

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Mayor's Office

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19 APR 2012

Dear Victoria

Thank you for your letter and the attached copy of the London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee's report on childcare affordability in London. I welcome the Committee's careful and comprehensive review of this very important issue.

Officers are already taking forward work on the Committee's recommendations, as follows:

Recommendation 3

The Mayor should include improving access to early years' education within his education inquiry, including a focus on tackling London's low uptake of the free entitlement to early education for three and four year olds.

This recommendation was drawn to the attention of the independent Education Inquiry Panel at their meeting on 14 March 2012. It was agreed that the secretariat would provide a note on current activity in this area to inform the Panel's views on how best the Education Inquiry might add value to work presently being progressed in this area

Following a roundtable on early years held by Pamela Chesters, my Advisor on Health and Families in January 2012, officers are working with London Councils, Directors of Children's Services and Heads of Early Years to highlight key delivery challenges to the rollout of the early years/childcare offer in London.

I have already highlighted these challenges in my recent response on the government's consultation on the free early years education offer for disadvantaged two year olds and in my earlier response to the consultation on the national child poverty strategy, as well as the submission to the Frank Field Review.

Recommendation 4

The Mayor should run an information campaign to encourage London employers to offer childcare voucher schemes. The Mayor should undertake this work by November 2012.

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Officers are gathering information on this issue and reviewing future work programmes and budgets to recommend priorities for action, taking account of where the GLA can best add value and the impact, costs and benefits of different options.

I expect a way forward to be agreed by the end of June, with a view to completing the work by the end of November 2012.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Boris Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London