

Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE
Secretary of State
Rt Hon Vicky Ford
Children and Families Minister
Department for Education
Sanctuary Buildings
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Philip Glanville, Mayor of Hackney
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Dear Mr Williamson and Ms Ford,

We are writing with urgency to follow-up on our call to you on Monday 4th January (please find attached) for action on behalf of early years providers in Hackney and across the sector. Hackney early years providers have worked hard to follow advice, undertake risk assessments and work with Government guidance released late in the evening of Thursday 7th January to further mitigate risk.¹ As we advised you last week, we do not expect early years provision, including children's centres, registered nurseries, childminders or maintained nursery schools, to fully reopen until they have put in place measures that take account of the increased prevalence, new variants and infection rates of the virus. Many will be operating from today, Monday 11th January, with reduced occupancy, in some cases offering part-time places in order to safely accommodate as many families as possible, in others reverting to small bubble groups.

Halt the census

We again ask the Government to recognise that providers right across the private, voluntary and independent sector, will also need to restrict their operations in the coming weeks and months and that this will in turn impact on their attendance records. We do not want to see any provider caught in a decision-making bind where prioritising safety risks financial stability. We understand that it remains Government's advice to

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/95065/3/Education_and_childcare_settings_-_national_lockdown_from_5_January_2021_.pdf



local authorities to “return to the normal funding approach (that is, ‘funding following the child’) for all providers from 1 January 2021”.² We ask that you review this position, call an immediate halt on the mid-January census, and continue to fund providers on the basis of January 2020 attendances until the current crisis is over.

An early entitlement funding model that fully recognises the costs of delivery

We remain deeply concerned about damage to vital services delivered in a very mixed sector which could have implications for local employment, access to work for families, equalities in the labour market, early childhood development and undo a decade or more of expanding high quality provision.

We recognise and support the joint campaign of the Early Years Alliance, PACEY and NDNA calling on the Government to:

- prioritise those working in the early years and childcare sector for Covid-19 vaccinations
- roll-out mass asymptomatic testing to all early years and childcare settings
- reinstate early entitlement funding support for settings which have been forced to close or have seen a fall in the demand for funded places
- introduce targeted funding for providers reliant on private income who have suffered from falls in parental demand

But we also ask you to commit to formally reviewing the effectiveness of early entitlement funding support and engaging with local authorities and the early years sector on establishing a funding model that fully recognises the costs of delivery.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Philip Glanville
Mayor of Hackney



Cllr Caroline Woodley
Cabinet Member for Families, Early Years
and Play

CC

Kate Green MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Education
Tulip Siddiq MP, Shadow Minister for Children and Early Years
Diane Abbott MP, Member of Parliament for Hackney North and Stoke Newington
Meg Hillier MP, Member of Parliament for Hackney South and Shoreditch
Cllr Sophie Conway, Chair of LBH Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
Cllr Margaret Gordon, Vice Chair of LBH Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission
Fleur Anderson MP, Member of Parliament for Putney
Early Years Alliance, Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years, and the
National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)