

TEMPLATE FOR LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Reminder: Please edit as appropriate and add as many personalised details as possible, as it is much more effective to use your own words than duplicated templates.

Dear [MP's name],

I hope you are well. As one of your constituents, I am writing to you with great urgency about the **Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill**, following its second reading in Parliament on Wednesday 8th January.

While I am sympathetic of the overall objective of the Bill, in terms of prioritising the safeguarding and wellbeing of all children and young people, the wording of the Bill will have devastating consequences for innovative educators like myself.

My Background:

I am a <enter job title> at <setting name or XXX type of learning provision>.

If you are a founder or staff at a progressive school or learning community, introduce your setting and describe **how** and **why** it differs from mainstream, including, if relevant your **hours** of operation. What are your core **values** and **guiding principles** and why are these so important for a well-rounded, holistic and 'suitable' education?

You could for example, talk about prioritising mental health, wellbeing, children's rights, social justice and 21st century life skills, such as creativity, critical thinking, communication skills and collaboration. Give **examples** as to how this happens in practice in settings outside of mainstream education, and **how** conventional schooling restricts these opportunities.

If you need further inspiration, you could take some ideas from [our website](#), and/or share our [INSPIRE Education Summit webinars](#), which include talks from the progressive education community.

My Concerns:

These are the areas of the Bill that I am most concerned about... <Add your concerns>

<Edit/omit the following as you wish>

Small independent learning communities, by design, are not conventional schools. They offer more flexible, tailored learning experiences that usually do not follow the National Curriculum or rigid timetables. These innovative learning provisions have emerged to address unmet needs within the mainstream education system, particularly for children who require a different approach to learning. They play a vital role in delivering suitable education 'otherwise than at school', often succeeding where conventional methods have not.

It is very worrying to me that **the definition of 'full-time' will be defined by regulation**. It's important that the definitions of 'full-time', 'all', 'majority' and 'part-time' are added into the Bill so that learning communities like mine, which currently operate on a part-time basis, can understand how we will be affected.

If the Secretary of State for Education were to decide that our hours of operation were in fact 'full-time', as a registered 'Independent Educational Institution' we may not be able to continue running, as the business management side of things would become unsustainable.

Not only that but imposing stringent regulations that force settings like mine to conform to conventional school models could diminish their ability to provide personalised and effective education. We would no longer be offering an alternative to mainstream, which our children so desperately need. The proposed Bill may inadvertently force these young people back into conventional schools that previously failed to meet their needs, exacerbating existing challenges and leading to increased drop-out rates or disengagement.

I am also deeply concerned about the financial and operational implications of the Bill, particularly regarding the government's projected spending versus the actual costs of meeting the increasing needs of children and young people who do not thrive in mainstream schools.

Urgent Amendments to the Bill:

This wording in the Bill urgently needs to be removed/changed... because... <Add your proposed changes>

If you need help filling in the sections above, have a look at **clauses 30-37** of the Bill relating to 'Independent Educational Institutions' and **clauses 24-29** for 'Children Not in School'.

You can also use the further resources at the bottom of our [campaign page](#) for ideas. You could even link to some of the articles/videos if any of them particularly resonate with you.

But don't worry if you really don't have time to include these sections, as a shorter letter is better than no letter at all, and your **personal story** is the most important part.

Further Questions:

[These are some suggested optional questions which you can add/omit as you wish]

In light of the concerns I have raised above, I urge Members of Parliament to consider the following questions during discussions of the Bill:

1. How does the Government plan to balance the need for oversight with the rights of families to privacy and autonomy in choosing alternatives to mainstream education?
2. In what ways will the unique characteristics of innovative independent settings, such as mine, be acknowledged and preserved within the proposed registration framework, ensuring they are not compelled to operate as conventional schools?
3. Please call for the Government to clarify in the Bill how it is defining 'full-time', 'all', 'majority', and 'part-time' education. It is important for these timings to be communicated now (as opposed to being decided later in the regulations), as changing the definitions may well put many small providers out of business. It will also dramatically increase the burden on inspectors.
4. What safeguards will be implemented to ensure that the registration process does not impose undue burdens on small independent education providers, potentially limiting the diversity of educational options available to families?

5. How will the Government support and recognise the contributions of small education provisions that have effectively addressed gaps in the mainstream education system, particularly for children with special educational needs or those who have not thrived in conventional school environments?

6. Can the Government provide a detailed cost breakdown associated with the implementation of the Bill, particularly concerning non-mainstream education providers, to ensure that the proposed measures are financially feasible and do not impose undue burdens on small independent settings?

7. When does the Government plan to publish the impact assessment for the Bill, and what are the reasons for the delay, considering that its timely release is essential for stakeholders to understand the potential effects of the legislation?

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

I would be very grateful if you could forward my concerns and questions to Bridget Philipson, the Secretary of State for Education, on my behalf.

[Optional additional request:](#)

I'd also welcome the opportunity to talk to you further via a surgery appointment, as alternatives to mainstream schooling [<and home education and/or school attendance difficulties... EDIT/OMIT AS APPROPRIATE>](#) are often misunderstood.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Kind regards,

[\[Your name and postcode\]](#)