

Rt. Hon. Philip Hammond MP  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London SW1A 2HQ

23 October 2018

Dear Chancellor,

We are writing to urge you to use next week's Budget to re-open Childcare Vouchers to new entrants and continue to offer the scheme as an option for working parents alongside Tax-Free Childcare.

In September, Employers For Childcare published our [submission](#) to inform the Autumn 2018 Budget. It explains why **closing Childcare Vouchers to new entrants will prevent the Government from achieving its objectives** in relation to childcare by ignoring the complex and changing needs of different families, meaning many will receive less support while others will miss out entirely.

This will lead to many ordinary working parents questioning their ability to work full time, or at all, and present a barrier to career progression and transition out of the welfare system for others. This will result in greater costs to our economy over the longer term. Ensuring the Childcare Voucher scheme is available to new entrants is a policy that is:

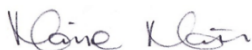
- aligned with the Government's objectives
- widely supported by parents, employers, and childcare providers
- achievable within budget and easy to implement as the necessary infrastructure is in place.

In the run up to, and following, the closure of Childcare Vouchers to new entrants, our independent charity's Family Benefits Advice Service has been inundated hearing from anxious parents who have been impacted. Enclosed, we have provided examples of the parents our team is speaking to daily. These provide strong evidence of the impact on families, and voices their plea to Government to re-open Childcare Vouchers. In some cases, parents are calling into question their ability to work.

We are monitoring the number of parents who, due to the closure of Childcare Vouchers to new entrants, have been unable to join the scheme but would otherwise have been advised it was the best support for them. In the last three months, we have completed more than 2,000 calculations for parents. Of parents who were no longer able to join Childcare Vouchers, 36% would have been better off on Childcare Vouchers. The others were better off on Tax-Free Childcare, Tax Credits or Universal Credit. This figure increases to 47% when we consider those who were comparing Tax-Free Childcare and Childcare Vouchers only. As a result, countless families across the UK stand to be direct losers from the scheme's closure, despite Government assurances there would be none.

On behalf of the many thousands of parents, employers and childcare providers across the UK who are calling for the Childcare Voucher scheme to be re-opened we ask you to take this opportunity and use the Budget to stand on the side of working families.

Yours sincerely



Marie Marin, Chief Executive

Encl.

**Enclosure 1: Examples of parents who have contacted Employers For Childcare’s independent charity showing the impact of the closure of Childcare Vouchers to new entrants**

*Names have been changed in order to keep parents’ details anonymous however each example represents a parent who has contacted Employers For Childcare. This is a small, representative sample highlighting the breadth of parents we have spoken to who are negatively impacted by the closure of Childcare Vouchers.*

	<b>Date of contact</b>	<b>Circumstances</b>	<b>Situation: why are they affected?</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>What did they say?</b>
1	17/08/18	Elaine and Aaron are married, with one child who is one year old. Both parents work full time.	Aaron works in the NHS as a junior doctor and is required to rotate every 6 months, moving in and out of different Trusts. They have £494 a month of childcare costs and would be <b>£371 a year better off on Childcare Vouchers</b> rather than Tax-Free Childcare. They will lose out when Aaron moves to another Trust and can no longer access Childcare Vouchers.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>“This scheme is essential for working families. I can see no reason why this would be closed. Childcare is a huge expense and every little helps. This is for families who value going out to work to provide for their own families.”</i>
2	31/08/18	Lorraine and her husband John are expecting their first child, due in December.	Lorraine and John expect their registered childcare costs to be £500 a month. Both work for employers who offer Childcare Vouchers. Lorraine and John would have saved £155 a month through Childcare Vouchers. Their savings through Tax-Free Childcare will be £100 a month. <b>The family would be £55 a month, £660 a year, better off on Childcare Vouchers</b> , and are losing out because of the closure of the scheme to new entrants.	<b>First child due after the deadline</b>	<i>“Removing Childcare Vouchers for new parents will prevent them from going back to work.”</i>
3	04/09/18	Jen and Chris are will be first time parents, and are expecting twins in November.	Both parents work for employers who offer Childcare Vouchers however they were unable to join before the scheme closes to new entrants. The family will have childcare costs of £152 a week when Jen goes back to work after maternity leave. They will be able to use Tax-Free Childcare however <b>they will be £268 a year worse off</b> than if they had been able to use Childcare Vouchers.	<b>First child due after the deadline</b>	<i>“By closing the voucher scheme my family would be financially worse off. The voucher scheme works better for certain circumstances and parents should be able to choose which service is best for them.”</i>
4	05/09/18	Elizabeth is a single parent, with two children.	Elizabeth is currently registered to receive Childcare Vouchers however she is in the process of changing jobs and will not have started her new job until after 4 October. She will be able to use Tax-Free Childcare but, due to her childcare costs, <b>she would have been better off using Childcare Vouchers</b> .	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>“The scheme needs to be kept open and is a lifesaver for parents who need every break they can get to help pay for childcare. Unless a person is paying for childcare themselves, they do not realise how necessary the scheme is.”</i>

	<b>Date of contact</b>	<b>Circumstances</b>	<b>Situation: why are they affected?</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>What did they say?</b>
5	06/09/18	Gavin phoned us for advice on his options. Gavin's wife is on maternity leave with their first child.	Gavin has been using Childcare Vouchers, however because he is moving job he is unable to remain in the scheme.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"My wife is on maternity leave and I was happy when I discovered I could avail of Childcare Vouchers knowing this would really help our childcare costs in the future. However, I have recently secured new employment. I was advised I can no longer avail of the scheme even though I commenced my new role on 1st October. I am very disappointed I am excluded from the scheme due to the fact I have changed job roles in order to further my career. I think it is a disgrace I am excluded when this change in employment occurred before the scheme actually closed. I believe the removal of this scheme is another hurdle placed in the way of parents trying to remain in full time employment and support their families."</i>
6	06/09/18	Anne is supporting the campaign to keep Childcare Vouchers open. She and her husband recently had their first child. Anne is on maternity leave, but will pay for childcare when she goes back to work.	Anne's husband is working in Northern Ireland on a marriage visa, but has no recourse to public funds. Even though he is paying into the tax system, he is not eligible to open a Tax-Free Childcare account. His only option for support was Childcare Vouchers however he was unable to join in time.	<b>Parent subject to immigration control</b>	<i>"Because my husband was unable to join Childcare Vouchers before it closed to new entrants, we won't be able to start saving for our future childcare costs when I go back to work. Closing the scheme limits our options for support, and could mean we lose out financially. I think the Government should keep Childcare Vouchers open so families like ours can continue to save on the cost of childcare."</i>
7	06/09/18	Sharon and her husband have three children, two year old twins and an older child in pre-school.	Sharon works part time but is considering increasing her hours of work. To do so, she would require childcare for her twins. However, Sharon has missed the deadline to sign up for Childcare Vouchers, calling in to question her ability to increase her hours as she would like to.	<b>Missed the deadline</b>	<i>"Being able to get Childcare Vouchers each month would make a huge difference to our family—this support could enable me to increase the hours I work and afford childcare. Without it, it may not be financially viable for me to up my hours. This limits our household income and impacts on our ability to afford other things."</i>

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8	12/09/18	Laurence contacted us by email seeking advice because he is no longer able to access Childcare Vouchers to help pay for childcare for his two children.	Laurence recently changed job. He used Childcare Vouchers with his previous employer however was told when he joined his new employer that he had missed the cut off date.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"I am now out of the current scheme having been penalised for changing jobs and now will be worse off because of not being allowed to continue .... with the childcare vouchers purely because I moved jobs. The childcare vouchers are great. I am very, very disappointed that I've been penalised and that by changing jobs you are considered a new applicant. It's a complete farce. The Childcare Vouchers are great. This new scheme not so much."</i>
9	13/09/18	Lauren and her husband Alan are expecting their first child on 4 February 2019. Both Lauren and Alan work full time for employers who offer Childcare Vouchers.	When Lauren goes back to work after her maternity leave they will need to pay for three days of childcare each week. Based on their circumstances, <b>Lauren and Alan would be £45 a month better off on Childcare Vouchers compared to Tax-Free Childcare</b> however because Childcare Vouchers are closing to new entrants, they will have no choice but to use Tax-Free Childcare. As a result, Lauren and Alan will be £540 a year worse off.	<b>First child due after the deadline</b>	<i>"It is ridiculous, given how much childcare costs, that the Government is taking away support from parents who want to go out to work."</i>
10	18/09/18	Jessica and her husband both work. Jessica works 4 days a week and her husband compresses his full time working week into 4 days. They have one five year old child.	Jessica and her husband spend, on average, £470 per month on childcare (extra in holidays). Jessica will be moving employer after October and will therefore be unable to access Childcare Vouchers. <b>She will be worse off financially, and told us that she is rethinking whether she can take the new role.</b>	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"I was able to avail of Childcare Vouchers since my daughter was born—which has really helped us financially and meant both my husband and I are almost in full time employment. I recently decided to change employers. I feel I will now be penalised financially for trying to avail of new opportunities in a new workplace and may need to rethink whether I can continue in this new role. I plea with the Government to review their decision. Taking away the scheme to new entrants will stagnate people in their jobs and will be detrimental to the overall workplace."</i>
11	20/09/18	Claire has one child and is returning to work following a career break. She works in the emergency services.	When Claire came back to work, she was informed that she had missed the deadline to join Childcare Vouchers.	<b>Missed the deadline</b>	<i>"I am so annoyed that I am unable to join the Childcare Voucher scheme as a result of missing the cut-off date with my employer, having returned to work following a career break. I am</i>

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					<i>arranging childcare for my little boy for the first time, around his pre-school, and Childcare Vouchers would have been a huge benefit. It's not fair I will not be able to access a Scheme that could have helped to save me money".</i>
12	25/09/18	Nolene is a parent who contacted us by email.	Nolene moved jobs within the NHS. She was treated as a new entrant, and was therefore unable to join the Childcare Voucher scheme.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"I have been informed by my HR Department that my request for Childcare Vouchers will not go through even with an off-cycle payment. I have just moved across from one NHS organisation to another. Both organisations are within the NHS and I don't think I should be penalised for moving within the NHS."</i>
13	04/10/18	Sean is a new parent with one child. He and his wife are both teachers. Their child has recently been in hospital, and they have been focused on this.	Due to an administrative error Sean missed the deadline to sign up for Childcare Vouchers, however his wife signed up in time. The family are better off for one parent to be claiming Childcare Vouchers than to move to Tax-Free Childcare, however because Sean was unable to join this means that <b>they are losing out on additional savings each year</b> . These are savings that could be put towards the cost of childcare now, and in the future.	<b>Missed the deadline</b>	<i>"Closing the door to new entrants has no positive outcome for the public. Our family is worse off by £600 each year because of this. This hits us financially, but also impacts on our well-being. My wife and I have contributed to the economy for years, and this is the one and only time we have looked for Government assistance."</i>
14	04/10/18	Adam contacted us for advice because his wife is changing job in order to progress her career and earnings, and they wanted to know what is the best support for their childcare costs of £490 per month.	As a result of changing jobs, Adam's wife is losing access to the Childcare Voucher scheme. The family will be eligible for £1,176 annually in support from Tax-Free Childcare. Had Adam and his wife been able to continue using Childcare Vouchers they would have been entitled to £1,866 in support each year. <b>This is a difference of £690 each year.</b>	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"Because my wife is changing jobs, we are losing her access to Childcare Vouchers. It feels like there is no real incentive to better yourself and increase your household income, as you are now being punished for doing so."</i>
15	04/10/18	Mary is a single parent. She had been using an unregistered childminder until a place became available for her child at a registered afterschool club.	A place has just become available in a registered afterschool's facility, however Mary has missed the deadline and is now too late to join Childcare Vouchers. <b>With Childcare Vouchers Mary would have received £933 in support each year, compared to £728 of support with Tax-Free Childcare.</b>	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	<i>"The Childcare Voucher scheme is good and should be retained."</i>

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16	4/10/18	Shirley is married with one child who is now 20 months.	Shirley's husband is in the Childcare Voucher scheme however Shirley has been off work sick following her maternity leave and missed the deadline to join. The family is better off for one parent to be using Childcare Vouchers, however <b>had both parents been able to use the scheme they would have been £518 a year better off.</b> They anticipate their childcare costs will increase and this saving would have provided vital help towards those additional costs.	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	<i>"I have been off work sick, which is why I missed the chance to get into the scheme."</i>
17	05/10/18	Lina and her husband are both subject to immigration control and have no recourse to public funds. Both are working, and are higher rate taxpayers.	Lina and her husband currently receive Childcare Vouchers however, should they change jobs, they will lose access to this and any support with their childcare costs. This is despite their significant contributions through the tax system.	<b>Parents subject to immigration control</b>	<i>"If we change jobs we won't have access to any other childcare help however non-immigrant parents can access Tax-Free Childcare. Families like ours won't be able to arrange quality support for their kids and might end up quitting."</i>
18	05/10/18	Michael lives in Cambridge with his wife Samantha. He phoned Employers For Childcare for advice.	Michael advised that he was planning to move employer on 8 October. Michael had never been in receipt of Childcare Vouchers. Michael received a calculation that identified <b>he would be better off to join Childcare Vouchers with his new employer</b> , however because of the date he was changing jobs it was too late to join. Michael didn't realise that he could no longer join the Childcare Voucher scheme.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"I didn't realise I couldn't register for Childcare Vouchers anymore. Childcare is so expensive, it makes parents wonder about working at all."</i>
19	06/10/18	Jeanine was made redundant shortly after returning to work from maternity leave. She had joined the Childcare Voucher scheme during her maternity leave. Her partner is disabled and does not work. Although Jeanine has been working for 22 years, she is not eligible for	Because Jeanine had not found a new job before 4 October 2018, she has lost access to Childcare Vouchers. Jeanine is keen to start work as soon as possible, and will need childcare arrangements to be in place to facilitate this. She has been in touch with her local MP about this issue. Although Jeanine is unemployed, she is still paying for childcare to avoid losing her child's place as she had to put her name down four months before she was born to secure a place.	<b>Made redundant and lost access to Childcare Vouchers</b>	<i>"I am exactly the person the government should be helping. My situation means that with no Childcare Vouchers and no Tax-Free childcare, parents who are dead and no other free childcare option that it is likely that I will have to give up working to look after my daughter when I want to work so will have to apply for benefits to pay my mortgage, bills and to eat. How is this supporting a person with childcare!!! The Government should allow every individual parent, no matter what their circumstances, to</i>



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		Tax-Free Childcare because of her circumstances.			<i>be able to choose between Childcare Vouchers and Tax-Free Childcare!"</i>
20	08/10/18	Belinda and her husband are working in the UK on a skills Visa and discovered that they cannot qualify for Tax-Free Childcare due to their Visa restrictions (they have no recourse to public funds).	Belinda and her husband both work and are paying taxes. Belinda was starting to look for a higher paid job to enable her to progress her career however, because of the closure of Childcare Vouchers to new entrants if she moves jobs, she will lose access to the scheme and have no support with her childcare costs. She therefore feels 'locked in' to her job for at least the next four years until her youngest child no longer requires registered childcare. Belinda is calling on the Government to re-open Childcare Vouchers to new entrants so that families like hers can get support with childcare costs and consider progressing in their careers – contributing more to the UK economy through the tax system.	<b>Parents subject to immigration control</b>	<i>"Without Childcare Vouchers, I would not be able to work the hours I do. Childcare Vouchers have literally given me the freedom to do my job properly, knowing that my children are safe. Now, I am locked into my job and can't move as the scheme has closed and if I move jobs I will no longer qualify. I'm devastated, because I was starting to look for a better paying job and now I can't move for the next four years, until my youngest no longer needs the vouchers. It makes me angry that I am required to pay taxes and do so without complaint, and I'm allowed to vote, but I can't have the same childcare benefits. It's frustrating that the government refuses to see the value in Childcare Vouchers. I've written to my local MP, and received two replies from MP Elizabeth Truss which show that they literally have no idea the impact that it has on non-British citizens and really don't care either. Childcare Vouchers are the ONLY way I can afford Childcare. TFC is NOT a solution for everyone and we should at least have a choice, especially because I am sure that mine is not the only family who is actually being penalised by the TFC system. The Childcare Voucher system needs to be reinstated so that immigrants who are contributing to the economy can still access affordable childcare."</i>
21	08/10/18	Jayne, who is married with two children, phoned Employers For Childcare for advice.	Jayne has been using a family member to provide childcare however the family member has now become registered, and has put their prices up. Jayne missed her employer's payroll deadline to join Childcare Vouchers.	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	<i>"I'm gutted to have missed Childcare Vouchers, it would have been so much help for us now."</i>

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22	09/10/11	Stephen is married, his wife is currently on maternity leave, and he anticipates paying for registered childcare from January for his first child.	Stephen missed his employer's payroll deadline to sign up to the Childcare Voucher scheme. <b>The family will be £618 a year worse off using Tax-Free Childcare than had they been able to join Childcare Vouchers in time.</b>	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	<i>"I think it's impractical of the Gov't to assume that Tax Free Childcare will suit every working parent. It's completely unfair of them to take away access to Childcare Vouchers for new entrants. Having a right to choose which scheme suits your personal needs, shouldn't be up to the Gov't, but down to the individual and their circumstances."</i>
23	09/10/11	Holly is a parent in Northern Ireland who has one child aged 8 months.	Holly will be starting work part time after her maternity leave, having previously been self-employed. Based on their childcare costs and working arrangements, <b>her family would be £101 a year better off on Childcare Vouchers rather than Tax-Free Childcare.</b> However, Holly has now missed the deadline to join Childcare Vouchers.	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	<i>"I was self-employed but am going back to work part time after my maternity leave. I will be too late to join Childcare Vouchers, and I now know that I will have access to less financial support with my childcare costs as a result."</i>
24	09/10/11	Ruby contacted Employers For Childcare for advice. Only her husband is working at present, Ruby is looking for work.	The family is unable to access Tax-Free Childcare because one parent is not working. <b>This means that they would currently be £77 a month or £924 a year better off on Childcare Vouchers,</b> and better able to access childcare allowing Ruby to look for a job.	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	We noted that English was not Ruby's first language and it was difficult for her to understand the implications of the closure of the scheme and the fact that Tax-Free Childcare was not an option for support until both parents were working.
25	09/10/11	Alexandra is married and has three children. She sought advice from our team at a face to face advice clinic. The family is paying £400 a month on childcare and is also eligible for Tax Credits.	Alexandra's family is currently on Tax Credits, however they will be moving out of Tax Credits next year and were keen to facilitate their transition using Childcare Vouchers. The parents missed the deadline to apply for Childcare Vouchers. When they are no longer in receipt of Tax Credits, they will receive support through Tax-Free Childcare however <b>had they been able to access Childcare Vouchers that would have been £576 a year better off.</b>	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	<i>"I am disappointed that my husband and I are unable to avail of Childcare Vouchers as a result of the closure. Tax-Free Childcare will be much less beneficial."</i>
26	09/10/11	Sophie is a teacher in the North West of England. She is married and has three children aged 3, 9 and 13.	Sophie changed employer over the summer and, by the time she was in receipt of a salary from her new employer, it was too late for her to join the scheme. <b>Her family would have been £578 a year better off on Childcare Vouchers than on Tax-Free Childcare.</b>	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	



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27	09/10/11	Harry lives in England, he is married and has one child.	Both Harry and his wife currently have access to Childcare Vouchers, however because Harry is changing jobs he will be unable to access Childcare Vouchers. This means that the family will move to Tax-Free Childcare, <b>but will be £150 a year worse off as a result.</b>	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"This is a great scheme, which is supported by many parents I know. So very important to the lives of working parents and their children."</i>
28	10/10/18	Caroline is married, she lives in Northern Ireland and has recently had her first baby.	Caroline is an NHS employee, required to rotate across Trusts. She has had her first baby and, on return from maternity leave, is moving to a different Trust.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"My husband is using Childcare Vouchers, but I was unable to make a salary sacrifice in time to join. This is very disappointing, and not what I expected when I went on maternity leave."</i>
29	11/10/18	Kaya and her husband live in England but are subject to immigration control. They have one child, aged 19 months.	Kaya and her husband are both working but are subject to immigration control. Tax-Free Childcare is not therefore available to this family. Their visas state that they have no recourse to public funds. Both parents missed the payroll deadline to join Childcare Vouchers and, as a result, <b>are losing out on support of £1,866 per year.</b>	<b>Parents subject to immigration control</b>	<i>"This makes me very angry, even though we are working and doing everything right, because of our visa restrictions we aren't entitled to any help. I really don't understand why, when we are paying taxes. Childcare may be just out of reach for us now."</i>
30	11/10/18	Abigail and her husband have two children, aged 9 and 4.	Abigail was able to join Childcare Vouchers in time, but her husband missed the deadline by four days. The family are able to use Tax-Free Childcare but are now <b>£772 worse off per year as a result of the closure of Childcare Vouchers to new entrants.</b>	<b>Missed the payroll deadline</b>	<i>"I believe many families would lose out if they are not able to use the childcare vouchers going forward as for many this option provides the best saving."</i>
31	12/10/18	Amy and Danny have two children, and live in Northern Ireland.	Amy moved jobs, joining the Civil Service on 11 October 2018. As a result Amy was unable to re-join Childcare Vouchers despite having been in the scheme with her previous employer.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"I am unhappy that I have missed out just because I changed employer, I wasn't aware that this rule applied when I was moving job."</i>
32	12/10/18	Tara and her partner have one child, and are paying £500 a month in childcare.	Tara is moving jobs shortly, and will be unable to continue receiving Childcare Vouchers as a result. The family was benefiting from £1,866 a year in savings with Childcare Vouchers, this will reduce to £1,200 from Tax-Free Childcare, <b>leaving them £666 per year worse off</b>	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"Any financial help for working families is vital. I have one child using vouchers. I hope to have another child but may not be able to afford to stay in work. I love working, I have spent years training, gaining qualifications and experience. If I left my position it's highly unlikely I could re-enter. While highly important, it's not just the immediate financial pressures that impact on families in similar situations, it's long term impact on careers, salaries, pensions, savings."</i>

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33	15/10/18	We received a social media message from a parent who wanted to voice their support for the Childcare Voucher scheme and will be losing access due to moving employer.	The parent has been using Childcare Vouchers for two years but decided to move job for reasons related to working conditions and pay. They were told that they could join the Childcare Voucher scheme with their new employer before they took the job, however they were later told when they started on 14 September that they would not be able to join. The parent went to their MP for support.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"Childcare Vouchers help me manage childcare costs and both my husband and I avail of them. I feel the Government does very little to support full time working parents and we'd be better off not working, owning our own house as you just get penalised! Having survived the recession we never seem to be in a position where we've any money for savings as it goes on bills, mortgage and childcare each month. It's time the government took some notice of those who work darn hard to keep the economy going!"</i>
34	16/10/18	We received a social media message from a parent with two children who wanted to voice their support for the Childcare Voucher scheme and will be losing access as she and her husband are moving to different employers.	This parent is a teacher and is currently benefiting from Childcare Vouchers but, as she and her husband are moving, they will be unable to continue in the Childcare Voucher scheme. <b>Tax-Free Childcare will not provide their family with as much support.</b>	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"I have been using childcare vouchers for about 7 years for my 2 children. Childcare is essential for me and the financial benefits of the voucher system has helped me tremendously especially considering the recent pay freeze on teacher salaries. At Easter we will be moving home due to my husband having a new job and I will need to get a new job in a new county. This means that despite being registered for vouchers for a number of years I will no longer be able to claim them. I have looked into the new system but it is not as beneficial for my family."</i>
35	19/10/18	We received an email from Nuala on 19 October. Nuala is a single parent with one child, and lives in England.	Nuala changed jobs in early October and, as a result, is unable to join the Childcare Voucher scheme with her new employer.	<b>Parent changing employer</b>	<i>"I would like to express my extreme dissatisfaction with the government's decision to close Childcare Vouchers. I have been a member for approx 5 years, only to find when I recently moved employers I was unable to set up a new scheme or even continue the scheme I already set up. I started my new employment on 10th October 2018, 6 days after the closure, so you can imagine my frustration to be told this. I am struggling to understand the logic to the closure of this scheme, surely it is an incentive</i>

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					<p><i>to get parents back working. I am a single mother to a 5 year old son and returned to full time work when he was 8 months old. I would not have been able to do so without the support of such schemes. I have moved jobs in an attempt to better my career which in the long run will benefit me and my son, however in the short term I have found myself worse off due to the closure of the scheme. I think the government seriously need to look at the impact their decision is having on families and they need to reconsider their decision."</i></p>

**Parents who are able to continue using Childcare Vouchers have also contacted us to express their support for the scheme, and call on the Government to keep it open to new entrants so that other parents can benefit, for example:**

Sarah is married with two children. Here family is better off using Childcare Vouchers, compared to Tax-Free Childcare, by £77 a month or £924 a year. Sarah: *"I have used Childcare Vouchers for nearly 9 years...and loved it very easy and your staff are always on hand to help. I feel sorry for families on the new system as good childcare costs a large amount of money. Childcare Vouchers have made it possible for us to both work."*

Mark and his wife have been using Childcare Vouchers for nearly 10 years. The family have found Childcare Vouchers to be a "lifeline", and hope to be able to continue using the scheme – they are calling for it to be re-opened so other families can continue to access support. Mark: *"Both my wife and I pay into childcare vouchers and have done for nearly 10 years now. To be honest it's been a real lifeline helping us to afford childcare and be able to save up in advance over the summer months. We cannot believe that families in similar situations will not be allowed to join. We are so thankful and grateful to still be in the scheme for at least another 7 years. Childcare vouchers is positive and works for ordinary working families trying to afford childcare and should be allowed for new entrants."*