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Dear Headteacher,

### **Period Poverty**

I write on behalf of the London Borough of Hackney to encourage you and your school to apply for the Government's '*Period Product scheme for schools and colleges in England*', if you have not already done so.

I want to ensure that every eligible institution in Hackney is able to access its full allocation of menstrual products so that we can end period poverty in our borough once and for all.

I am aware that sadly too many of our borough's schools have direct experience of pupils unable to afford menstrual products and even missing school because of period poverty. Nationally research by Plan International has shown that one in 10 girls between the ages of 14 and 21 in the UK have been unable to afford menstrual products, while 49% have missed an entire day of school because of their period. I am keenly conscious that this will in all likelihood have been in the case in your school as well.

I am aware of the wide range of excellent work you and your teams already do voluntarily in assisting pupils in period poverty by working with the now closed Red Box campaign providing tampons and menstrual pads. I also recognise that period poverty is still a subject that is surrounded by stigma and taboo, which is why I felt it was such an important issue to write to you directly about.

No one should be held back from reaching their potential because of their gender and ending period poverty is crucial for the dignity and empowerment of women and girls.

As you may be aware, the Government announced last March in its Spring Statement that it would fund free menstrual products to all secondary schools and colleges. This announcement was long overdue and something that, in partnership with Hackney Schools and the Red Box campaign, I have long called for as we try to tackle both the causes and stigma surrounding period poverty.

The scheme has now, rightly, been extended to primary schools as well and from 20 January 2020, schools have been able to access the Government's '*Period Product scheme for schools and colleges in England*'. Further information about how to apply can be found on the Department for Education (DfE)'s website via the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/period-products-in-schools-and-colleges/period-product-scheme-for-schools-and-colleges-in-england>. I am told it is a simple process that any member of school staff can be the key contact for, so limiting the administrative burden and making sure support is offered quickly.

I want to ensure that every eligible institution in Hackney is able to access its full allocation through the Government's scheme and I would strongly encourage your school to apply, if you have not already done so. It would be great if Hackney – one of the communities that helped create and sustain the incredible community Red Box campaign, which so many schools and the Council signed up to and led to this Government action – could become the first borough in the country to ensure all schools are signed up.

I am keen to support you in tackling poverty in our borough in all its forms. If I can ever be of any assistance on this or on any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Glanville". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Philip Glanville  
**Mayor of Hackney**