Russell MW (Michael), MSP"
<Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Re: Free Childcare Delay

Dear Mr Russell,

Please see below the message I sent to you last Wednesday, 8th July, I can confirm that my home address is [REDACTED]Dunoon [REDACTED]

Regards

[REDACTED]

Dear Ms Sturgeon and Scottish Ministers

For the first time in my life I am writing to elected politicians to express my dismay and disgust at the announcement made today in regards the Scottish Governments policy on the provision of free childcare. This policy, one of the key commitments of your manifesto, was much welcomed when you were elected and numerous families have made detailed arrangements to ensure their children are best placed to take advantage of it NEXT MONTH.

My 3-year-old granddaughter is one of these children. Just today, her mother, my daughter, received notification from her local nursery confirming her place, starting on 1st August, which is **3 weeks on Monday**. Following this afternoon's announcement, they are now as a family in complete and utter chaos with no idea how they will be able to make alternative childcare arrangements in such a short timescale. They will not be able to take up the nursery place on a paid basis due to financial strains not least brought about by impacts on income as a result of the Covid pandemic, and without family nearby to look after their daughter it is entirely possible that one of them may have to give up their job, a nightmare prospect which has left them totally devastated tonight.

Has the government thought this crazy about turn through?? This scheme is due to start in one month's time, thousands of children and families have today literally been thrown on an educational and financial scrapheap by this SNP government, and many will, like my own family, have absolutely no way out of this nightmare in any way, never mind within the space of the next 3 or 4 weeks. Whilst I understand and appreciate that Covid has affected many aspects of our everyday lives, it is utterly wilful and despicable that this government has chosen to behave so badly towards our young families and children, the future of the country and the very people who should have most support to enable them to get back to normal as quickly as possible. For many of them, after all that they have endured over the last few months, this really will be the last straw.

I would appreciate a response from those of you who realise the importance of listening to public opinion, but much more importantly I would prefer to see sometime very soon that the decision announced today has been reversed in the interests of our children, our families and our economy. On a personal basis given the scale of the U turn which has been made, and the total disregard for one of the most important sectors of our country, I think it is unlikely that I will ever consider supporting the SNP again.

I look forward to hearing from you.

[REDACTED]

From: Russell MW (Michael), MSP
<Michael.Russell.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: 08 July 2020 20:48

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Automatic reply: Free Childcare Delay

Thank you for taking the time to contact me. This is an automatic reply to let you know your email has been received.

There is a strict Parliamentary protocol that Members of Parliament can only take up matters on behalf of their own constituents. I'd be obliged, therefore, if you could include your **home address and postcode** in your email to me. If this was not included originally, please send your original email again and include this information.

Please note that at the moment I am receiving a large volume of mails and calls from constituents concerned about the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) and I will be prioritising these and other urgent cases.

For the latest health guidance on coronavirus please visit www.nhsinform.scot

For up to date information from the Scottish Government please visit <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Travel information and workplace advice is available at www.hps.scot.nhs.uk

If you do not have symptoms and are looking for general information please call the NHS Inform free helpline on **0800 028 2816**

It is also important to take care of your mental health at this time. Visit www.breathingspace.scot

Any businesses with questions relating to the impact of COVID-19 are urged to call the business helpline number, 0300 303 0660. This will be open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm. Callers should select option one to speak to the COVID-19 team.

I will also be posting local updates and any community news on my website www.michaelrussellmsp.scot and on my Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/michaelrussellsp>

Best wishes

Michael Russell MSP

Argyll and Bute

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AO – [REDACTED]

From: Kevin Stewart MSP <Kevin.Stewart.msp@parliament.scot>
Sent: 17 July 2020 12:14
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject: (Case Ref: KS5008)

Dear Maree,

I hope you are well.

I am writing to you regarding concerns that have been raised by a constituent around the delivery of the increased early years and childcare provision. Please see below a copy of my constituent so that you fully understand their concerns.

I would appreciate it if you could outline what steps the Scottish Government are taking to progress the fully funded hours available to parents across Scotland.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,
Kevin

Kevin Stewart MSP

Aberdeen Central
Third Floor
27 John Street
Aberdeen
AB25 1BT

Tel: 01224 624719

From: *****
Sent: 14 July 2020 07:39
To: *****
Subject:*****

Hello,

I am a constituent and I am writing to express my deep concern over the way in which Aberdeen Citys are conducting business along with the handling of extended nursery hours for the city.

Aberdeenshire council have confirmed that children will receive 900 extended nursery hours once they return after the summer if it is safe to do so, while Aberdeen city have simply put the plans on hold. I have received very little information about how my child will return to nursery, let alone with the extended nursery hours I was counting on to return to work.

If Aberdeenshire Council is able to return this service, it seems unfair and wrong that Aberdeen city cannot even provide a date when we will receive this also. It is clearly a post code lottery with regards to education and support for families. When I contacted the councillors, I was simply told that the covid crisis is the reason for this. However, I believe very little was done prior to this crisis to achieve the extended hours as set out by the Scottish government. As this was a platform which was campaigned on, I believe it was wrong that the government allowed this budget to be used to plug the gap caused by covid. As the economic crisis deepens, getting parents back to work should be the priority to kick start the economy. In addition, the level of deprivation in Aberdeen is worse than in the shire and therefore, condemning people, most commonly women, to stay at home with their children is a the wrong thing to do. Women make up the majority of those employed by caring and key worker roles and recent events have showed us how important they are. I myself work for the NHS and I agreed to hours to work on the basis of what was promised to me. I feel incredibly let down by this government and the administration in Aberdeen and may not be able to return to my work at all. This is a financial blow to my family who cannot rely on family for childcare due to various issues.

I also have deep concerns about the way the council is running. This budget which decided extended hours would not be attempted was decided at a council meeting with only 3 councillors present. This is not a democratic way to run an administration. In addition, there have been reports that meetings are continually cancelled and the next meeting where all councillors will be present is not until december. I believe this is a serious issue and should be dealt with at a higher level.

The ways in which the money is being spent is a disgrace also. Creating "pavement extenders" to make social distancing more "welcoming" is a particular low. They are made of decking and hence would not be safe in wet or icy weather. They have also spent so much money on pedestrianised areas which do not currently have any shops. Daily reports about the way they have created one way systems and poor parking is in the press. This administration is becoming not only undemocratic but uncaring to the views of the public.

Kind regards,

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Micase for [REDACTED]

From: Sarah Boyack MSP <Sarah.Boyack.MSP@Parliament.scot>

Sent: 15 July 2020 11:30

To: Scottish Ministers <[Scottish Ministers@gov.scot](mailto:Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot)>

Subject: (Case Ref: SB2045) Letter from Sarah Boyack MSP to John Swinney MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Dear John

I am writing on behalf of my constituent who has asked that I raise her concerns with reopening nurseries with you. I have copied my constituents correspondence below for your information and would greatly appreciate a response to allow me to update my constituents.

I'm writing to ask you to urge the Scottish Government to review the current guidance for the reopening of nurseries immediately.

I am a [REDACTED] of a nearly 2 year old girl and the Edinburgh nursery she was due to start at in mid April has just notified me that it can not reopen under current guidelines. I have been managing childcare over the last few months thanks to the flexibility of my employer and my sister's ability to provide childcare due to her working hours reducing under lockdown. However from 10 August, my sister, who is a college lecturer, will return to her workplace full time and if the nursery doesn't reopen I will have nobody to care for my child.

The Scottish Government has advised that their guidance for the reopening of nurseries will not be reviewed until the end of July at earliest. This is simply not good enough given that the academic year starts at the beginning of August and many parents will be expected to return to work in Phase 3, which as you know is expected to start in July. It was generally expected that the guidance would be relaxed following representations to the government from the nursery sector, particularly in light of the government's recent change in position for the reopening of schools.

One area of concern is the proposed establishment of bubbles of children with a maximum of 8 children. It is proposed that individual groups, working with named members of staff, are to be kept separate from, and are not to be in close contact with, other groups. In the nursery my wee girl is going to, this will involve the allocation of at least 2 groups to separate areas of each playroom which raises many practical issues (eg each room has one entrance door, one door to the garden, one sink, one shared toilet, etc).

In addition, the stated group size of 8 does not coincide with prescribed staffing ratios for all age groups (viz 1 adult for 8 children over 3 years old, 1 adult for 5 children between 2 & 3 years old and 1 adult for 3 children under 2 years old). This will result in a larger number of smaller groups (eg separate groups of 5 children between 2 & 3 years old) which would be impractical to manage, or staff numbers above the prescribed ratios (eg 2 adults for groups of 8 children between 2 & 3 years old).

I understand that in England the latest guidance takes away the need for bubbles at all from 20 July. Instead nurseries will focus in their own risks assessments. I would like to see something similar adopted in Scotland and nurseries told this as soon as possible.

Given that the academic year starts earlier in Scotland than England I would expect Scotland to be ahead of England in reviewing its guidance. Since this outbreak has begun, there has been very little focus on pre-school childcare. It feels like those of us with children under 5 are not being considered. I am my daughters sole provider and I need to get back to work.

I am lucky that I am not a single parent who has lost their job because if I were I'd also be risking a benefits sanction for not being able to seek employment because of childcare. If my wee girl can't start nursery in August, however, I could find myself in that

position - or at the very least being forced to take unpaid time off work to care for her.'

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Best wishes

Sarah

Sarah Boyack MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

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AO – [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 17 July 2020 13:14

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: 1140 hours childcare

Dear Maree Todd,

I am writing to express my extreme dissatisfaction with the revision to the commitment to deliver 1140 hours of free Childcare for some children from August 2020.

As you'll no doubt be aware, individual councils are making their own decisions as to whether they can deliver the 1140 hours. Some are, others state that they cannot. This is creating an inequitable situation across Scotland with some families receiving this funding and others in neighbouring local authorities not. In my own area, East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC), they are insisting that they cannot deliver the 1140 hours for all eligible families as they failed to build three new nurseries at various sites across the local authority. They state they can only offer 750 hours as a result, but they will continue to deliver 1140 hours to families at

pilot nurseries. Thus creating inequity and a postcode lottery of funding within the local authority. They do recognise that working families may require more than the 750 hours, and state that families can make their own arrangements to pay for wrap around care. To my mind, this is an acknowledgment by the council that there is additional capacity beyond the 750 hours available for working families either at their establishments or privately, therefore why not fund these hours and these families if the space IS actually available?

Our own private partnership nursery [REDACTED], have worked extremely hard to put in place extra staffing and facilities to support the 1140 hours which were promised. I am already concerned that the extra resources they have spent will not now be recouped and that the nursery which my kids have attended since the age of 1 will be in dire financial straits (not to mention other nurseries in the same position.

From my own perspective, we have [REDACTED] who are entering their preschool year. They would have just received the additional hours funding this academic year and this was something we had planned and budgeted for over the last 18 months. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, My one person small business has been unable to operate and even going forward this looks limited or unlikely. The provision of additional hours at nursery would have proven crucial in facilitating our children's preschool education, whilst facilitating my return to work, allowing us to budget and to continue paying for essentials such as grocery shopping and our mortgage if work opportunities are not forthcoming.

[REDACTED] were able to provide us with the 1140, therefore why can funding not be extended to those families who are able to access 1140 within private nurseries to create some equity within the local authority? Why were other creative solutions not explored such as prioritising children in their preschool year, given that they have already missed months of early years education as a result of the pandemic? Why not grant the funding to all families and if there is not space in either council or partnership nurseries allow parents to make arrangements at non-partnership nurseries as a one-off arrangement?

My husband wrote to our elected councillors over 7 days ago. Currently we've had a response from only one of them. Insultingly this simply asked us to refer to the EDC website for a response to our queries, without a link! This is why I am now writing to you for some support with this

matter. More and more of our neighbouring councils are opting to honour the 1140 hours childcare commitment.

I would ask that the Scottish Government supports EDC to deliver the 1140 hours as promised, as I know I am not the only concerned parent. Surely the provision of this childcare will support growth of the economy. Parents will be able to return to work and in some cases, some families will have additional monies that can be spent in shops, restaurants etc to boost economic growth and potentially create jobs in areas worst hit by the pandemic.

I await your response.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 16 July 2020 19:21

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Delay in doubling childcare hours

Dear Nicola,

Like many will be, I am upset by the decision to reduce the additional childcare hours I have to ask that you consider many other means of saving money.

I am a self employed mother. I can only work a certain amount of hours having two children.

It cost £500 (£6000pa) per month for 3 days of childcare in Irvine.

I earn around £20,000pa after tax and I get no other financial help.

A low income family on £15,000 each get this childcare free which technically brings their annual income to £20,000pa

This creates a gender disadvantage.

How about paid Prescriptions are introduced again. People hoard paracetamol and all sorts of medicine abusing the benefit system, pretending to have pain just to get more money but don't even take their medicines. I have worked in the nhs as a [REDACTED] and have seen on a massive scale the medicine wasted.

People admitted to hospital pay a flat rate for the meals in hospitals. They pay for food at home and still get paid benefit or wages while in hospital. I don't see this being unreasonable.

I just feel it's a kick in the teeth for mother's. I have one grandparent left to help who is in the vulnerable group and I was actually in a position that I could work more as I'm at full capacity and refusing people but having the additional hours i won't be able to now.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

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From:
[FirstMinisterWebsite@gov.scot][SMTP:FIRSTMINISTERWEBSITE@GOV.SCOT]

Sent: 11 July 2020 07:59:26

To: First Ministers Website Mailbox

Subject: Nursery 1140 hours

Auto forwarded by a Rule

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Nursery 1140 hours

Message Body:
Good morning,

Firstly I would like to thank you for your leadership during this pandemic.

I am, like many others, a working parent. I have been asked to return to my office in the center of Edinburgh next week, I do not drive and rely on public transport.

I understand how difficult the decision making is at present however with the recent announcement that nurseries are no longer required to fulfill the extended hours this year it has left me, and I am sure many others in impossible situations. As it stands I have no idea what hours my son is returning to nursery or even what days. This is unacceptable, as it makes it impossible to make work arrangements and childcare arrangements. I have been left in limbo. I am reluctant to have my son on public transport, If his nursery does not start back with the 1140 hours he will be required to be on 3 buses a day in order for me to get to work and drop him at childcare.

I am also deeply upset that many other nurseries over Scotland and Edinburgh already have the extended hours therefore my son will be missing out; not only will my son be missing out but I will now have to tell my employer that my planned increase in hours in August will now need to be delayed by a year.

If my child's nursery will not be getting the extended hours will I get a payment to cover additional childcare?

Also when exactly are we getting more info on School nurseries, I feel they have been forgotten in this pandemic. My son has a speech therapist which he has not seen now since February and of course the lockdown has also disrupted his progress. I fear that missing out on extra hours at nursery will further impact him and possibly lead to a delay in starting school.

We parents of school nursery children desperately need this information as quick as possible, we have details for school but as I have previously mentioned we have very little info regarding nursery.

I look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for your time.

Kind regards

--

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 15:52

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminder guidance

Dear John Sweeney,

Having seen the recent guidelines about childminders not being allowed to drop or collect children at school has compelled me to contact you.

As a teacher, it is impossible for me to drop or collect my children at school and I rely on a childminder to do this for me.

There is no flexibility in teaching to allow me to look after my own children in this respect, and I have no family nearby to help.

Please reconsider this as it makes my childcare untenable, presents our family with a very difficult situation, and threatens the livelihood of our excellent childminder.

Many thanks
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:27

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

08/07/20

John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister: DFMCSE@gov.scot

Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People:
MinisterCYP@gov.scot

DMcMillan SM (Stuart), MSP Stuart.McMillan.msp@parliament.scot

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the

economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Inverclyde.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Swinney J (John), MSP

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:39

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Restrictions on blended childcare

[REDACTED]

**Personal Assistant to John Swinney
MSP for Perthshire North / Deputy First Minister / Cabinet Secretary
for Education & Skills**

Tel:  [REDACTED]

www.johnswinneymsp.com / www.scottish.parliament.uk



Before you print think about the ENVIRONMENT

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:36

To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on blended childcare

[REDACTED]

Dear John Swinney,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on

childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools [from 11 August](#) (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of 5 children and 4 families that I currently support in Houston

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

ELC funded and registered childminder.

The Scottish Parliament: Making a positive difference to the lives of the people of Scotland

Pàrlamaid na h-Alba: A' toirt deagh bhuaidh air beatha sluagh na h-Alba

www.parliament.scot : facebook.com/scottishparliament : twitter.com/scotparl

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:47

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: blended care restrictions

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

08/07/2020

Dear John Swinney

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the

Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where

I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Cumbernauld.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 11:10

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care in childminding setting

Please find attached a letter with great concern for my children and families who use childminders in blended care. [REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

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[REDACTED]

Dear Sir John Swinny msp deputy first minister.

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 6 children and 6 families that I currently support in Livingston west lothian. Parent I have spoken to would need to leave employment. Key worker.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely, [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 11:17

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: I am sharing 'Letter Template from SCMA_Blended Care Restrictions on Childminding.docx' with you

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear John Swinney

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on

parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 5 families that I currently support in Livingston. I would like to point out I have worked pretty much throughout lockdown for key worker families and now with more families back (4 families at only 1 time) it would be devastating to my business & to the parents who need to go to work, if when the schools return I was not able to continue this support!

Il would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 11:28

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminders

[REDACTED]
08 / 06 / 20

Dear Sir -

John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister:

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery and school) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

we also need to know if we be able to return to our normal number of householders, in order to provide care to all the families who are now returning to their work places. All Childminders guidelines still remain for phase one, with max of 4 households. we are now going into phase three.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will hugely struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy. This is my career and my only income and i have spent nearly 10 years building up my reputation and career.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus.

However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the impact of COVID-19 on families and us smaller childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if the restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11th August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childminding sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 9 children (8 households over a week). Some of which are key workers, in Inverness. Out of my 9 children 6 children are of school age and would still need childcare after school.

As Deputy First Minister, I would please ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11th August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus), and to also give dates as to when or if we will return to our normal number of households in order to provide care to all the families who are now returning to their work places. Childminders guidelines still remains the same for phase one, we are now going into phase 3 will things change for us?

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 12:19
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: BLENDED CARE RESTRICTIONS

[REDACTED]

08/07/20

MR John Swinney MSP
T4.23
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Sir / Madam, [Mr John Swinney](#)

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the

risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 15 children and families that I currently support in [BAILLIESTON AND SURROUNDING AREA](#).

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Original Correspondence

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 12:58

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Unique Situation

Hi Maree,

I was wondering if you would be able to give me a call to discuss a unique situation I currently find myself in.

I run the [REDACTED] currently in Scotland registered for [REDACTED] children. We fall into no bracket that's seems fair due to our completely unique setting and have lots of extremely upset and Panicking parents ([REDACTED] families use my setting weekly).

I know you have been a great support to childminders during this difficult time and appreciate the time you have given to do videos and offer reassurance.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From:

[FirstMinisterWebsite@gov.scot][SMTP:FIRSTMINISTERWEBSITE@GOV.SCOT]

Sent: 10 July 2020 00:22:21

To: First Ministers Website Mailbox

Subject: Childcare hours postponed

Auto forwarded by a Rule

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Childcare hours postponed

Message Body:

Dear Ms Sturgeon,

This is the first time I have ever contacted an elected representative, however I am so disappointed and insensed by today's announcement regarding the failure to deliver the guaranteed 1140 hours of childcare.

My understanding is that some councils that have all of there establishments ready on time will still go ahead and provide the hours, however councils which are SNP administrated will not go ahead.

I am a constituent of Clackmannanshire council, I am aware that the majority of nurseries in Clackmannanshire have already been offering the full amount of hours for some time now, (which I expect will not be revoked) so I find it very unfair that they will not begin offering the hours per establishment if they are ready

and have the provision there when your excuse for not offering it is completely down to Covid 19 rather than finances. The nursery I will be using is ready to offer the hours. There will be many families within the same local authority as me who will benefit from a full 2 years of this excellent support that you have promised and I will now completely miss out as my child will be at school when it is eventually implemented in 2021 (If that happens.)

I have voted SNP in the past few elections and this issue has really disappointed me as the commitment to childcare has been a key factor in my vote as a hard working parent.

Regards,
[REDACTED]

--

This e-mail was sent from a contact form on the First Minister of Scotlands website (<https://firstminister.gov.scot>)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 July 2020 18:33
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: FAO Maree Todd

Dear Ms Todd

I am a mother of a 3 year old boy who attends the [REDACTED] in Edinburgh.

It has been good to see John Swinney declare last week that primary and secondary schools are planned to return in August full-time.

Unfortunately little has been said on the early years sector. The City of Edinburgh Council runs the [REDACTED] and the guidance we have had so far is that the nursery is likely only to be able to support 600 funded hours per child not 1140 from August and each child will be able to be at the nursery for only two days per week. This is despite the nursery being in the pilot scheme since August for the 1140 hours.

This almost halves the funded provision and makes it impossible for families to hold down jobs as we emerge from lockdown. I would ask you please to follow your colleague John Swinney and tell Scotland that the state-funded early years settings plan to go back full-time from August with 1140 funded hours, as was planned before Covid struck. That way, parents can look forward to getting back to work and we can minimise the economic damage to our country and to parents' careers. I implore you to make a statement on this as I and many of my fellow parents are struggling with whether to try to book private childcare now while there may be places available, or whether some of us will have to give up work as the economics no longer make sense.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 02 July 2020 09:39

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: 1140 funded nursery places

Good Morning

Thank you for taking the time to read this, I am emailing regarding the 1140 hours of funding that was to come in to place August 2020 for nursery children

My child since the age of 1 has been in full time nursery to allow me to work full time, the new funding that was coming into place would have reduced my monthly bill significantly which as it stands is just under £700.

I was struggling financially every month but this was bringing me a new lease of life and I was hoping to go back to university part time with the saving.

We then received the blow that councils were no longer legally obliged to provide this funding come August, I understand why this decision was made, nurseries were still to be built, people employed etc, but councils has stripped the funding completely so when my child goes back full time in August my bill doesn't change. Which I don't quite understand as my child has a place so why cant she receive the funding?

I think it is very unfair and I am going to have to put off returning to education until I hear news of when I can receive the funding,

you might not realise but to many and thousands of others this was a life Line, I understand delays for people who don't have places yet but what about the ones who do surely something can be done?

This is affecting me in so many ways the councils are using what the government has said as an excuse as I know other councils are giving funded places

can you please give an indication of when you expect this funding to be up and running, this information is key.

thank you

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 03 July 2020 19:49

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: 1140 hours

Evening Maree,

I am very upset that Glasgow city council has made the decision to remove the 1140 hours for now even though some neighbouring authorities are offering it. I use a private nursery for my son. This effectively means I am around £3k worse off each year than some of my friends who happen to live in a different post code. It seems incredibly unfair that some children in Scotland are getting these hours for free but others are having to pay. Either all children should get it or none at all is my belief. It feels as if one of the poorest areas in Scotland is being penalised. I often feel like areas such as play parks here in Glasgow are underfunded as it they come with damaged equipment and are badly maintained (for example kings park). Whereas somewhere like rouken Glen is beautifully kept. So this is just another thing that has added to my frustration.

Personally I now have to find other means of care in order to work to pay bills and my mortgage as I cannot afford to put my son and daughter into nursery together for days I was hoping for. This means using grandparents of which during a pandemic is far from ideal.

I can understand if Glasgow didn't have the time to put the training and facilities in place by August but if that is the case could they perhaps consider paying us the amount we are losing out on whilst others children are fortunate enough to receive it. This funding I was led to believe attached the child and should not be spent elsewhere.

I would like to know that this is being discussed further at government level as this is really causing financial difficulties across many individuals which has been worsened by COVID-19. This is not the time to remove the help that parents like myself need.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 22:34

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Child Care Provision

Hi Nicola

I am writing to hopefully gain some clarity after the announcement was made regarding child care provision. I understand the statement was addressing the fact that the full hours entitlement for three year olds cannot be met. please believe I fully understand why that would be the case. However in my area of Troon nurseries have been contacting parents and it has come to light that certain nurseries are able to offer more funded hours than others.

Namely Troon Primary nursery offering two days funded a week against the private nurseries one day. The thought that the funding is not only a post code

lottery but down to simple luck at which box was ticked months ago is upsetting. I have since found out 6 councils are offering the full 1140 hours.

Many children who will be missing out are at private nurseries and have been attending for some time due to parents working. I feel it's important to draw attention to the fact many will have mother's working full time. So essentially women are being punished for this. Actively discouraged from working out with the home. I myself work as [REDACTED]. As a woman it is made extremely difficult to work full-time. This distribution of childcare will mainly punish women like me. I am so proud to live and work in Scotland and as a feminist it gives me huge pleasure that the leader of my country is a woman. So please please consider how to make this fair and how we can enable women to go to work and be leaders.

I would love to hear your thoughts on this and any further information you can provide.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 13:44

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: 1140 hours childcare Ref: [REDACTED]

Good afternoon

Annabelle has asked me to forward this email from her constituent [REDACTED], for your comments.

We look forward to your response in due course.

Many thanks

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

You can read Annabelle's Privacy Statement [here](#)

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 9 July 2020 at 08:57:06 BST

To: "Ewing A (Annabelle), MSP" <Annabelle.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: 1140 hours childcare

Ms Ewing

I was truly disappointed to hear the Government's decision to postpone the 1140 commitment (currently indefinitely as no future date has been announced).

I understand that due to the current pandemic there would have been a delay from the initial date of August. However there does not appear to be any explanation as how this delay has been so significantly extended, so as to not be in place at all during the next school year 2020/21.

This decision to delay such a valuable policy for parents (and children) seems entirely contrary to the Government's stated intentions to get the economy moving and people back in work.

I am currently off on maternity leave with my second child. I would have benefited from the policy come January. I am admittedly in the lucky position where I will be able to return to work and still afford to put both my children into childcare part-time. However, many people won't and this will particularly impact women looking to move back into the work place.

At a time when Governments have been attempting to do more to narrow the gender pay gap, this decision will do the opposite.

I would be grateful if you could provide an explanation for this decision given the impact it will have on countless parents, women in particular.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Baillie J (Jackie), MSP
Sent: 13 July 2020 10:19
To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>
Subject: FAO Maree Todd: Change in Early Education Hours

Dear Maree,

[REDACTED]-Change in Early Education Hours

I write on behalf of a number of my constituents who have got in touch to raise their concerns at the decision taken by the Scottish Government to defer delivery of the 1,140 hours of Early Education childcare in the 2020/21 school year.

Until very recently, parents had been repeatedly told that they would be able to access 1,140 hours of childcare. This allowed them to forward plan and to make commitments such as returning to their own workplaces. Many of their plans have now had to be scrapped due to the announcement that these hours have been reduced. At a time when our economy is in desperate need of reboot and recovery, this decision is forcing predominantly female workers to stay at home.

Furthermore, serious concerns have been raised as to the impact that the decision will have on the development and mental and physical wellbeing of children. Children benefit hugely from the skills that they learn within early education environments and the interactions that they get to have with other

children. These reduced hours will undoubtedly have an impact on their ability to learn and develop.

I would be grateful if you could tell me what the Scottish Government is doing to support parents and children who have been affected by this decision and how you plan to support local authorities so that they are able to implement greater levels of childcare than the current 600 hours.

Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: Scott J (John), MSP <John.Scott.msp@parliament.scot>

Sent: 14 July 2020 14:03

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Delivery of 1140 'funded' nursery hours

Dear Maree

I am writing following contact from a considerable number of constituents who have contacted me expressing their concerns over the Scottish Government's decision to delay full roll-out of the duty to provide 1140 hours of 'funded' childcare from August.

I believe that several of my constituents have contacted you direct regarding this matter, setting out their particular concern over the provision of nursery hours in South Ayrshire, and over the more general impact of the delay in rolling out the duty to provide 1140 hours, so you will perhaps be familiar with the circumstances here.

While I do believe that most people are understanding of the fact that the current Covid-19 pandemic has put considerable and completely unexpected pressures on the capacity and financial ability of government and Councils to deliver on previously announced initiatives, such as the 1140 funded hours commitment, I also believe that parents here in South Ayrshire and across Scotland, must have urgent reassurance that the delivery of these promised 'funded' hours will take place at the earliest possible date.

As you will appreciate, many families have made forward plans, including work plans and family budgeting, based upon the assumption that these 1140 hours would be delivered from August, only to have these plans upset by the announcement last week that this would no longer be the case.

Understanding that you will not be in a position at this time to give me a date on which the roll-out will in fact take place, I do however believe it is essential that it happen as quickly as possible and, on that basis, I do want to add my voice to those urging that the initial assessment of readiness, to be undertaken by the Joint Delivery Board by December 2020, be brought forward.

Certainly, while parents are understanding of the particular pressures at this time, I do not believe their understanding will extend over a prolonged period during

which they have no indication whatsoever as to when all children, no matter where they live in Scotland, will have equal access to the promised 1140 'funded' hours.

I would be grateful for your consideration of this matter and look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards

John

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 09:56

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot

Subject: From 1140 to 425 hours

Dear Mr Swinney,

After following recent developments in the ELC plans I feel compelled to write to you and express my dismay.

My child attends [REDACTED] in Troon, South Ayrshire. Instead of returning to the planned 1140 hours in August, he has instead been offered 2 mornings of 4.25 hours (8am until 12.15pm) for 50 weeks. This equates to 425 hours over the year. The reason for this is limited space for as long as cohorts of 8 are required.

However, even if the cohorts should be removed from the guidance I am completely unclear on how many hours he will be entitled to. Just a mile away in the same town we have one nursery offering 1140 hours and another offering 600 hours. The postcode lottery across Scotland is one thing, but to have such inconsistency within one small town is ridiculous.

How is this getting it right for every child? The unfairness is a bitter pill to swallow. I implore you to do the right thing and make sure every child in Scotland receives the same entitlement - from when nurseries reopen next month, not several months down the line.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 10:22

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot

Subject: 1140 EYC Provision

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my concern over the withdrawal of the 1140 nursery/childcare hours for three and four year olds in Scotland, and specifically in my local authority of South Ayrshire.

My three year old was first of all not accepted to her first choice nursery due to [REDACTED]. She was accepted into our second choice, however they have not been able to provide any other information other than that she has a place. As you can imagine, as working parents with another younger child to arrange care for this has left us in a bit of a dilemma when arranging childcare from August onwards.

To now hear that the 1140 hours do not have to be provided by local authorities is a further blow. Financially we will be out of pocket almost to the point where there will be no financial benefit to both parents in the household working their current contractual hours. Logistically as well the sessions we are likely to be provided with are not working-parent friendly. In our circumstance, I will more than likely have to change my working hours to accommodate and know several other parents in the same position at my workplace alone. Not that it should matter but we are third sector youth justice workers so this would then affect the service delivery.

The 1140 hours is an excellent provision by the Scottish Government and was welcomed and revered amongst all parents I know for its recognition that free or subsidised childcare is needed for working parents to continue working and for other parents to either be motivated into working or studying. The fact that there was a degree in flexibility around the hours at most local authority nurseries was the icing on the cake. This has now all been taken away and left parents in financial and logistical quandaries. Not to mention disappointed for the children who are in desperate need for some socialisation, particularly after lockdown.

Lastly, I am disturbed to read that some local authorities will in fact be providing 1140 hours. Some have committed to less, and some (like mine) have not committed a number which has led to a huge discrepancy across the authority (I have some friends who have been offered 8 free hours per week and some who have been offered 20, the nurseries less than a mile from each other). So apparently children are now being treated differently dependant upon postcode. Personally, I think Scotland can do better than that.

I understand that COVID-19 has had a huge impact on what can be provided, I cannot understand though why the entire policy has been effectively put on the back burner for the foreseeable. Surely it's a case of picking up where we left off at the beginning of March, resulting in a few months delay at most (for nurseries require building works and recruitment). I (and most other parents) would probably be fine with a short delay, as long as this is communicated.

I am not expecting a response to this email, more so that it is noted and added to the (I expect) hundred of others you will receive along the same vein to give the Government food for thought and action for change.

Of course I hope this finds you well, I look forward to hearing updates on the 1140 hours in the next few weeks hopefully.

Kind Regards
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 July 2020 14:19
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot
Subject: Lack of 1140 hours for young children within the Early Years

Dear Mr Swinney,

I am emailing you to express my concern given the decision to postpone the introduction of the 1140 hours for young children within the Early Years setting with no set implementation date for the future. While I understand in many cases there has been a postponement of building work due to Covid and there is a lack of additional space required within nurseries to cover new health regulations, my particular gripe is about a different situation in South Ayrshire.

My grandchild attends a partnership nursery (and that is where her allocated funding is for August 2020) The particular nursery has put in place alterations to support the local authority with the implementation of the 1140 hours, including employing more staff, increasing their resources and expanding their outdoor learning space. This money had clearly been spent on the anticipation of receiving the funding in August 2020. They also have space to allow all the necessary health regulations regarding covid and in fact have been used as a nursery for frontline workers so have shown their ability to do so. We fully expected my grandchild to receive her full allowance of hours, as her friends will who will attend Troon Primary Nursery a short walk from hers will receive. It is totally unfair that some children will receive the hours and some will not just because the council has decided not to fund a fully compliant partnership nursery. It is not because of lack of capacity either as the hours are available in the nursery if the family pay for them. My grandchild has special medical needs and the nursery she is in has coped well with this and you can understand that even if she could change nursery to get her hours (which is not possible) it would be unsettling for this to happen.

I feel my grandchild is being discriminated against and I would like to hear your comment about this as it is surely an unfair situation that her partnership nursery is not being allocated the full funding when it has capacity to provide the hours for her.

Regards
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 July 2020 09:20
To: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary

for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Fwd: 1140 Childcare for working parent

Please read below letter addressed to Dr. Whitford who has yet to return my query. The query and issues below are still outstanding and extremely relevant to all ELC parents facing these unprecedented changes to funding.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 2 July 2020 at 22:30:05 BST

To: philippa.whitford.mp@parliament.uk

Subject: Re: 1140 Childcare for working parents

Dear Dr. Whitford,

I write you in regards to local authorities no longer being legally obliged to deliver 1140 hours of funded childcare from this August. I understand this is being left up to the local government, but south Ayrshire are not disclosing any details of plans for funding for childcare settings until the government announcement on the 30/07/2020 (2 weeks before the children start). As you can imagine, this leaves many parents in limbo in regards to if they will subsequently need to fund childcare when they have not financially prepared to do so.

I have two children, a preschooler and anti pre level for 2020 school year. My husband and I both work full time to cover normal household expenses. Our application for placement for ELC was solely based on the funding our private nursery was to be receiving at the time ([REDACTED]). We would have not have made this choice if we knew the funding would be revoked or only allocated to pilot locations. If no funding goes forward, we would have to fund 2 childcare places, 3 days a week to cover our working patterns. This equates to a £1200 bill that we do not have or would have expected to pay given the SNP childcare changes that were supposed to take affect in Aug.

If these changes of funding were to relieve pressure on the councils preparation of these changes, the cut of funding hours should only impact places that do not have the facilities or staffing levels to proceed with the provision. Are you able to confirm that the SNP government is still going to be funding private nursery and other childcare settings that are otherwise ready for the 1140 launch? How are you going to help parents who are waiting to hear the placing patters and financial impact this change is going to have on their families?

To expect parents to come up with £1200 2 weeks before school starts in order to cover care is extremely disappointing to say the least.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 13 July 2020 17:09

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>; maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot;
John.Scott.msp@parliament.scot; clare.adamson.msp@parliament.scot;
[REDACTED]

Subject: Decision to postpone introduction of 1140 hours free childcare in South Ayrshire

Dear all

I am getting in touch with regards to the removal of the obligation for councils to provide 1140 hours of childcare to 3 and 4 year olds from August 2020 and the disparity which has now emerged between different local authority areas and childrens' access to childcare provision across Scotland.

I am a parent of a 4 year-old who has been with a private nursery provider in the South Ayrshire area since 2017 when I returned to work after maternity leave. Our monthly childcare bill was in excess of £600 most months to allow me to work 3 days a week. This was *with* significant extra unpaid care from grandparents. We were finally able to access the 600 hours free childcare in August last year when my son was 3 and a half. This was enormously helpful in terms of helping us to balance our household budget and repay some debt.

Since the start of lockdown, we have obviously had no childcare and have become aware that South Ayrshire Council will not be providing the 1140 hours we had budgeted for from August. [REDACTED]. This will now be impossible as it would not be financially viable for me to work more than 3 days per week and my partner's employer will no longer be flexible about his full time hours after schools reopen.

The decision to delay the introduction of the 1140 hours in South Ayrshire not only creates huge inequality with other parts of the country, but leaves parents in 'limbo', unable to return to their normal working hours or to tell their employer or clients when they will be able to do so. It also creates a big financial burden for many families and puts (mainly) women at a disproportionate disadvantage in their careers and business opportunities, all at a time when many grandparents (who have previously provided unpaid care to bridge the affordability gap), are shielding.

I would like clarity as to why South Ayrshire Council in particular are unable to commit to the 1140 hours or to provide any indication of whether they will ever do so before my son starts school in August 2021? Our private provider, [REDACTED] is ready to provide the 1140 hours immediately if SAC will agree to fund them.

What has changed since the start of lockdown? South Ayrshire has the same number of nurseries and schools and had presumably recruited and trained the extra early years staff to meet the Scottish Government's commitment. They have had help to furlough these staff so have not had to sack any of them. They have also had as much time as other councils to consider health and safety measures and plans for outdoor learning and adaptation of classrooms.

I and many other parents in South Ayrshire would appreciate clarification on these issues and the opportunity for a two-way dialogue about the future learning of our 3 and 4 year olds. As clients of a private nursery we have had absolutely no contact from South Ayrshire Council on this matter or any virtual support for my son's learning and development during 4 months of lockdown. He is an only child and has had no contact with his peers, so I believe it is very important for him to return to an early years learning environment ASAP.

I find this U-turn on the commitment to 1140 hours childcare to be just another example of how SAC is willing to cut vital services to the detriment of some of its most vulnerable citizens and with little concern for the wider impact on the community and individuals.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 12:30

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Cc: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot; [REDACTED]

Subject: Nursery hours U-turn

I, and my family of four, are residents of South Ayrshire and send my children to [REDACTED]. Both [REDACTED], four, and [REDACTED], one, have attended [REDACTED] since my wife returned to work as a [REDACTED] at the end of her maternity leave. [REDACTED] has now been there for over three years and is well established. He has made friends among the children and among the staff. [REDACTED], who started to walk at nine months and can already speak in four word sentences has made friends there among the children and staff. Both are well established and grounded in [REDACTED]. It would be a wrench to remove them from [REDACTED] and place them elsewhere.

The pledge the Scottish Government made to increase state funded nursery hours from 600 to 1140 was a welcome and much needed policy. In today's world both parents often need to, and want to, work. My wife is devoted to her job as [REDACTED]. I, for my part, am the family's main earner but I my income has been reduced drastically because of the impact of Covid.

When, last year, we learned that the Scottish Government intended to increase the hours to 1140 for council run nurseries and not private nurseries we choose to keep our children in [REDACTED] and use our savings to fund the extra cost. Because of covid our savings are near gone. We will have to review our choices.

The choice to stagger the introduction of the policy with council run nurseries benefiting from the extra state funding was, in my view, an attack on private industry. The further policy u-turn is another attack on private industry and a betrayal of parents all over Scotland. It is the type of government behaviour that

sticks in the throat and leaves a lasting taste. Much like Maggie's poll tax, which was introduced in Scotland a year before England.

Given the impact of Covid has already had on the economy the impact this policy u-turn will have on the nursery sector will be disproportionate. It can only spell disaster. Nurseries will shut, jobs will be lost driving up welfare cost. The council run sector will increasingly struggle to keep up with demand. Quality of provision will fall and the level of care our children receive will fall. It will be the double whammy to the children and the sector.

However, there remains hope that the Scottish Government has time to review this u-turn and keep its policy pledge. The Government has already shown that it is willing to listen to the voice of the people and has pledged to re-open schools fully in August. This is a crucial step in returning the economy to a normal footing. So, I ask the Scottish Government to once again listen to the voice of parents and children of Scotland and keep its pledge to fund the 1140 hours of nursery care for all nurseries, both council run and private.

Yours in hope

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 16:54

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Irrational Approach to funding of Early Years

John Swinney MSP Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills.

Dear John,

Since leaving my last full-time position as [REDACTED], I haven't felt the need strongly enough to direct much communication to Government. However, a situation has been allowed to arise in South Ayrshire which appears to me to be wrong and working against what Government is rightly trying to achieve in creating and supporting people back to work as the "lockdown" eases.

I fully understand the need for Government to reconsider the timing of the full introduction of the 1,140 funded hours of childcare in light of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and in particular the recognition that infrastructure and capacity that should have been in place by now is, in some cases, not yet available. However, South Ayrshire Council appears to be taking a rather random approach to this by providing differing levels of funding to different nurseries. Specifically, there is a partnership nursery in Troon which has invested substantially in additional people and infrastructure in anticipation of the much heralded scheme but is receiving less funded hours than the local nursery co-located in the primary school. The partnership nursery has demonstrated its capabilities in terms of capacity and health regulations by being designated as the

provider for the children of front-line workers. As further evidence of the capability and capacity of the partnership nursery, they are able to accommodate additional hours if these hours are paid for by parents. Over and above the obvious discrimination the Council is exercising, the fact that parents cannot get their children back to nursery so they can return to work without paying is a disincentive to resuming working. This in turn could lead to children being denied the opportunity of returning to nursery and, as has been well expressed by the First Minister, children have, are and will be going through very challenging times as it is.

I have approached you directly because I am concerned that what is happening in South Ayrshire may not be isolated and it might be that it is better for Government to direct or at least advise Councils about this issue.

My best regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 17 July 2020 10:31

To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>; Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>; Freeman J (Jeane), MSP <Jeane.Freeman.msp@parliament.scot>; Greene J (Jamie), MSP <Jamie.Greene.msp@parliament.scot>; [REDACTED] Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: ELC funding

Hello

I would like to share my concerns around the lack of commitment from a number of authorities to the 1140 hours ELC funding. As you are aware the government has delayed the full implementation until a review in December with another 6 months then for this to be further implemented - meaning in all likelihood that this will not be available for some parents at all in this school year.

I think this is outrageous - personally this is going to have a huge impact on me - despite confirmation from the nursery my child has an allocated place at - that they are indeed able to offer the full 1140 hours - they have reported they are unable to do so because South Ayrshire Council have declined to fully fund them to offer the hours.

Unfortunately this is not applied equitably throughout the authority, as many of the nurseries have been validated to offer up to the full 1140 hours whilst others are limited. Concerningly when I speak to other parents it would appear that SAC are favouring their own authority nurseries rather than the private providers. At the moment I am unaware of a single private provider who has been given the authority to offer the full 1140hours, but numerous local authority nurseries have been put in the position to do so. I can confirm that the majority of private providers are in the position to offer the full 1140hours but have not been

authorised to do so - creating massive disparity. If I want to increase from 600 to 1140 I am able to do so, however this will be at my own personal expense.

Whilst I am absolutely accepting that COVID will have had an impact on the authority, I feel it is discriminatory that only those children who are attending authority nurseries will benefit from the proposed increase in early education. My child will be disadvantaged because, as a full time working parent I chose to register him at a private nursery who could provide wraparound care (something that the local authority nurseries are not able to commit to in advance of the school year commencing). I am aware that feedback from the authority concentrates on capacity and the financial impact however given this has been on the table since 2017 I believe this demonstrates a lack of commitment from SAC to fully engage in the process from the outset. The organisation of registration was already extremely poor with many nurseries and providers being kept in the dark until the last possible second, and here we are again with mere weeks until the school year should commence and no notification on finalised plans.

For me personally this reduction in hours will have a huge knock-on effect - as a full time working, single parent this is going to have a major financial impact. My childcare costs are going to be difficult to manage, at this present moment I am unsure how I will proceed. My parents are both elderly, and with significant and deteriorating health conditions, therefore I cannot ask them to provide any assistance with childcare. I had budgeted to afford the wraparound care for my child to be able to attend nursery for the duration of my working hours, however at this point my childcare costs are going to increase by between 30-40%. My original budget would now only have my child looked after until 1pm.

With regards to childcare it is also my belief that this decision will have the biggest impact on working parents - as I would say the majority of working parents have opted to select private providers in the first instance as they are able to commit to the wraparound care - so it is yet another example of working parents being penalised.

An ever increasing number of authorities in Scotland have met the challenge to provide the 1140 hours, so it is extremely disappointing and frustrating that South Ayrshire is operating its own postcode lottery - without thought on the impact to our children.

As a key worker I have worked for the duration of lockdown, juggling childcare, working hours, significant increase in my tasks and responsibilities - happy to play my part. I am absolutely not complaining about this, but for South Ayrshire to then report that their 'contingency' arrangements are basically only to look after their own interests due to financial sustainability - when they have in fact already received the funding for this early learning model to be developed is insulting.

I was fully accepting that the 1140hours implementation was delayed, and accepted that as a parent it is my responsibility to find my own childcare etc, however to come to the realisation that my local authority is running its own postcode lottery - with disparities affecting my child, my child to be disadvantaged with regards to not receiving the early learning that he should be entitled to, and

that some of his peers will receive - not to mention increased financial pressures put on myself. This is where I draw the line.

I hope this is a situation that you will be able to help to resolve going forward, and I look forward to hearing back from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 17 July 2020 09:41

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Early Years Provision

Good morning,

I hope this email finds you well.

I am aware I'm probably slightly late with this email as I know there has been a lot of activity with parents messaging about the issue, but I wanted to also highlight my concerns and disappointment further after finding out today that the nursery my daughter attends, [REDACTED], are only offering us 600 funded hours compared with the original proposed 1140 hours.

Why are different nurseries within SAC being allocated different amounts of money to provide the 1140 provision? The likes of Troon, Dundonald and Symington are offering the 1140 hours (give or take, I think Troon might be 1000 hours). Why is this being unfairly divided across different provisions? The inequality of it all is frustrating. Information on the government website under ELC funding for local government states that the full amount has in fact been allocated to SAC.

Whilst I know the pandemic has had an effect on a lot of things, including some nurseries who were planning to build to accommodate the 1140 hours which hasn't gone ahead yet, I fail to understand how this impacts her nursery in particular, who didn't propose any extra work to be able to accommodate this. In fact, they have added [REDACTED] which has been completed during lockdown. They have the capacity to fulfil it, but have not been allocated it, yet a few streets down to road is a centre that are allocating it.

It's extremely frustrating to see that as a result of this my daughter will be disadvantaged because of the nursery she attends. My daughter [REDACTED] has been an only child living in lockdown since March. Whilst we have been getting out and about for a walk and things, the idea of some normality to rejoin her peer group is exactly what she needs to continue to develop socially and build her confidence and to also enjoy life as a child. Unfortunately unless we subsidise this, now most of that has been taken away from her. How does that keep her in Scotland's best interests. Whilst it has been an utter joy and blessing to spend so much time at home with her, she is more than ready to socialise with friends of her age. Myself, like many other parents have scarified our working careers and

adjusted around childcare and again myself, like many others, shouldn't be expected to pick up the remaining fees when this was promised to us, and arrangements for work and study amongst people have already been made. It will financially impact us hugely as a family. It is literally like cutting the legs from under working mums.

There shouldn't have to be a decision made, but now it will have to be between what is financially affordable and trying to balance it with that of my daughters needs, and that isn't fair, all because the capacity is there, but it just isn't being funded.

I do hope that this can reach out to all relevant people and help build the bridge in correcting this issue.

I look forward to hearing from you

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 20:06

To: John.Scott.msp@parliament.scot; Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot; Brian.Whittle.msp@parliament.scot; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Change to 1140hours policy

Good Evening,

I'm writing to you as a very concerned parent of a 4 year old residing in Troon, South Ayrshire.

In January I was delighted to apply for my 4 year old to attend his private nursery 3 full days a week. Myself and my partner work full time. [REDACTED]

We have worked hard throughout this pandemic, which has been a struggle with our opposing shifts, but my nursery has been there for me. And I will add I have continued to pay in full my child's fees throughout this time.

Having found out this week that the 1140 hours will no longer be offered for my child I have been stressed, upset and angry.

I am stressed as I had to submit a 52 week flexible working plan to my employer which was done in April. These new hours allowed me to progress my career and apply for a new role for which I was successful. Because of the change of hours it means that every week of my plan needs to now be changed as I don't have the childcare anymore. My partner's work is not flexible and so again as a female I am set back in my career and disadvantaged against my male peers. I chose to have a family and have no regrets for this and I have put my child first for the last 4 years. These new hours gave me hope that I could progress my career as I had

increased flexibility with shifts I could work. This has now been taken from me and I may have to change roles again.

However I am mostly upset and angry as I have also learned that Troon Nursery will be afforded the 1140 hours. Barassie Nursery and Muirhead Nursery were also pilot schools for the hours, so although I believe not confirmed, I imagine it is likely they will also receive the hours. As such my child is being disadvantaged because he does not go to a school nursery, which is due to both his parents [REDACTED] and requiring the longer hours. He will risk being behind his peers as they are receiving almost double the hours than him. This surely has to go against the GIRFEC policy and also may mean he is not achieving as much as others.

I feel my child is being punished for elements outwith his or my control. He is being punished for coming from a working family. And he is being punished for going to a private nursery.

At a time when our children should be a priority it appears they were the first thing to be cut.

I wanted to make you aware of the upset and anger which I feel a lot of parents in my position are feeling due to these changes. And although I completely understand the restrictions the Covid Pandemic has caused and the financial strain, this move to not increase nursery hours is only going to worsen that financial strain on families and it is extremely unfair that not all children are receiving the same opportunities as some schools are offering the hours. This is extremely unfair for the children.

I do hope you have kept safe throughout the pandemic and I wish you and your family well and sincerely ask that the change in hour's is reconsidered and the 1140 policy reinstated.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 19:50

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: 1140 hours withdrawal

Dear Sir/Madam,

I'm writing to you regarding the withdrawal of 1140 hours of childcare in South Ayrshire.

I was initially understanding and sympathetic to the struggles that councils are finding themselves placed in due to Covid-19. However, further investigation has revealed the system to be a complete postcode lottery and the complete inequality of the system is frankly shocking. As I am sure you are now aware, local authority nurseries are being allocated far more in hours than private nurseries. My sons

private nursery ([REDACTED]) is only offering slots of three hours 10 minutes which makes it entirely impossible for me to manage with the package offered.

I will have to pay a subsidy which takes one day of care up to £47. Over the cost of the month one day of childcare a week is £188 a month, with a deduction of £50 which is my allowance in restricted hours from the government means that monthly I will pay in £138. £138 for one day a week of childcare when the Scottish governments initial policy entitled my family to 2 & 1/2 completely funded days per week. If I had a Glasgow postcode I would be getting the entire amount paid for. The fact that [REDACTED] can offer additional space shows that they have capacity, just not the funding from the council.

I wouldn't have an issue with paying for childcare if the hours were being restricted across-the-board but they are not and even more shockingly South Ayrshire Council are receiving the entire allowance of hours and therefore money from the Scottish government but not distributing it to nurseries.

I want to know where this money is going and why the choice has been made to give larger funded placements to local authority nurseries. I would also like to see a publish list of all the local nurseries and the hours allocated to them.

Isn't the entire point to get parents back into work by supporting them with a subsidised system? By cutting the funding the council are taking the legs from under hard working parents who have been counting on these hours to make ends meet.

I would appreciate a response at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 13 July 2020 15:55

To: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot; alison.harris.msp@parliament.scot; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<DFMCSE@gov.scot>; John.Scott.msp@parliament.scot

Subject: Delay of Early Years Funding

Good Afternoon,

My name is [REDACTED] and I have a 3 year old son who attends [REDACTED] in Ayr.

I have recently been informed that South Ayrshire Council and the Scottish Government have announced delaying the funding for 1140 hours for all children aged between 3 and 4.

I cannot speak for all parents of children within this age group but I can for myself.

I have used the [REDACTED] for nearly [REDACTED] years spread across my 3 children. People often comment on how well behaved and well mannered my children are and I can only put this down to the support and care they have received growing up with the staff within the chain.

During lockdown I have noticed a massive change in my son [REDACTED]. Days before lockdown [REDACTED] (not COVID related), my husband and I [REDACTED], so safe to say [REDACTED] wee world has been turned upside down. Not being at nursery during lockdown has not helped. [REDACTED] loves going to nursery, looking forward to the next day and dreading the weekends. Not having the routine and time with his friends has changed him. His moods, eating habits and general behaviour has changed dramatically. My husband and I feared we may have to reduce his hours when the nursery re-opened as we couldn't afford the fees - even with tax credit help, and this pained us as we know how much our son loves going. The only light at the end of the tunnel was that in August the free 1140 hours started so the reduction of hours could be temporary. We were then able to budget how we move forward. We could map out a way to get back on our feet and start to get our family life back to as close to normal as we could. So this news shattered us. We may need to find 2nd jobs in order to keep our son's life normal. What I don't understand is with the free hours this reduces the Government's Tax Credit pay outs as I know personally, once declared the free hours my weekly award would reduce. So surely in the long run not delaying this is more beneficial?

I am writing to you all today to beg, plead and urge for this decision to be reversed. To ask of you all to think of all the children involved - for some it is their ONLY interaction with children their own age which at this time of their lives is imperative. They have all been through enough without denying them this time to be children. To learn and be nurtured. Parents need to work to look after their families but cannot with out childcare. Catch 22! So these extra hours help in a way no-one can explain.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your response.

--

Regards
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 19:28
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: Issue with Out of School Care Guidance

Dear Mr Swinney,

I am writing regarding the Scottish Government's guidance on the re-opening of out of school care providers which was published last Friday 3rd July to ask you to reconsider its ruling that "blended placements" (where a child attends more than one out of school care setting) should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. I believe this is overly-stringent and completely unnecessary when one of the placements is an entirely outdoor setting.

When schools resume, my children were due to attend one setting for most of the time when I require childcare and then an entirely outdoor after school care provider, [REDACTED], on a Thursday afternoon. However, this will not now be possible unless the guidance changes.

In particular, I find it hard to understand how young children can be permitted to frequent playparks as often as they like and play with other young children there without the need to socially distance yet under this new guidance, they would not be permitted to attend an entirely outdoor after-school club as a second childcare setting. This is completely inconsistent and if I took my children to the park every Thursday after school instead, which would be completely in line with current public health advice, they would be mixing with an even greater number of children than those they would see each week at the outdoor after school club.

At a time when schools are being actively encouraged to increase their provision of outdoor learning as a means of educating children whilst reducing the risks of spreading Covid-19 which we know are greater indoors, as well as the wide body of research which demonstrates the benefits of being outdoors for children's physical and mental health, I cannot understand why no grace has been given to outdoor settings in this guidance.

I know at least two other families who were planning to use the same outdoor provider as a second setting from August and can only assume that there are many others too. This also must be a great cause of concern to this small business which will already have had its survival threatened due to the lockdown over the last few months.

I know that a review of the guidance is due to be undertaken shortly and updates published by 30th July. As part of this I urge you to reconsider your position on blended placements and to grant an exemption in cases where one of the placements is an outdoor setting.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

(The two other families I referred to above also support this request and have given me permission to include their names and details below)

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 13:33

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Outdoor EYC : blended placements ?

Good afternoon – apologies for directing this frustrated message to you but we are needing some clarity on whether or not blended placements are being

permitted for outdoor nurseries and the people we usually get advice from are not at work just now.

The Monday-Wednesday EYC provision in [REDACTED] – supporting children from the local area and, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, three and four year olds from [REDACTED]. Unfortunately coronavirus stopped play [REDACTED].

We are hoping to start again mid-August and had a full register of children who would be dropped off by parents/carers. (The transporting of the [REDACTED] children is a different hurdle!) However the situation is now that the [REDACTED] school nurseries have sent out registration documents to the parents and SOME have stated there are to be no blended placements, we are finding, understandably, that parents are panicking and signing their children into their school's nursery only. The SG announcement that there would be no further decisions made before the end of July has left us in a difficult situation. It will have a radical impact on whether or not we can afford to offer the service at all, so we are in a Catch22 situation when trying to reassure parents that things may change but they are needing reassurance from decision-makers further up the tree!

It does seem an anomaly that under twelves can play outdoors together, whole school populations are returning in August but blended nursery placements with a fully outdoor nursery are not being permitted/considered. This not just a challenge for the likes of ourselves – a small rural EYC provision but is also going to be difficult for urban outdoor providers as well.

[REDACTED] risk benefit analysis will ensure the children and staff are kept in separate groups of less than 8, hygiene protocols are all compliant with coronavirus guidelines and drop-offs/pick-ups are managed on an individual basis in the car park.

Perhaps you can help ?
Many thanks,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 11 July 2020 09:11

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: OOSC

Morning,

If phase three states

The limit on the number of other households you can meet per day (indoors or outdoors) does not apply to young people who are under 18.

Children aged 11 or under no longer need to physically distance indoors. then why does this not apply to out of school clubs? I am being told the oosc still needs to only have 8 children in a bubble .

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 16:40

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: After school care

Dear Ms Todd,

It is very difficult to make any type of commitment to my employer without knowing what schooling and after school provision there will be for my children. The simple equation is that if I can't work, I can't make money and therefore can't spend to boost our ailing economy.

Our After School Club has so much outdoor space, clean toilets, hard working professionals running it so I really feel that, given the information available to me, I am clever enough to make an informed decision about whether or not the childcare situation is safe enough given the current Covid pandemic.

I need the government to stop trying to control everything. In the attempts to control every aspect of daily life, the civil service is unable to keep up, the Public Health Office is weeks behind paperwork and the general populace is getting fed up.

Please can you allow Nursery's and After School clubs to publicise the risk assessments etc which they have been required to submit. If the parents believe the necessary steps have been put in place they surely they can be allowed to make the decision? If a disclaimer is necessary then why not allow parents to sign one if they wish and get these businesses running again?

I write whilst being similarly frustrated in being unable to see my aunt who is in a nursing home. I haven't seen her since March 17th. The home has written what appears to be a very sensible set of rules and guidelines. Surely if the POA and NOK's of all of the residents agree the home is taking all necessary precautions, then we should be allowed to see our very lonely loved ones. They don't have much time left yet we are all waiting for Public Health to approve the documentation. I appreciate Nursing Homes don't come under your remit but would be grateful if you could forward my email to the MSP responsible.

My husband is a Sports and Remedial Therapist and was allowed back to work on 6July under very strict and acceptable cleaning regulations. He treats people in significant pain and had over 40 appointment booked in within hours of advertising he was opening. On Thursday 9 July Sports Therapists were told to close. Yet the hairdressers, beauty therapists etc can all open next week. Surely pain management is more of a necessity that a beauty treatment. Again, the government has taken decision making out of people's control.

We have kept to every Covid rule throughout but are now being controlled to an unacceptable level.

I'd be very grateful if you could acknowledge our angst and advise me of how you plan to rectify this situation.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

Dear Maree

I am writing on behalf of my constituent, [REDACTED], Grangemouth, [REDACTED] who recently contacted me regarding the current deadline in place for the "Access to Childcare Fund" application which is being overseen by Children in Scotland.

As you can see from the attached letter from [REDACTED], a copy of which I understand she has also forwarded to yourself, she has very real and legitimate concerns regarding the proposed closing date for the submission of applications given the uncertain times that we currently find ourselves in.

I would appreciate if you could look into this matter and give every consideration to an extension of the closing date given the current circumstances.

I have also sent a copy of this to Ms Aileen Campbell MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government for their consideration.

I look forward to your considered response.

Yours sincerely
Angus MacDonald MSP
SNP – Falkirk East Constituency

[REDACTED]

Thursday 9th July 2020

Aileen Campbell MSP

Dear Ms Campbell,

I am writing to share my major concerns, deep distress, and dismay at the regretful timing of the launch of the 'access to childcare fund', being managed by Children in Scotland.

Be assured, I feel the ethos and context of the fund 'to make services more accessible and affordable for low income families and move towards a more rights based, dynamic offer for all children' is of paramount importance, particularly post covid-19 crisis, to both tackling child poverty and building

resilience for these children.

I ask that the timescales attached to the application process be extended. The application opened on Monday 6th July and closes on Monday 27th July. To ensure that the very services (Out of School Care) that should be central to having the most impact on the changes outlined in the fund, can submit well designed applications the closing date should be extended to 28th September 2020. Most Out of School Care Services (OSC) will be unable to apply right now or within the current timescales due to:

- In the current economic crisis OSC are unsure how their model of delivery will look post 30th July when we receive Scottish Government Guidance and know for certain what the school day will look like.
- Most Services will not know if they are able to operate in school buildings, which will have an impact on delivery.
- The majority of OSC are charitable (not for profit) and run with little or no profit margin, they still need to analyse how they can operate if they need to work at a lower capacity. E.G. First 4 Kids SCIO run 3 breakfast clubs, 10 after school clubs and a holiday club. We need to run at 80% of our capacity to breakeven. Changes to the operational model makes us fragile financially.
- The majority of OSC staff are Furloughed so unable to apply.
- Those that are fortunate enough to still have staff working reduced hours are focussed on ensuring their organisation survives to be able to re-open.
- The partners OSC would work with, Family Support, Schools are also Furloughed or on summer breaks.
- OSC will play a crucial part in the economic recovery of Scotland by providing the childcare required for the country to get back to work or retrain. Working towards sustainability of these services needs to come first before such organisations can develop additional operational capacity to meet the needs of these children and their families.

First 4 Kids SCIO has had initial discussions with Family support and

Headteachers regarding how best to use the funding to support children where play would be an appropriate early intervention to improving outcomes for the child and their families, how we would measure it and demonstrate the impact. We are unable to develop this further at present due to the reasons above.

I feel despair that when schools return the number of children who will need such interventions and support will increase dramatically due to the stresses of the covid-19 crisis. The right people to support the mental stresses these children may feel and act out in their behaviour are well trained playworkers in OSC. This 'access to childcare' fund will be hugely important for services to respond, but we need to be able to apply for it in a fair and thoughtful way to ensure best use of the monies available.

I look forward to hearing from you with your thoughts on this extension and my very valid concerns.

Your faithfully

[REDACTED]

Cc: Michael Matheson MSP (Falkirk West)
Angus Macdonald MSP (Falkirk East)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 03 July 2020 09:39

To: Scottish Ministers <Scottish_Ministers@gov.scot>

Subject: Out of School Care Sector

Dear Maree Todd

I am writing to you as a provider of out of school care here in [REDACTED]. I have been operating my business now for [REDACTED] years and accommodate [REDACTED] children per day for after school care and early morning care.

As a sector I know that SOSCN has been campaigning on our behalf to address the concerns and issues we providers have and we are grateful for the hard work they do on behalf. It has been a very difficult and challenging time for all businesses since closure on 20th March.

In particular our sector still to this point this morning have no guidance for our reopening. It's Friday and to be told that guidance will be coming through today just before the weekend is rather crass. We as providers need time to read and absorb the information and the weekend is not the time to do this when we may have family plans. It adds to stress and anxiety as we would not therefore be able to contact our senior teams to discuss this.

We have felt that we are an afterthought in amongst all this planning for businesses to reopen. There has been a lack of understanding from the government about the important role we play in the community for working families. Parents rely on us and need to be able to plan their return to work. Without any guidance coming through we cannot confirm to our families what the model of out of school care will look like.

To be told you may open on the 15th July **if you wish** is ridiculous without guidance. All staff have been on furlough since 20th March so to contact staff; bring staff out of furlough; prepare premises for children's return to ensure it is COVID compliant; arrange holiday care bookings all takes time. Again this statement makes our sector feel we are no more than a glorified baby sitting service.

I am very disappointed at the lack of consideration and reassurance from the government that has been shown for our sector. Without us parents would be unable to work and children would not have the caring and nurturing environment that out of school care provides.

I know I am not alone in my thoughts about how this has been handled.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 13 July 2020 17:28

To: Jamie.Greene@parliament.scot; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childcare Hours

Dear Jamie Greene and John Swinney,

Understandably this has been a very trying time for everyone and I appreciate that it will be quite some time before much of our day to day 'normality' can resume. I also won't get into my opinion of Mr Swinney's poorly timed announcement of

returning to school full time in August. That's a discussion for another day I'm sure.

I am actually writing to you with regards to the situation in which I am sure many parents find themselves with regards to childcare. My own personal situation is that both my husband and I are Secondary school teachers with two children, a 3 year old and a 9 month old. We are very much in childcare limbo at the moment, as I literally finished sending off paperwork for my eldest child's request for allocated hours in nursery along with the necessary paperwork to admit my youngest child.

We are due to start work in 4 weeks and I may not even have any childcare for one of my children, let alone help with the other's hours. I have also had to cut my maternity leave short as come August we are unsure if we can financially cover all childcare costs. We also had intended to move house, which now might be put on hold as there are still so many unanswered questions.

With all due respect, if Mr Swinney can state that we teachers can simply go back to work without even consulting them, then there really should have been some thought put into how childcare would be accommodated for this. And no, not central council hubs, which looked like the case for quite some time. I am happy to do my part and go back to work to look after other people's children and parents would expect me to do that to the best of my ability. I don't think it's too much to ask that the same be considered of my own children.

As I said this is my individual circumstance but I have many friends who will find themselves in a similar situation. I actually shudder to think about those families, especially mothers, who may actually have to consider changing their working arrangements/ career paths as a result of the financial strain this could bring to their families. It often reaches a point whereby women don't even see the merit in returning to their work.

I hope that you will look at how you are tackling this ordeal and put measures in place to benefit families like my own moving forward with the schools re-opening August.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED] (Full time Secondary School teacher and working Mum)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2020 8:25:14 PM

To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>; Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>; Haughey C (Clare), MSP <Clare.Haughey.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: After School Child Care

Dear All,

My name is [REDACTED]. I live in Cambuslang and I am part of the Rutherglen Scottish parliament area.

I am writing to you to ask you to look into the provision of after school care as a matter of urgency. Schools are expected to return full time on August 13th. In order to allow this to happen many parents require after school child care. Blended Childcare restrictions mean that as things stand, children are unable to attend more than one bubble per day. There is another update from the Care Inspectorate and the Scottish government expected on 30/07/20 and the current restrictions may or may not be eased.

At this moment my own after school care provider – [REDACTED] – are unable to plan for reopening as they have not been included in the plan for the return to full time education. Without the provision of after school care my wife and I will struggle to return to normal full time work.

I urge you to include after school care provision as part of the complete return to work plan for the lockdown release.

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 03 July 2020 10:14

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: urgent summer keyworker childcare

Importance: High

Good Morning

I am writing in regard to the fact I have been refused summer childcare care as a cat 1 keyworker.

I am a practice nurse part time in [REDACTED] and also since mid March have been an assessment nurse in the Covid assessment centre based in the [REDACTED]. A few weeks ago we started the Community swabbing team to swab people for covid 3 days before they go to live home in a care home. I am an integral part of the rota. I feel this classifies me as a Cat 1 worker. [REDACTED] have been at [REDACTED] hub since schools closed. Even the start was stressful as they lost my original application so I had to chase quite a few times only to be informally told on a Sunday to just take them on the Monday. I did not receive an email last Thursday as most parents did and only knew about the email hearing another parent talk. I received this after 9 on Friday morning and had to submit by midday. I chose [REDACTED] from the list as my preferred option. I received my rejection on Monday with no reason given. I have since heard [REDACTED] is not opening so don't know why it was an option. I don't know of anyone who has actually been given a place apart from a [REDACTED]? This happened at the start when most people were refused and [REDACTED] ended up being undersubscribed.

I have no other childcare options, my nearest family live 8 hours away and aren't able to travel here as they would normally due to shielding. My other options (sports clubs) are not yet allowed to open. I put all of this on my form but was still rejected. Can you please advise why I would not be a cat 1 worker as most of work is related directly to COVID and what childcare options are available for me now in the next 3 weeks in order that I continue with this work?

Many Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 July 2020 18:20
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Grandsons

First Minister I have a question I'm hoping you can help my mother with. Her Grandson stay in Gloucester and my brother has asked if he could bring them up to her to watch as him and his wife have to work. What she would like to know is can they. This will not be happening until the beginning of August.

Thank you for your time on this.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 July 2020 12:43
To: Central Enquiry Unit <CEU@gov.scot>
Subject: Visits

Good Afternoon, I've been trying to get an answer to this for some time. Can my grandsons come from England for me to watch them for their parents work?

Thank you, [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 June 2020 13:47
To: Todd M (Maree), MSP
Subject: Key Worker Support

Dear Maree,

[REDACTED]. Throughout the recent lockdown we have remained open providing care for around 20 children of 'key' workers and vulnerable children. That has

been quite successful and the support from the government and council has been generally timely, appropriate in quantum and welcome.

However, as we now begin to unwind this arrangement I have one specific issue and it relates to the timing of the end of the key worker support. If support for key workers continues until 11th August, as I am advised is the intention, and meanwhile other parents who return from 15th July have to pay normal fees we will be faced with a very distasteful contrast between those groups. Key Workers have been working and earning throughout and living fee free. Non-key workers have been, in many cases, in reduced financial circumstances but in order to return to paid employment will be obliged to pay nursery fees. Is that fair?

I should declare my position at this stage. My son holds a senior clinical post in an NHS hospital. Certainly he has been working long hours and has been exposed to more risk than most of us. But on the other hand he has had shedloads of overtime and bonus payments. GP's are well paid and over the last three months have probably had much less pressure than they would usually experience but we are giving free childcare. Why? Certainly we appreciate the work of the NHS but I feel that we are going overboard with the hero worship. They were doing their jobs. Difficult for sure but then many of us have times of great pressure and risk at some time in our working lives.

I am a Party Member and I am solidly behind most of what has been done in Scotland. But I believe that this aspect has not been thought through well. I have no idea how I will explain or justify this to any non-key worker parent.

Regards,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 July 2020 20:35
To: Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot
<Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Grandparents

Dear Ms Sturgeon,

I and my husband, are a couple of grandparents, who like many others, are missing the cuddles from their grandchildren. Please can you explain why a single grandparent has earned the right to be in the company of grandchildren, when a couple are being denied seeing their grandchildren? A single grandparent can be in the company of many friends, whilst social distancing, just like a couple or perhaps more than a couple. We, as a couple, have been adhering to your guidelines, by not travelling more than 5 miles, not meeting with others until very recently, going out for our allowed walk, however we know of many who have travelled to Edinburgh, Perth and parts of Fife, have met indoors before the lockdown was eased and of garden parties. Golfers are also travelling more than

5 miles to chase a ball over grass! It appears to be a rule for some and not for others.

Also, there arises the situation, where a childminder, who is also a grandparent, can be looking after 2-3 children, but cannot give their own grandchildren a cuddle due to not being in a 'bubble'!

It has been, and continues to be, very hard not seeing them as we used to. We are missing out on being a part of their lives, doing special things with them and seeing them develop, especially the one year old. The others are 9,6, and 4. I feel we are being treated rather cruelly. Members of Parliament mention peoples' mental health, so who is thinking about grandparents' mental health?

I was rather upset last night, when Jason Leitch, intimated that this social distancing could continue until this time next year, or until a vaccine is found. So, does that mean we are not to be able to cuddle, hug our grandchildren for another year? PLEASE tell me this is not true? PLEASE rectify this situation by letting ALL grandparents, in their twilight years, enjoy quality time with their grandchildren. After all, we may not be here this time next year.

Yours,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 9:23:07 AM

To: Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP

Subject: Grandparents

I am finding the grandparent rules ridiculous considering my husband and I are together all the time, have completely obeyed the rules, in an area with no outbreaks, and yet can't look after our wee ones or even hug them, when our neighbours , because they are 1 grandparent can do all of that just next door. At what point am I allowed to look after them the one day a week we do normally? . We are not even over 70. Have you any idea how heartbreaking it is not to touch them? [REDACTED] has just turned 1. We missed him crawl, we missed him walk. [REDACTED] is 3, we have had a terrifically close relationship with him, now the children hardly know us.

Like us, my son and daughter in law have done everything by the book, and I will not get to return till Nicola says so, that's how good they've been.

Please understand the effect this is having on us. They are struggling all the way, we are extremely bored.

[REDACTED].

202000061411

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 July 2020 14:22
To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>; Forbes K (Kate), MSP <Kate.Forbes.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Key Worker Support

Hi Kate and Maree- my daughter [REDACTED] lives in [REDACTED] and is a key worker with the NHS Scotland in Inverness and hope one of you can help with questions we discussed at a socially distanced BBQ yesterday.

My Grandson [REDACTED] was at the Hub in [REDACTED] and it was a great help [REDACTED] but the Hub is now closed and [REDACTED] has not been advised of any future arrangements for key worker provisions can you advise if future cover is likely?

My Grandson [REDACTED] is getting childminder cover but that ends at the end of July and [REDACTED] is unclear if the new nursery provisions will kick in after that date can you advise?

Sorry to contact you both as I am unsure who is best to deal with this

Cheers [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 June 2020 12:36
To: Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot
<Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Closure of out of school services in [REDACTED]

Dear First Minister

I have a [REDACTED] year old niece who lives in Aberdeen, [REDACTED] has Downs Syndrome. Her family have received the attached letter from [REDACTED] informing them that the out of school services that [REDACTED] has been attending and which have been costing her family over £100 per month is ending with effect from the 3/7/2020.

I am absolutely devastated as are [REDACTED] family that this facility which is a lifeline to her and many others with similar disabilities is being taken away from those in our society who cannot fight for themselves, and it is morally wrong in my opinion that they are being denied this service.

We as a family would be eternally grateful if Aberdeen City Council could see fit to continue the funding for this service and any help you can give to make this happen would be wonderful for [REDACTED] and all those children that this awful decision will have an enormous impact on.

In closing and on a completely personal note can I thank you for the sterling job you are doing in getting Scotland through this awful pandemic, in such a clear and articulate manner.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 19 July 2020 09:04

To: Alison.Dickie@edinburgh.gov.uk; ian.perry@edinburgh.gov.uk; Todd M (Maree) <Maree.Todd@gov.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Liberton After School Club

Dear Cllr Dickie, Cllr Perry, Minister,

I'm writing to express my concern regarding the current restriction on the reopening of Inch House Community Centre, Liberton. I'm particularly concerned at the impact this will have on the children, parents and staff of Liberton After School Club (LASC).

Liberton After School Club provides a vital service for working parents by delivering high quality after-school childcare for Liberton Primary School pupils. For the children, this is a fantastic environment in which to play, exercise, develop and interact with all ages. For working parents this is a critical service that facilitates full time employment. As an Employer, LASC provides employment, training and development opportunities for a number of staff members, many of them young people.

Following the fire and closure of Liberton Primary School, LASC temporarily relocated to Inch House Community Centre. Under difficult circumstances they continued to offer the same high level child care until the community centre was closed due to Covid-19. As these restrictions are lifted, it is vital that LASC can return to a full service as soon as possible.

I'm therefore very concerned that Edinburgh Council currently have no plan to allow Inch House Community Centre to re-open and allow LASC to start operating again. I understand that this is contrary to information provided in The Scottish Route Map stating that all childcare provisions would be able to reopen from 15th July. Currently, we may have to wait until October before the community centre will reopen.

For the sake of our children's mental and physical wellbeing, and the wider economy, we need LASC to start providing childcare as soon as schools reopen in August. The management team have provided a clear and coherent plan to the council, but without success. I urge to to re-consider and do whatever is necessary to resolve this situation before August.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Dear All,

I write specifically with regard to the provision of childcare for my son at Liberton After School Club (LASC) <https://libertonprimary.wordpress.com/parents-information/after-school-club/>

LASC usually operates out of a room in Liberton Primary School, however earlier this year there was serious fire at the school. This resulted in the children having to travel to other schools by bus before returning to the school at the end of the academic day and being collected by LASC who were operating out of Inch House [Community centre | Inch House | Edinburgh](#)

Inch House is literally 200 yards from the Liberton Primary School. Of course, quite soon after the fire, Covid-19 happened and it was all suspended.

My understanding is that despite the fact that the govt wants to encourage schools and child care to reopen and for parents to be able to go back to work. LASC will be prevented from reopening because Inch house community centre will not be reopening.

FYI I am [REDACTED] who as well as boking after my child non-stop since lock down commenced, has also been attempting work full time from home. This has not been a happy situation for me or my son as I'm sure you can appreciate.

In my opinion:

- The info on the routemap seems a bit misleading.
- We really need after school child care well before October when the community centres potentially reopen. This would impair my ability to work from home or from the office.
- LASC are struggling financially and could easily end up closing permanently. In the long term this would mean that I might be faced with dramatically increased child care bill. The day to day service offered by LASC is considerably cheaper than the private sector and in my view better, because more children attend LASC and it is based in the school (so no after school transport issues)
- LASC also offers fundamentally better provision of cover for holiday periods than is offered by the private sector. I do not receive the same amount of holiday entitlement from work as my son gets from school. The private sector in my vicinity doesn't offer a comparable level of care. This would become a considerable headache for me in the future.

It's important that LASC is able to open very soon and survive as an institution. I urge you to please make whatever changes you can to make this happen.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 17 July 2020 12:34

To: 'ian.perry@edinburgh.gov.uk' <ian.perry@edinburgh.gov.uk>; Todd M (Maree) <Maree.Todd@gov.scot>; 'Alison.Dickie@edinburgh.gov.uk' <Alison.Dickie@edinburgh.gov.uk>; 'Ian Murray' <ian.murray.mp@parliament.uk>

Subject: CLOSURE OF LIBERTON AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

Importance: High

Good morning,

I am a parent to one of the pupils that attends Liberton Primary School and also the Liberton After School Club (LASC). I have recently received an email from the Manager of the LASC and I am extremely disappointed and angry that they have been told that they will not be able to operate until at least October.

As I am sure you are aware, the school suffered a terrible fire in February of this year and the LASC was deeply affected by this and had to decant to Inch House. The club has been through a huge trauma, disruption and the staff have been totally amazing throughout, due to their sheer determination to make sure that they continue to provide a childcare service. Inch House have also been extremely welcoming, helpful and are happy for the club to continue using their facilities providing they can get the go ahead with the Council to reopen for LASC to use. However, this has been stopped by the Council to reopen hence no LASC can therefore open.

I am a working mum and rely heavily on the LASC to be open, especially with the schools going back in August. It just seems outrageous that the Council have not thought about this being a vital service to working families. Not only is it a service that I rely on, my son does too as it gives him the opportunity to see and play with his friends as he is an only child. This is so important for his wellbeing and mental health. As you can appreciate, this is extremely important given the current climate.

I fear that if the Council do not act on this quickly, there will not be a service still there in October. I really feel that the Council should seriously look at this more closely and understand the effects this has on parents, children and also the excellent staff that we have at LASC. The staff at LASC are a real asset to the club and it would be a disaster and a real shame if this was to close and jobs were lost. My son has attended the LASC for [REDACTED] years now and we would both be deeply upset especially when this could have been prevented.

All I ask is that the Council / Government put their heads together and think about this rationally and sensibly and understand what this service means to not only me but the whole community.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 July 2020 16:13

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject:

Dear Ms Sturgeon,

I am a sole trader and have been running an Out of School Care from [REDACTED] for the last 20 years. We have been working from the school dining room like so many other After Care services. You may know that with the current situation the councils are no longer leasing school premises. This leaves me and my staff unemployed and around 60 parents without the service. I understand that the cleaning of the school property is a priority but as a valued part of the school community I find it hard that we cannot come to some sort of compromise and work out a way to maintain the high standard of cleaning as always as well as running the service alongside the school.

I have been approached by many of my current parents enquiring about places for their children as they themselves are returning to work and rely on the service I provide.

I know I am not the only service provider in this tricky position, I have searched for alternative premises, etc where to run from but have been unsuccessful. I find it hard to believe that there has not been more media or press attention as so many people will be affected.

In addition to the care service at [REDACTED] I also run another service from other premises, but I will not be able to accommodate all the children from [REDACTED]. in the other service (SRC)

The result of not providing this service will be in making my staff redundant.

I know this is a difficult time to request your assistance in this matter but I do respectfully ask for your help in the above subject.

I would appreciate an early response as the school term time is about to commence.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 17 July 2020 18:20

To: alison.dickie@edinburbh.gov.uk; ian.perry@edinburgh.gov.uk; Todd M (Maree)

<Maree.Todd@gov.scot>; ian.murray.mp@parliament.uk

Subject: LASC CHILDCARE

I am writing with regard to the above childcare service.

As a working parent so it is important to have reliable childcare. I am [REDACTED] and as such I normally work while they are at school and am independent apart from school holiday cover at which time I use LASC as my boys attend Liberton Primary School. I am sure you are aware that Liberton Primary School have had a very disruptive year which started prior to Covid. As a school community they tried to make improvements and alterations to accommodate a growing intake in the constraints of an aging school building. Sadly in the midst of these improvements there was a devastating fire which thankfully didn't injure anyone but the school suffered greatly.

My children attended the LASC during the February holidays in the Inch House Community Centre. While the setting was different, the staff were positive, enthusiastic and supportive of the children during this disruptive period. In the time following this the children were displaced to three locations for schooling until Covid closure.

Now for my own situation... I am a "keyworker" based that the [REDACTED], I have been unable to work during the pandemic as my support network was not available. No school, no LASC, no family due to shielding grand parents topped with [REDACTED] keyworker hubs were not a solution for us. It has been a long, isolated four months for my family.

I was aware of the Scottish Route Map for childcare provisions reopening on the 15th of July and am keen to obtain childcare to return to work, to get my children outdoors and playing with their friends, to get some form of normality in our lives. I am also hopeful to change my working schedule and that would mean I would rely on more frequent support from LASC. As such I feel it is a massive injustice to hear that as community centres will not reopen to groups LASC will not be able to operate until October. Had they been in their usual premises of Liberton Primary School would have been able to operate from now?

This service is essential to many families, keyworkers, home workers etc and while I find the situation stressful it must be difficult for the staff to deal with the uncertainty of their jobs. During the lock down period staff have supported the children with many online resources via Facebook, email and youtube. It is so obvious they care deeply for the children.

Personally currently my [REDACTED] rarely leave the house, they need a return of some normality, reassurance of familiar faces of staff and peers and I need childcare to return to work, as such I feel the information implied I could plan this after the 15th of July not on return of schools or October. Once again South Edinburgh and Liberton Primary School children are suffering.

Yours
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 July 2020 12:09

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Early Years Education

Dear Nicola Sturgeon,

I think you've been doing a good job under very difficult circumstances, most people I know are happy to follow the science and come out of lockdown at this slightly slower, more sensible pace.

I'm writing because I've just seen East Lothian Council's (ELC) update on early years childcare. They only updated the website, they haven't yet directly contacted those of us impacted, which is in itself inexcusable.

Your aim now is for schools to go back full time in August, as long as the science backs that up. This is the smart course of action, however ELC are refusing to apply the same to nurseries. They are claiming that because the Scottish Govt didn't explicitly mention early years in their announcement, that it doesn't apply to them. ELC nurseries are often within the Primary Schools, if the science is saying it is safe for primary kids to return to school with no social distancing, then it has to follow that it's the same for nursery children. These children often have older siblings so won't be socially distant from them. By August, hopefully, they won't be socially distancing from their friends outside of school. Why should it be necessary for 4 year olds to be subject to more rigorous rules than 4 and 5 year olds in Primary 1?

Preschool nursery is supposed to prepare children for going to school, sending them in for 2 full days at nursery, followed by 5 days at home is absolutely failing to prepare them for school. Also, by August they will have been at home for 6 months, two full days of nursery will exhaust them, they will be emotional and need support and at that age, that means cuddles. Are their teachers going to refuse to cuddle them when they've previously been allowed to? That will be incredibly damaging to young children.

ELC have also said that this new set up has reduced their capacity so some children who have already been in nursery may now no longer have a space. They haven't bothered to tell us who is affected by this. There's no hint of how long it's going to take them to decide either. Parents can't possibly plan to return to work with this level of uncertainty.

ELC were intending to implement a 48 week model for the 1140 hours in Longniddry, which was going to be of no use to most parents. No-one is going to send a child to nursery during school holidays when they have other children at home, so that means schools were going to be open and staff required to sign new contracts all at vast ongoing cost, for a service almost no parents wanted. ELC said early on in the lockdown that they would no longer offer us the 1140 hours in Longniddry. The obvious course of action should have been to continue with the existing set up, i.e. younger children in afternoons and older preschool children in mornings. That's what they need to be doing in August.

When ELC refused to implement the term time model for 1140 hours, which was favoured by both parents and staff, they claimed it was because they lacked the catering provisions for the nursery children. How are they intending to ensure the children are properly fed now?

I understand there will be teachers and non teaching staff who need to continue to shield and I entirely agree that they should do. However, if the science is saying it is ok for primary children to return to school full time, then the same risk assessment must apply to children in the nurseries next door. To aim for 2 full days only and disrupt preschool children by refusing to allow them to return to the nursery they've already been attending is unacceptable. To not communicate to affected parents is inexplicable.

Please reconsider the current guidance, the same sensible approach must be applied to early years children, or we'll have an entire year of children utterly unprepared to begin school and parents who cannot work effectively for another year. Nursery children must return to their own nurseries as normal, in the same way Primary and Secondary children are. This current approach is failing children, parents and the economy.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 07 July 2020 12:14

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Note from Michelle Brown to your Facebook Page Fergus Ewing MSP - SNP.

Maree Todd MSP
Minister for Children and Young People

Dear Maree,

I would be grateful if you can read my constituent [REDACTED] email.

As you can see, her issue is that come August her youngest will not be allowed the same ELC education that his older sister had due to blended placements not currently being allowed. As an NHS worker [REDACTED] relies on private nursery during school holidays hence my oldest had benefit of year round nursery at private one but also some time in the school nursery.

She urges the government to see how frustrating this is for families and ask for reinstatement of blended placements for ELC at the earliest opportunity. [REDACTED] argues that it does not make any sense to allow children to freely play over the holidays then put more pressure on working families come August.

I would be grateful for your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Fergus Ewing MSP
Inverness and Nairn

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 07 July 2020 10:01

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Note from [REDACTED] to your Facebook Page Fergus Ewing MSP - SNP.

Thank you for replying. Yes I would be delighted if this was raised as I know others are affected by this both in terms of using 2 nurseries or using childminders and nurseries.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

On Tue, 7 Jul 2020, 09:52 [REDACTED] wrote:

Good Morning [REDACTED],

Thank you for emailing Fergus about this matter. I understand the pressures you have outlined here.

Fergus would like to take this up with the Education Minister for Childcare and Early Years on your behalf, would this be in order? I think it would be a good idea to communicate your experience.

I hope this finds you well.

With kind regards,

[REDACTED]

**Office Manager to Fergus Ewing MSP for Inverness and Nairn
Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Tourism**

CONSTITUENCY OFFICE:

112 Church Street

Inverness

Highland

IV1 1EP

PARLIAMENTARY OFFICE:

T3.05

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP

Email: [REDACTED]

N.B Working from home

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 06 July 2020 15:58

To: Ewing F (Fergus), MSP <Fergus.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Note from Michelle Brown to your Facebook Page Fergus Ewing MSP - SNP.

Afternoon.

I am sure this will make no difference however I am so frustrated I need to raise this issue.

I appreciate the work that has been done during COVID however I now feel our children and working families have been forgotten. It is brilliant news my children (3 and 6) can now play freely with their cousins and friends over the summer. My issue is that come August my youngest will not be allowed the same ELC education that his older sister had due to blended placements not currently being allowed. As an NHS worker I rely on private nursery during school holidays hence

my oldest had benefit of year round nursery at private one but also some time in the school nursery.

I urge the government to see how frustrating this is for families and reinstate blended placements for ELC at the earliest opportunity. It does not make any sense to allow children to freely play over the holidays then put more pressure on working families come August.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 19:20

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Coronavirus: Sturgeon 'deeply regrets' free childcare delay

As a parent relying on the availability of the promised childcare hours I am deeply appalled at this now being delayed as my son will not require childcare next year when starting school, I require the hours now.

As working parents contributing to the governments funding through taxable income and other means I expect a government to uphold their commitments as I continue to uphold my commitments working and contributing to society

I would like an explanation fo the following

Why is it delayed for up to a year if Covid only impacted approx 3 months

Nurseries communicated only 2 months ago that despite Covid they would still be able to honour the hours - what has changed?

Why do you continue to offer free hours and additional hours to families on benefits when they more than likely do not require the childcare if they are not work, I understand there are members of society for whatever reason do require childcare but cannot work, but I am also aware that there are members of this society that continue to abuse the benefits system and we continue to enable this behaviour

If schools can return to the new norm by August why can't other arrangements be fulfilled such as the additional childcare hours

My understanding is the Scottish government will receive £800m from the UK government as a result of new support measures announced today, what will this be spent on? Why can't some of this be used to fund the childcare hours. I believe the annual cost of this could be in the region of £840m therefore why can't the hours be increased by a proportion even if the full amount can not be delivered. There had been no compromise or partial change, you have completely revoked this with no middle ground or attempt to provide some kind of support

I look forward to a response. I would urge you to reconsider delaying this scheme, a slight increase in hours or implementation of this later in 2020 would serve such a benefit to working families, I would also like to understand what consultation process followed that enabled the decision to remove the scheme from the school term 2020-2021

Regards

[REDACTED]

Glasgow (Southside)

Sent from my iPhone

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:27

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Greenock

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister: DFMCSE@gov.scot

Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People: MinisterCYP@gov.scot

DMcMillan SM (Stuart), MSP Stuart.McMillan.msp@parliament.scot

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Inverclyde.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:47

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on blended childcare

[REDACTED]

Renfrewshire

[REDACTED]

Dear Maree Todd,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools [from 11 August](#) (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of 5 children and 4 families that I currently support in Houston

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

ELC funded and registered childminder.

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 10:43
To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Cc: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: I am sharing 'BLENDED CARE EMAIL 080720' with you

Dear Mr Swinney

Please find attached my letter to you regarding the blended care position on my childminding business which effects myself and all my families.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as is possible.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
South Queensferry
EDINBURGH
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Mr John Swinney
The Scottish Government

Dear Mr John Swinney MSP

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the children and families that I currently support in South Queensferry.

I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 11:18

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: I am sharing 'Letter Template from SCMA_Blended Care Restrictions on Childminding.docx' with you

Shared from Word for Android

<https://office.com/getword>

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy S10 - Powered by Three

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[REDACTED]

Dear Maree Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 5 families that I currently support in Livingston. I would like to point out I have worked pretty much throughout lockdown for key worker families and now with more families back (4 families at only 1 time) it would be devastating to my business & to the parents who need to go to work, if when the schools return I was not able to continue this support!

It would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 11:30

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminders

[REDACTED]

Inverness

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Madam -

Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery and school) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

we also need to know if we be able to return to our normal number of householders, in order to provide care to all the families who are now returning to their work places. All Childminders guidelines still remain for phase one, with max of 4 households. we are now going into phase three.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will hugely struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy. This is my career and my only income and I have spent nearly 10 years building up my reputation and career.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus.

However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the impact of COVID-19 on families and us smaller childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if the restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11th August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childminding sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 9 children (8 households over a week) . Some of which are key workers, in Inverness. Out of my 9 children 6 children are of school age and would still need childcare after school.

As Minister for Children and Young People

I would please ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11th August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus), and to also give dates as to when or if we will return to our normal number of households in order to provide care to all the families who are now returning to their work places. Childminders guidelines still remains the same for phase one, we are now going into phase 3 will things change for us?

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 13:19

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended childcare

Dear Maree Todd, MSP, Minister for Children and Young People

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the four children and three families that I currently support in Kilmarnock, East Ayrshire.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]
Kilmarnock
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 13:16

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children and Young People
<MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Letter Template from SCMA_Blended Care Restrictions on Childminding
(1).docx

Please find letter attached.

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[REDACTED]

Linlithgow

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 6 children and families that I currently support in Linlithgow.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:49

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care restrictions

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Cumbernauld,

[REDACTED]

08/07/2020

Dear Marie Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the

Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Cumbernauld.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended

care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 12:24

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: BLENDED CARE RESTRICTIONS

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

08/07/20

Maree Todd MSP
M4.03
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1

Dear Sir / Madam, [Maree Todd](#)

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the

Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 15 children and families that I currently support in [BAILLIESTON AND SURROUNDING AREA](#).

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 12:40

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<DFMCSE@gov.scot>; Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>;
Shona.Robison.msp@parliament.scot

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Dear Mr Swinney, Ms Todd, and Ms Robison,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed **are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.**

I personally have had one family leave already and have another family who will have no choice but to leave soon if the blended care restrictions aren't lifted. Not only will I lose their current child but also their second child who was due to join my service. In addition, I'm having to turn away families who are looking for blended childcare so they can return to work. This is desperately frustrating as offers of work for me have been very much reduced since the government increased the amount of free funded hours of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) to 1140.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I truly have very much supported and appreciated the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the families that I currently support in Dundee.

As my representatives, I would ask that you urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Dear Maree Todd MSP,

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 5 families that I currently support in East Kilbride.

As my local representative, I would ask that you urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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For more information please visit <http://www.symanteccloud.com>

Dear Maree

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 5 children and families that I currently support in the west Dunfermline area.

As my local representative, I would ask that you urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Dunfermline

Fife

[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Livingston

West Lothian

[REDACTED]

8th July 2020

Dear Maree Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in Livingston.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended

care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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Dear Mrs Todd.

I really hope you can make the government see sense that children will be better cared for in the well controlled and managed childminding setting to facilitate parents to return to work full time. Failure to allow blended care will result in parents not being able to work full-time and therefore negate the point in the schools returning full time.

I really hope you can help

Please see my letter attached

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Aberdeen

[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 14 children and families that I currently support in Milltimber. I fail to see how being looked after in my small, before and afterschool childminding setting, with no more than 7 children (3 of which are my own) can be of concern. I will be operating within stringent controls as identified on my Risk Assessment for Covid -19 to ensure the children in my care minimise contact and will largely be entertained outside. We all know that childminders can better control smaller groups of children than can be managed in the class room environment with 25 other children. Also out of school if not in a formal managed and governed setting like a childminders the children will all be congregating and playing in large groups at the local parks. The aim of the schools going back full time was to facilitate parents getting back to full time work. If blended learning restrictions are not lifted parents will only be able to work between 09:30 and 14:30 thus negating any benefit of the schools reopening full time.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8th July 2020

Dear Maree Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 4 children and families that I currently support in Livingston.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 15:55

To: Cole-Hamilton A (Alex), MSP <Alex.Cole-Hamilton.msp@parliament.scot>

Cc: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>; Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Blended childcare.

[REDACTED]

South Queensferry

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8TH July 2020

Dear Mr Cole- Hamilton

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and 5 families that I currently support in South Queensferry.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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FAO
Marie Todd MSP
Minister for Children and young People

Dear Madam,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the nine children I currently support in Linlithgow, West Lothian.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms Maree Todd,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 11 children and families that I currently support in Dumfries and Galloway.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Childminder.

Dear Madam,

The current restrictions on blended care/placements(i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. I have already lost 2 families as a result of the impact of COVID-19.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. By attending my setting they will be mixing with far less children than at school/ nursery or before and after school care. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the remaining needs of the 3 children and support 2 key worker families in Dunfermline. I love my job and have worked hard to build up my business. I would hate to have to have to close and look for other work because of this.

I would ask that you urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Inverness

[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

Dear Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in the [REDACTED] area of Inverness.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 7:43:44 PM

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]

Inverness

[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

Dear Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in the [REDACTED] area of Inverness.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2020 6:09:36 PM
To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Blended care

[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

Dear Madame, Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in Ratho.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
8 July 2020

Dear Sir / Madam,

John Swinney MSP
Maree Todd MSP
Keith Brown MSP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable

in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 6 children from 4 families that I currently support in Clackmannanshire.

I would urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Registered Childminder

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[REDACTED]
08/07/2020

Dear Ms Todd,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in Irvine.

I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Care Inspectorate Registration; [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Stirling

[REDACTED]

08/07/2020

Marie Todd

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in Stirling.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

8th July 2020

Dear Sir/madam

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue

after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools [from 11 August](#) (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of 7 different families that I currently support in [Gorebridge](#).

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return [on 11 August](#) (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Glasgow

[REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED]

9th July 2020

Dear Ms Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable, going from 8 children (2 to 3 children have attended during COVID19 under Keyworker and Vulnerable Children to date) to one child and it is unlikely that the one will not remain as his brother would not be able to attend, therefore I will have no children and no point to continue as a childminder, my husband is also self-employed working in Home maintenance with no work coming in at present which will leave us no alternative but to apply for benefits for the first time in our married life of 36 yrs . This will have an adverse effect on me and the families I support, one of which is a young person with Autism who has attended my service since he was 5yrs old he is now 15yrs and I am working on transition with him, I am also working with a child with Speech, language and Behavioural issues and as for the parent who is returning back to College to finish her second year in Social work what is she going to do, as for the impact on the local economy, Parents who cannot work or return to college cannot spend as will be the case for myself and my family, this is going to kill Childminding and to say this has caused upset, concern and anxiety to me and

my family is an under-statement as for my minded families this is going to have a massive impact on them.

I have VERY much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of 8 children from 6 families covering the Springboig, Greenfield, Shettleston and Carntyne areas of the city.

As Minister for Children and Young People I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

Please note that as of Fri the 10th of July it is my duty under my terms and conditions to provisionally give my parents a months' notice of closure as of the 11th Aug 2020, I will now have to prepare my minded children of this decision also and make it clear to my parents that I have no alternative to close due to the decision of the Scottish Government .

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Reply
,
Reply all
or
Forward

Send
[]
9

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Dear Deputy First Minister John Swinney, Minister CYP Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends our childminding services and another settings such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are

causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families we support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, our childminding services will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on the Childminders of this Forum Area, the families we support and on the local economy.

We have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

We believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the children and families that we currently support in the North/East Forum area of Glasgow .

As Ministers, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Maree Todd
MSP
Minister for Children and Young People

Dear Madam

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 18 children and 12 families that I currently support in Bonnyrigg. I have been open throughout the lockdown period providing vital care for children of keyworkers and helping and providing school work and supporting the children with their learning.

I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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Please find the attached letter with the importance of change and the affects of the restrictions on blended care for this coming august.

I look forward to your response

[REDACTED]



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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

09.07.20

Dear Maree Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the seven different children and families that I currently support in Broxburn. This also affects me as a parent as my child will also attend a local nursery setting.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on

blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9th July 2020

Dear Ms Maree Todd Minister for Children and Young People

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 6 families that I currently support in the Carntyne, Shettleston, Barlanark and Tollcross area of the East End of Glasgow

As Minister of children and young people, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED] Registered Childminder



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Reply

Forward

URGENT! Blended Childcare Concerns

(No subject)

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 11:02
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject: PARENTS LETTER TO SCOTTISH MINISTERS AS TO BLENDED
CHILDCARE

For the attention of minister of children and young children Ms Maree Todd

See attached

Thanks

[REDACTED]

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9th July 2020

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister & Ms M Maree Todd
Minister CYP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the

Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for the childminding service that I use to provide vital Childcare provision.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, I will struggle to find alternative childcare provision in order for me to continue with my employment, I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector and removal of this restriction on blended care is required to maintain childcare provision in order for parents to go back to employment or training as not all employees can work from home.

As Ministers I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 14:18

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;
Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice Inbox x

Dear Deputy First Minister John Swinney, Minister CYP Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends our childminding services and another settings such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families we support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, our childminding services will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on the Childminders of this Forum Area, the families we support and on the local economy.

We have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

We believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to

meet the needs of the children and families that we currently support in the North/East Forum area of Glasgow .

As Ministers, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 22:58
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject:

Please see attached. My son is Autistic and needs routine within his day to day life. These few months have been hard enough to adjust to without these changes going back to school.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

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9th July 2020

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister & Ms M Maree Todd
Minister CYP

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for the childminding service that I use to provide vital Childcare provision.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, I will struggle to find alternative childcare provision in order for me to continue with my employment, I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector and removal of this restriction on blended care is required to maintain childcare provision in order for parents to go back to employment or training as not all employees can work from home.

As Ministers I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 21:06

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminding blended placement concern

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse impact on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time

return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the [insert the number of children and families you support] children and families that I currently support in [insert your local area].

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 13:05
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr Richard Lockhead

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my

childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 9 children and 8 families that I currently support in [REDACTED], Moray.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Swinney J (John), MSP
Sent: 08 July 2020 10:39
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: Restrictions on blended childcare

[REDACTED]

Personal Assistant to John Swinney
MSP for Perthshire North / Deputy First Minister / Cabinet Secretary for Education & Skills

Tel: 📞 [REDACTED]
www.johnswinneymsp.com / www.scottish.parliament.uk



Before you print think about the ENVIRONMENT

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 10:36
To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Restrictions on blended childcare

[REDACTED]
Renfrewshire
[REDACTED]

Dear John Swinney,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools [from 11 August](#) (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of 5 children and 4 families that I currently support in Houston

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

ELC funded and registered childminder.

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From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Swinney J (John), MSP
Sent: 08 July 2020 10:45
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: FW: I am sharing 'BLENDED CARE EMAIL 080720' with you

[REDACTED]

Personal Assistant to John Swinney
MSP for Perthshire North / Deputy First Minister / Cabinet Secretary for
Education & Skills

Tel:  [REDACTED]

www.johnswinneymsp.com / www.scottish.parliament.uk



Before you print think about the ENVIRONMENT

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 10:43
To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Cc: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: I am sharing 'BLENDED CARE EMAIL 080720' with you

Dear Mr Swinney

Please find attached my letter to you regarding the blended care position on my
childminding business which effects myself and all my families.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as is possible.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

Mr John Swinney
The Scottish Government

Dear Mr John Swinney MSP

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding

businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the children and families that I currently support in South Queensferry.

I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir John Swinny msp deputy first minister.

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 6 children and 6 families that I currently support in Livingston west lothian. Parent I have spoken to would need to leave employment. Key worker.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely, [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 11:17

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: I am sharing 'Letter Template from SCMA_Blended Care Restrictions on Childminding.docx' with you

Shared from Word for Android

<https://office.com/getword>

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[REDACTED]

Dear John Swinney

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 5 families that I currently support in Livingston. I would like to point out I have worked pretty much throughout lockdown for key worker families and now with more families back (4 families at only 1 time) it would be devastating to my business & to the parents who need to go to work, if when the schools return I was not able to continue this support!

Il would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 11:45
To: McDonald M (Mark), MSP <Mark.McDonald.msp@parliament.scot>; Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Important Blended care

Hi
Please find below a letter regarding the effect on childminders that non blended care will have

King Regards

[REDACTED]

The Scottish Parliament: Making a positive difference to the lives of the people of Scotland
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba: A' toirt deagh bhuaidh air beatha sluagh na h-Alba

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[REDACTED]

Date 8/7/2020

Mark MacDonald

Dear Sir / Madam, MSP

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 6 children and families that I currently support in Stoneywood, Bucksburn.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 13:18

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;
Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Fwd: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice.

Dear Mr Swinney, Maree Todd,

Please see the attached document outlining my concerns regarding the Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

Childminder

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 8 July 2020 at 12:07:33 BST

To: "angela.constance.msp@parliament.scot"

<angela.constance.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice.

Dear Angela

With regards to Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice, please see the letter attached.

I look forward to your assistance in this matter.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 11:28

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminders

[REDACTED]

Inverness

[REDACTED]

08 / 06 / 20

Dear Sir -

John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister:

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery and school) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

we also need to know if we be able to return to our normal number of householders, in order to provide care to all the families who are now

returning to their work places. All Childminders guidelines still remain for phase one, with max of 4 households. we are now going into phase three.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will hugely struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy. This is my career and my only income and I have spent nearly 10 years building up my reputation and career.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus.

However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the impact of COVID-19 on families and us smaller childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if the restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11th August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childminding sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 9 children (8 households over a week). Some of which are key workers, in Inverness. Out of my 9 children 6 children are of school age and would still need childcare after school.

As Deputy First Minister, I would please ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11th August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus), and to also give dates as to when or if we will return to our normal number of households in order to provide care to all the families who are now returning to their work places. Childminders guidelines still remains the same for phase one, we are now going into phase 3 will things change for us?

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 12:19

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: BLENDED CARE RESTRICTIONS

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

08/07/20

MR John Swinney MSP
T4.23
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Sir / Madam, [Mr John Swinney](#)

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 15 children and families that I currently support in [BAILLIESTON AND SURROUNDING AREA](#).

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:47

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: blended care restrictions

[REDACTED]

08/07/2020

Dear John Swinney

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the

Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As

such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Cumbernauld.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:27

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]

08/07/20

John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister: DFMCSE@gov.scot

Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People: MinisterCYP@gov.scot

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Inverclyde.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 12:23

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]

John Swinney

Scottish Parliament

Holyrood Edinburgh

EH99 ISP

Dear John

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial

sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the six families that I currently support in Larbert.

As my local representative, I would ask that you urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in well in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

With thanks, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 July 2020 13:44
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject: Blended Care Impact on Childminding

Please see attached letter,
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

10th July 2020

Maree Todd MSP
Minister for Children and Young People
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP
Dear Ms Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day. This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse impact on the wider out of school care sector. Following this SCMA called on the Scottish Government to urgently make an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

In response to this, the Scottish Government has now stated that it "hopes to be in a position to lift the restrictions on blended placements alongside the return of schools subject to expert advice and suppression of the virus and will confirm by 31 July whether this restriction can be lifted at the same time as schools return".

While this a positive step, I do not believe this commitment goes far enough. We (childminders and parents/carers) need clarity that all restrictions on blended care will be lifted on childminding settings before the schools go back, so that these are allowed and childminders are able to drop off and pick up children. In addition, it is essential that the Scottish Government also takes account into the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

Removal of these restrictions on blended care are required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 9 children and 5 families that I currently support in [REDACTED].

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to fully commit to removing all restrictions on blended care, subject to ongoing progress in suppressing the virus and also to including the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Fee M (Mary), MSP
Sent: 08 July 2020 11:19
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Restrictions on blended care

Good morning,

Please find below an email to Mary with regards to the constituent's childminding business.

Mary would appreciate if you can provide an informed response to take back to Ms Rix.

With kind regards
Angela

[REDACTED]
Office Manager / Lead Caseworker

The office of Mary Fee MSP (West Scotland)
Shadow Minister for Skills, Health, Sport and Equalities
NEW ADDRESS:
Mirren Chambers
Third Floor
41 Gauze Street
Paisley
PA1 1EX

[REDACTED]

www.maryfeemsp.com

 Before you print this email think about the environment

Mary Fee MSP is registered as a data controller with the UK Information Commissioner and the reference number is: Z3318237. Any personal data is processed under the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (the GDPR), the Data Protection Act 1998 and any Act that replaces the Data Protection Act.

If you would like to view Mary's privacy statement, then please request a copy by emailing Mary.Fee.msp@parliament.scot

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:33

To: Fee M (Mary), MSP <Mary.Fee.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on blended care

[REDACTED]

Dear Mary Fee,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of 5 children and 4 families that I currently support in [REDACTED].

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

ELC funded and registered childminder.

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 15:42

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care Restrictions on Childminding

Dear Maree,

Sorry about that, hope this works.

Many thanks for getting back to me regarding this problem.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This email has been scanned by the Symantec Email Security.cloud service.

[REDACTED]

Livingston
West Lothian
8th July

Dear Sir / Madam,
Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the eight children and four families that I currently support in Livingston.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Please see attached letter how the current restrictions on blended care will impact on my childminding business.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]
Childminder

[REDACTED]
Cumbernauld
Glasgow
[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

Maree Todd
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Ms Todd

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Cumbernauld.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Childminder

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 15:16

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care Restrictions

Dear Maree Todd

Please find attached letter about Blended care restrictions for childminders

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Taylor

This email has been scanned by the Symantec Email Security.cloud service.

[REDACTED]

10th July 2020

Maree Todd

M4.03

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP

Dear Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day. This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse impact on the wider out of school care sector. Following this SCMA called on the Scottish Government to urgently make an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

In response to this, the Scottish Government has now stated that it "hopes to be in a position to lift the restrictions on blended placements alongside the return of schools subject to expert advice and suppression of the virus and will confirm by 31 July whether this restriction can be lifted at the same time as schools return".

While this a positive step, I do not believe this commitment goes far enough. We (childminders and parents/carers) need clarity that all restrictions on blended care will be lifted on childminding settings before the schools go back, so that these are allowed and childminders are able to drop off and pick up children. In addition, it is essential that the Scottish Government also takes account into the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

Removal of these restrictions on blended care are required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 20 children and 17 families that I currently support in Aberdeenshire.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to fully commit to removing all restrictions on blended care, subject to ongoing progress in suppressing the virus and also to including the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Can this be added as an OR

Thanks

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 15:11

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care Restrictions

Dear John Swinney

Please find attached letter about blended care restrictions for childminders

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

10th July 2020

John Swinney

T4.23

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP

Dear John Swinney

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day. This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse impact on the wider out of school care sector. Following this SCMA called on the Scottish Government to urgently make an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

In response to this, the Scottish Government has now stated that it "hopes to be in a position to lift the restrictions on blended placements alongside the return of schools subject to expert advice and suppression of the virus and will confirm by 31 July whether this restriction can be lifted at the same time as schools return".

While this a positive step, I do not believe this commitment goes far enough. We (childminders and parents/carers) need clarity that all restrictions on blended care will be lifted on childminding settings before the schools go back, so that these are allowed and childminders are able to drop off and pick up children. In addition, it is essential that the Scottish Government also takes account into the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

Removal of these restrictions on blended care are required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 20 children and 17 families that I currently support in Aberdeenshire.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to fully commit to removing all restrictions on blended care, subject to ongoing progress in suppressing the virus and also to including the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 21:06

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;
Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: For the attention of Deputy First Minister Mr John Swinney

For the attention of Deputy First Minister Mr John Swinney

MinisterCYP@gov.scot

for the attention of Minister of Children and Young People Ms Maree Todd

Thank you

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9th July 2020

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister & Ms M Maree Todd
Minister CYP

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for the childminding service that I use to provide vital Childcare provision.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, I will struggle to find alternative childcare provision in order for me to continue with my employment, I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector and removal of this restriction on blended care is required to maintain childcare provision in order for parents to go back to employment or training as not all employees can work from home.

As Ministers I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 July 2020 15:25

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;
Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: for the attention of Deputy First Minister Mr John Swinney

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister & Ms M Maree Todd Minister CYP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the

Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery/School) in national

Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for the childminding service that I use to provide vital Childcare provision.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, I will struggle to find alternative childcare provision in order for me to continue with my employment, I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector and removal of this restriction on blended care is required to maintain childcare provision in order for parents to go back to employment or training as not all employees can work from home.

As Ministers I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 July 2020 15:25
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;
Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject: for the attention of Deputy First Minister Mr John Swinney

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister & Ms M Maree Todd Minister CYP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery/School) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for the childminding service that I use to provide vital Childcare provision.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, I will struggle to find alternative childcare provision in order for me to continue with my employment, I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector and removal of this restriction on blended care is required to maintain childcare provision in order for parents to go back to employment or training as not all employees can work from home.

As Ministers I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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[PEU-ELC 057 REDACTED - DFM - 10 July \(A29478949\)](#)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 15:36

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: HELP FOR CHILDMINDERS IN SCOTLAND

Dear Mr. Swinney,
Please find attached an urgent appeal to help childminders like myself in Scotland.

Kind Regards
[REDACTED]

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For more information please visit <http://www.symanteccloud.com>

[REDACTED]

9th July 2020.

John Swinney MSP
Deputy First Minister.

Dear Mr. Swinney

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements(i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable.This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic

and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse effect on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the [REDACTED] children and approx [REDACTED] families that I currently support in [REDACTED].

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 10:19

To: McMillan SM (Stuart), MSP <Stuart.McMillan.msp@parliament.scot>; Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>; Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Commercial in confidence

Dear John/Stuart/Maree

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery or primary school) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 30 children and 23 families we support children and families that I currently support in Inverclyde.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 13:13

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Dear Maree Todd MSP,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery or school) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the eleven children and eight families that I currently support in Lossiemouth.

As Minister for Children and Young People, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

08.07.20

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 13 July 2020 07:52

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;

Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>;

david.linden.mp@parliament.uk

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

13^h July 2020

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister & Ms M Maree Todd Minister CYP & Mr David Linden MP

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent

as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for the childminding service that I use to provide vital Childcare provision.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, I will struggle to find alternative childcare provision in order for me to continue with my employment, I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector and removal of this restriction on blended care is required to maintain childcare provision in order for parents to go back to employment or training as not all employees can work from home.

As Ministers I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 17:10

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

Dear Mrs Todd

Please find attached this email that i would ask you to read as a matter of urgency, we are all aware of the impact that COVID19 has had on businesses.

I am writing this with a very heavy heart my husband and myself have been childminders now for 10 years and deliver a very high quality childminding service in our local community. Parents and families rely on our service before school and after school, the children enjoy coming to our service children have made secure loving attachments to the both of us and have made great friendships with the children who attend my service. Hopefully as the virus suppresses and children are able to go back to school and now that children can meet up with friends i would ask you as a matter of urgency to look at lifting these restrictions on blended care. If these restrictions remain in place i do not see the financial sustainability as a whole on the childminding sector and the massive headache and anxiety this will cause many working parents.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Maree Todd

Dear Maree Todd

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the Six children and Five families that I currently support in [REDACTED].

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 19:54
To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

Dear Nicola Sturgeon

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in the [REDACTED] area of Inverness.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Deputy

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 18:47

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: blended childcare provision and Covid-19 restrictions

Dear Mr John Swinney,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 11 children and families that I currently support in Dumfries and Galloway.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Childminder.

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 15:40

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care Provision

[REDACTED]

Livingston

West Lothian

[REDACTED]

8th July 2020

Dear John Swinney

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in Livingston.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 20:20
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on
Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

[REDACTED]

Stirling

[REDACTED]

08/07/2020

John Swinney

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding

businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in Stirling.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

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From: [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

Sent: 09 July 2020 08:42

To: Coronavirus Public Enquiries <CPE@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: Blended care and childminding services

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 19:59

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;
Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>;
Keith.Brown.msp@parliament.scot

Subject: Blended care and childminding services

[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

Dear Sir / Madam,

John Swinney MSP
Maree Todd MSP
Keith Brown MSP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible

childcare to meet the needs of the 6 children from 4 families that I currently support in Clackmannanshire.

I would urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Registered Childminder

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 15:44

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care restrictions on childminders

Dear Mr Swinney

I sincerely hope you can help the childminding sector to survive by allowing blended, well managed, before and after school care in childminding settings.

Please see my letter attached

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Mr Swinney

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 14 children and families that I currently support in Milltimber. I fail to see how being looked after in my small, before and afterschool childminding setting, with no more than 7 children (3 of which are my own) can be of concern. I will be operating within stringent controls as identified on my Risk Assessment for Covid -19 to ensure the children in my care minimise contact and will largely be entertained outside. We all know that childminders can better control smaller groups of children than can be managed in the class room environment with 25 other children. Also out of school if not in a formal managed and governed setting like a childminders the children will all be congregating and playing in large groups at the local parks. The aim of the schools going back full time was to facilitate parents getting back to full time work. If blended learning restrictions are not lifted parents will only be able to work between 09:30 and 14:30 thus negating any benefit of the schools reopening full time.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on

blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 15:28

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements

Dear John

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 5 children and families that I currently support in the west Dunfermline area.

As my local representative, I would ask that you urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Dunfermline

Fife

[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 15:46

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care

[REDACTED]

Livingston

West Lothian

[REDACTED]

8th July 2020

Dear John Swinney

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 4 children and families that I currently support in Livingston.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 17:29

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminding Blended Care

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

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FAO
John Swinney MSP
Deputy First Minister

Dear Sir,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the nine children I currently support in Linlithgow, West Lothian.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 18:12

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended care Restrictions

Please see attached letter how the current restrictions on blended care will impact on my childminding business.

Kind regards
[REDACTED]
Childminder

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[REDACTED]

8 July 2020

John Swinney
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Mr Swinney

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and families that I currently support in Cumbernauld.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Childminder

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 08 July 2020 20:13

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminding - Restrictions on Blended Care

[REDACTED]

08/07/2020

Dear Mr Swinney,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and families that I currently support in [REDACTED].

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 July 2020 15:55
To: Cole-Hamilton A (Alex), MSP <Alex.Cole-Hamilton.msp@parliament.scot>
Cc: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>; Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Blended childcare.

[REDACTED]

South Queensferry

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8TH July 2020

Dear Mr Cole- Hamilton

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 7 children and 5 families that I currently support in South Queensferry.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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Pàrlamaid na h-Alba: A' toirt deagh bhuaidh air beatha sluagh na h-Alba

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 09:49

To: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>

Subject: Childcare

[REDACTED]

09/07/2020

Dear First minister

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on

childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 5 children and families that I currently support in East Ayrshire.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 10:14

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: URGENT! Belended Childcare Concerns

[REDACTED]

Glasgow

[REDACTED]

9th July 2020

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 6 families that I currently support in the [REDACTED] area of the East End of Glasgow

As Deputy First Minister, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]



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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 10:59

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills

<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: PARENTS LETTER TO SCOTTISH MINISTERS AS TO BLENDED CHILDCARE

For the attention of Deputy First Minister John Swinney

See attached

Thanks

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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9th July 2020

Dear Mr John Swinney Deputy First Minister & Ms M Maree Todd
Minister CYP

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for the childminding service that I use to provide vital Childcare provision.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, I will struggle to find alternative childcare provision in order for me to continue with my employment, I have very much supported the cautious and considered

approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector and removal of this restriction on blended care is required to maintain childcare provision in order for parents to go back to employment or training as not all employees can work from home.

As Ministers I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 11:55

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Fwd: Restrictions on blended care

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]

Date: 9 July 2020 at 11:39:09 BST

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Restrictions on blended care

[REDACTED]

**John Swinney
Deputy First Minister**

Dear Mr Swinney

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time

return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare for 14 children and families that I currently support in [REDACTED].

I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 13:00

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Dear Mr Swinney

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as

to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 5 families that I currently support in the [REDACTED] area.

As the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, I would ask you to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 13:15

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>;
Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Fw: Concerns about the Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Dear Minister,

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11

August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 12 children and 10 families that I currently support in [REDACTED] and the surrounding area.

I would urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 13:17

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 06:57

To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]

Fife

[REDACTED]

9th July 2020

Dear John Swinney MSP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 11 children and 8 families that I currently support in Letham

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 12:07
To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]
Fife
[REDACTED]
9th July 2020

Dear Maree Todd MSP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the

virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 11 children and 8 families that I currently support in [REDACTED]

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 12:07

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Blended Care

[REDACTED]

Fife

[REDACTED]

9th July 2020

Dear Maree Todd MSP

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 11 children and 8 families that I currently support in Letham

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 09 July 2020 21:07

To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
<DFMCSE@gov.scot>

Subject: Childminder blended placement concern

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse impact on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the [insert the number of children and families you support] children and families that I currently support in [insert your local area].

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2020 15:38
To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Subject: HELP FOR CHILDMINDERS IN SCOTLAND

Dear Maree,
Please find attached an urgent appeal for childminders like myself in Scotland.

Kind Regards
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
9th July 2020.

Maree Todd MSP
Minister for Children and Young People

Dear Maree,

**Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the
Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice**

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance and lack of advance clarity of intent as to when they will be removed are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day.

This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse effect on the wider out of school care sector.

The Scottish Government has shown strong leadership and advance clarity of intent by announcing last month that it is now possible to plan for the full-time return of schools from 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus). This also provided all those involved in schools with at least seven weeks' notice to help plan for this.

I believe that similar leadership and advance clarity of intent is urgently required now for the childcare sector. Removal of this restriction on blended care is required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 68 children and approx 45 families that I currently support in Stranraer.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to provide an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 15:40

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: URGENT Covid-19 Restrictions on Blended Care/ Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Dear Maree Todd,

Please find attached a letter that details the concerns of the impact of the restrictions there are currently in place regarding blended care/ placements.

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to fully commit to removing all restrictions on blended care, subject to ongoing progress in suppressing the virus and also to including the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

14.07.2020

M4.03

The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Maree Todd,

Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends my childminding service and another setting such as a nursery) in national Scottish Government operating guidance are causing significant problems for my childminding business, and the children and families I support.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminding service will struggle to remain financially sustainable. This will have an adverse effect on me, the families I support and on the local economy.

I have very much supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day. This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will still be viable in 12 months' time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding businesses and on parental choice. This could also have a significant adverse impact on the wider out of school care sector. Following this SCMA called on the Scottish Government to urgently make an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care by the time the schools return on 11 August (subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus).

In response to this, the Scottish Government has now stated that it "hopes to be in a position to lift the restrictions on blended placements alongside the return of schools subject to expert advice and suppression of the virus and will confirm by 31 July whether this restriction can be lifted at the same time as schools return".

While this a positive step, I do not believe this commitment goes far enough. We (childminders and parents/carers) need clarity that all restrictions on blended care will be lifted on childminding settings before the schools go back, so that these are allowed and childminders are able to drop off and pick up children. In addition, it is essential that the Scottish Government also takes

account into the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

Removal of these restrictions on blended care are required to ensure the financial sustainability of my childminding service, where I provide high-quality, flexible childcare to meet the needs of the 8 children and 4 families that I currently support in Bishopbriggs, East Dunbartonshire.

As my local representative, I would ask that you to urge the Scottish Government to fully commit to removing all restrictions on blended care, subject to ongoing progress in suppressing the virus and also to including the economic impact of COVID-19 on childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 14 July 2020 19:39

To: Minister for Children and Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>

Subject: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

Good evening Ms. Todd

RE: Restrictions on Blended Care/Placements and the Impact on Childminding, Children, Families and Parental Choice

The current restrictions on blended care/placements (i.e. where a child attends a childminding service) in national Scottish Government operating guidance are causing significant problems for my child, our childminder and my ability to work full time.

If the restrictions on blended care are to continue, my childminder will struggle to remain open. Furthermore, this will have an adverse effect on me and my work as it is unlikely they will support what effectively is a part time role if the restrictions on blended care remain in place.

Our childcare provider and our family has supported the cautious and considered approach adopted by the Scottish Government which has enabled us to suppress the virus. However, as the risks reduce, there is also an increasing need to take into account the economic and social impact of COVID-19 on families and childcare providers which is becoming more critical by the day. This was highlighted in a recent survey by the Scottish Childminding Association which found that only 19% of childminders in Scotland believe their businesses will be viable in 12 months time if restrictions on blended care continue after the schools return. As such, this could have a devastating effect on childminding business and my choice as a working parent.

Like many, many others, my child attends our childminder both before and after school. This measure would potentially impact wider out of school care too. I understand the SCMA called on the Scottish Government to urgently make an unequivocal commitment, in advance, to removing all restrictions on blended care

by the time the schools return on 11 August, subject to continued progress in suppressing the virus. We understand that the Scottish Government 'hopes to be in a position to lift the restrictions on blended placements alongside the return of schools subject to experts advice and suppression of the virus and will confirm by 31 July 2020, whether this restriction can be lifted at the same time as schools return'.

While this is a positive step, I do not believe this commitment goes far enough. As a working parent, I need clarity that all restrictions on blended care will be lifted on childminding settings before the schools go back so that these are allowed and childminders are able to drop off and pick up children. In addition, it is essential that the Scottish Government also takes into account the economic impact of COVID-19 on all childminding businesses when considering if these restrictions can be lifted.

As our Minister for Children and Young People, I ask that you, please, urge the Scottish Government to fully commit to removing all restrictions on blended care subject to ongoing progress in suppressing the virus.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 10:59:31 PM

To: [REDACTED]; Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>; Hyslop F (Fiona), MSP <Fiona.Hyslop.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Re: Letter from Cabinet Secretary - 24 June

Dear Fiona and Maree,

[REDACTED] set-up a petition to highlight the fact that there are no grants available to the majority of private nurseries following on from the decision that private nurseries are not deemed 'pivotal' enough to the economy to receive the PERF grant. [REDACTED] set this petition a few days ago and it already has over 2,000 signatures and this number is continuing to

increase. We believe this highlights how vital private nurseries are to our local economies.

https://www.change.org/p/scottish-government-support-private-nurseries-through-covid-19?recruiter=50883947&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=share_petition&recruited_by_id=28f6c3c0-a137-0130-e44b-3c764e04873b&fbclid=IwAR0uiblX4c5kN1r8zKX0nwznCR9cs52gsbqhzFSpl5VgOUpsPS1iZlcl536g

We have had no financial support to cover our fixed costs while closed due to Covid-19. There are also no grants available to support us in adapting our settings to comply with the new guidelines for opening ELC settings from 15th July. In order to make our setting safe for our children our costs will increase to adapt our outdoor space so that it can be used to its fullest potential including additional shelters, hand washing facilities etc. The requirement to operate in 'bubbles' of 8 children will also result in increased staff costs and many other of our costs will increase including cleaning, resources etc.

We are part of the '2020 Together (we can)' group of nurseries who have been liaising with Maree on this issue and we believe are meeting on this tomorrow. Private nurseries provide vital childcare for 0-5's and allow thousands of parents to return to work. Private nurseries provide childcare for those that are not catered for in public nurseries and provide parents with vital choice in where they use their funded entitlement. We believe this petition highlights how vital private nurseries are and demonstrates that without some financial support they will be unable to survive the financial burden imposed by covid-19.

Kind Regards,
[REDACTED]

On Mon, Jun 29, 2020 at 3:20 [REDACTED]:

Good Afternoon [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email to Fiona Hyslop.

After speaking to Fiona about your most recent email, I can confirm that Fiona has spoken to Maree Todd, Minister for Children and Early Learning, personally

in parliament regarding support for private nurseries. Maree Todd relayed that she was very aware of the sectors concerns and the need for support, if possible, for the private nursery sector in order to get people back to work. We will send you any updated information, when available, from the Scottish Government in relation to help for private nurseries.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED] Constituency Assistant to

Fiona Hyslop, Member of Scottish Parliament for the Linlithgow Constituency

Fiona Hyslop MSP Constituency Office, 59 West Main St., Whitburn, West Lothian, EH47 0QD | [REDACTED]



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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 26 June 2020 15:11

To: Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture

<CabSecEFWC@gov.scot>; Hyslop F (Fiona), MSP

<Fiona.Hyslop.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Re: Letter from Cabinet Secretary - 24 June

Dear Fiona,

Thank you for your letter. Our response is as follows:

- With regards to the PERF grant we spoke to someone about the appeal and were told that we did not pass their 'pivotal' criteria which we still strongly dispute. We were originally told that we could submit additional information to be considered with our appeal and spent considerable time producing this to support our appeal. I was then told during my call that additional information could not be taken into consideration in our appeal which we are very disappointed about as we feel it really highlighted why our business is vital to the local economy. The person I spoke to has fed back to her superiors that a lot of nurseries are not receiving this grant and are 'falling through the cracks' in terms of grant funding to cover ongoing fixed costs.

- On the point about ELC funding we really need to stress, as we did on our phone call, that this has not provided us with additional funding to cover our fixed costs and make required adjustments to our setting. The Scottish government have issued guidance on this funding which states that ELC settings need to use this funding towards staff costs and then furlough the remainder of staff and claim through the UK Gov furlough scheme. This is what we have done and therefore it has not provided any additional financial benefit to our business beyond what the furlough scheme offers. Currently ELC funding only makes up 15% of our total income and therefore you will see that the majority of our children are under 3 and not eligible for funding. Council nurseries don't cater for under 3's and they are also limited in the number of hours/week that they provide and therefore private nurseries like our business are vital for families with young children.

- On the point about the working group who are looking at the financial sustainability of the sector we have had no communication on the work done by this group via our representative body NDNA. From the correspondence from yourself we believe you recognise the importance of private nurseries in supporting parents going back to work and therefore we would like further communication directly on this. The Scottish Government has announced ELC settings should prepare to open on the 15th July however the guidance issued have various financial impacts for us including extra staff and changes to our setting and therefore it is vital that we receive information on a support package urgently.

- The email you sent us also detailed that you would speak to Maree Todd further about the support package required for ELC settings and WLC to see what support they will offer and we would ask that we receive feedback on this urgently. I have emailed WLC and been told that no additional financial support

will be offered although they have used money to invest in additional cleaning resources and adapting their own settings. They have cited the ELC funded place income while closed as being a benefit to us, as highlighted above this is not the case and I have responded to them to make this point.

We would ask that you become actively involved in supporting a financial package for private nurseries to support the vital role we play in allowing parents to return to work and opening up the Scottish economy post Covid-19. To be clear we do not currently qualify for any grants to support fixed costs or necessary changes to our setting to open in July although almost everyone recognises that private nurseries provide a vital role in supporting young children and allowing many parents to return to work. Our sector urgently requires support from the Scottish Government.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

On Wed, Jun 24, 2020 at 8:46 PM <CabSecEFWC@gov.scot> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached a letter from the Cabinet Secretary

Thank you

[REDACTED]

Private Secretary to Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture

The Scottish Government

St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | T: [REDACTED]
M: [REDACTED]

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From: SCOTT, Ian (NHS GRAMPIAN) [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 July 2020 22:14
To: ELC Partnership Forum <ELCPartnershipForum@gov.scot>
Cc: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>
Subject: Guidance on childcare agencies

Hi,

We hire a Nanny via an agency they have worked throughout the COVID spell looking after our children and preparing meals for them as we are both hospital consultants. I am an [REDACTED] and wife is a [REDACTED] at NHS Grampian. We often work 12 hours at a time and know both our children will have meals prepared and be well looked after. We also know that if we are both home late our children will have had a proper evening meal rather than a cold meal prepared the night before (I think this is probably more risky from a food preparation point of view). The letter sent to all Childcare providers on the 10th July suggests they shouldn't prepare food and this should be done by the parents. I am slight at a loss as to why this is a particularly risky activity or why this is likely to spread COVID-19? I would be grateful if you could supply the evidence for this policy as I can't understand it. If this is true and applies to key workers could you please provide a letter to NHS Grampian explaining why one of their [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] consultant will need to leave work early to prepare meals for their children. I find this somewhat of a ridiculous rule particularly when the incidence of COVID-19 is very low within Grampian and Scotland as a whole.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 01 July 2020 21:13

To: [REDACTED]; earlyyears@edinburgh.gov.uk

Cc: First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>; DFWES Keyworkers <keyworkers@gov.scot>

Subject: Critical Worker Childcare.

Dear [REDACTED], Early Years Team and Mrs Sturgeon.

It is with great confusion that I am sending this email.

We have recently been informed by our City of Edinburgh Council Group approved childminder that our 4 year old son no longer is classed as a 'Key Worker Child' and that funding has now been stopped.

Both myself and my wife as classed as 'Critical Workers' under the guidance set out by UK Government and as both Category 1 and Category 2 under Scottish Government Guidance, myself as critical to UK Infrastructure within [REDACTED] and also as [REDACTED][REDACTED] and my wife as a registered practicing [REDACTED]. Neither of us are in a position where our roles allow for working from home and therefore require child care which has been provided by our local childminder.

With the effects that the COVID Pandemic has had on nurseries and the roll on effect placing a hold on the increased funded hours roll out, we are caught facing drastically increased costs in providing care for our son while we are working.

I would greatly appreciate a reply detailing what the reasoning is behind Edinburgh Council going against UK Government guidance and recategorising Critical Workers so as to no longer fit the funding criteria.

UK Government's link to Critical Worker Guidance

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision#critical-workers>

Scottish Government's link to Key Workers Guidance
- <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-guide-schools-early-learning-closures/pages/key-workers/>

Cc - keyworkers@gov.scot

Cc - firstminister@gov.scot

I look forward to your timely reply.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 30 June 2020 13:47

To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Key Worker Support

Dear Maree,

[REDACTED]. Throughout the recent lockdown we have remained open providing care for around 20 children of 'key' workers and vulnerable children. That has been quite successful and the support from the government and council has been generally timely, appropriate in quantum and welcome.

However, as we now begin to unwind this arrangement I have one specific issue and it relates to the timing of the end of the key worker support.

If support for key workers continues until 11th August, as I am advised is the intention, and meanwhile other parents who return from 15th July have to pay normal fees we will be faced with a very distasteful contrast between those groups. Key Workers have been working and earning throughout and living fee free. Non-key workers have been, in many cases, in reduced financial circumstances but in order to return to paid employment will be obliged to pay nursery fees. Is that fair?

I should declare my position at this stage. My son holds a senior clinical post in an NHS hospital. Certainly he has been working long hours and has been exposed to more risk than most of us. But on the other hand he has had shedloads of overtime and bonus payments. GP's are well paid and over the last three months have probably had much less pressure than they would usually experience but we are giving free childcare. Why? Certainly we appreciate the work of the NHS but I feel that we are going overboard with the hero worship. They were doing their jobs. Difficult for sure but then many of us have times of great pressure and risk at some time in our working lives.

I am a Party Member and I am solidly behind most of what has been done in Scotland. But I believe that this aspect has not been thought through well. I have no idea how I will explain or justify this to any non-key worker parent.

Regards, [REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 July 2020 10:14
To: Todd M (Maree), MSP <Maree.Todd.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: urgent summer keyworker childcare
Importance: High

Good Morning

I am writing in regard to the fact I have been refused summer childcare care as a cat 1 keyworker.

I am a practice nurse part time in Inverness and also since mid March have been an assessment nurse in the Covid assessment centre based in the [REDACTED] Centre. A few weeks Ago we started the Community swabbing team to swab people for covid 3 days before they go to live home in a care home. I am an integral part of the rota. I feel this classifies me as a Cat 1 worker. My twin boys have been at [REDACTED] hub since schools closed. Even the start was stressful as they lost my original application so I had to chase quite a few times only to be informally told on a sunday to just take them on the monday. I did not receive an email last thursday as most parents did and only knew about the email hearing another parent talk. I received this after 9 on friday morning and had to submit by midday. I chose [REDACTED] from the list as my preferred option. I received my rejection on monday with no reason given. I have since heard [REDACTED] is not opening so dont know why it was an option. I dont know of anyone who has actually been given a place apart from a student nurse who is [REDACTED]? This happened at the start when most people were refused and [REDACTED] ended up being undersubscribed.

I have no other childcare options, my nearest family live 8 hours away and aren't able to travel here as they would normally due to shielding. My other options (sports clubs) are not yet allowed to open. I put all of this on my form but was still rejected. Can you please advise why I would not be a cat 1 worker as most of work is related directly to COVID and what childcare options are available for me now in the next 3 weeks in order that I continue with this work?

Many Thanks

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 June 2020 20:24
To: Swinney J (John), MSP <John.Swinney.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Key worker and no childcare

Hello John, hope you receive this and give it some thought.

We have no childcare as the Govt/PKC have blocked us access to our [REDACTED] in Perth.

I am a key worker (although PKC decided I am not) and my wife's furlough has ended as [REDACTED]. I work in Inverness away from home on powerlines, and my wife needs to turn in to work as can't be employed at home. An application to PKC for 2 childcare spots has been declined. We have been refused use of our nursery that we have used for last 6 years.

Its a scandal that working parents are being put in a position to leave a 6 and 7 year old at home while we work for the good of local and national benefit.

Please can I get my childcare spots back, why are the Govt and PKC refusing me access to my childcare provider. Abysmal policy.

Please pop round to [REDACTED] when you get a chance to check in on my kids while we are working for the benefit of society.

Thanks

[REDACTED]

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 July 2020 11:43
To: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills <DFMCSE@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: Access to Keyworker Hub Schools - [REDACTED]

Please can you respond to the below enquiry [REDACTED] regarding Keyworker Hub School access at Perth and Kinross Council.

[REDACTED] is disappointed that the council had refused local activity hub placements.
[REDACTED] is not a constituent of John's.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 June 2020 12:45
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Documents as discussed.

Hello,

Further to our telephone call earlier please find attached the information from England we discussed.

My partner is a sole employee/director of small car garage and I work for the NHS as a secretary. It may be worth adding I changed jobs [REDACTED] but this was not due to Covid19 staffing it was a planned change from a GP practice to [REDACTED], both key worker positions in which I work [REDACTED]. My partner closed his business to look after the kids when the schools closed as he was required to do to support my key worker role. At the start of lockdown, until I changed jobs, I was working much more to cover for colleagues who were shielding and isolating. When garages were given the green light to open we applied to get hub places for our 2 kids. We were denied on the grounds that my partner is not a key worker. We applied again after dealing with our local councillor who confirmed that my partner is a critical worker to his business but we got a response today saying nothing has changed from the previous application so we wouldn't be offered places. My partner is the main wage earner in the household and we need his income to survive. We feel let down that my partner cannot work when a couple in our exact situation over the border would both be able to work and still access the hub. We have been advised today by your colleague [REDACTED] that childcare will hopefully reopen on 15th July so right now all we can do is hope that happens and we'll be able to access it as a priority.

If you could pass the documents on it would be much appreciated. Thank you for your kindness on the phone earlier.

Take care,

[REDACTED]

On Wednesday, June 10, 2020, 2:53 pm, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Holly FYI

N.B. This is for England may be different in Scotland

Kind Regards

From

[REDACTED]

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