

Dear Ms Phillips,

**P-04-346: Petition on provision of early years education**

Further to the Petitions Committee call for evidence for the above petition I would like to submit the following evidence in response to your questions:

1. Are you able to access early years education for your 3-4 year old in a way that is convenient to you?

As a working parent, living in Penarth and working in Cardiff, I use private childcare provision for my two children (aged 3 and 5). I am fortunate that my private childcare provider (Hazelhurst Nursery, Penarth) operates a 'wrap around service' for 3-4 year old children who have a place at state nursery school. This service includes the drop off and pick up of children at a morning and afternoon session at state nursery. This service is extremely popular (and Hazelhurst Nursery has expanded their provision in this area in the last year through the purchase of additional vehicle) but it is only available for a limited number of schools, depending on demand. I am fortunate that it has included Victoria School for the last three years which has allowed my eldest child to take advantage of free early years education. However, the cost of transport and additional staff members does mean that financial savings are minimal for working parents who take up this option.

2. Does the provision of early years education for your 3-4 year old enhance or hinder your opportunities to work or study?

I have been offered additional working hours at my current employment but as my youngest child has been unable to take up early years education this term (see below), the financial costs of additional childcare outweigh the benefits of more hours. The potential additional hours of 'free' state provision would have been an ideal opportunity to take up further study, as I wish to revive my Welsh language skills and improve my future employment prospects.

3. Have you declined to take up provision for early years education for your 3-4 year old as it is inconvenient for you to do so? If so, what childcare provisions have you made instead?

I have declined a place at Cogan Nursery for my youngest child (who turned 3 in January) as my private childcare provider does not offer a pick up and drop off service to this nursery. As my eldest child is also at Victoria School it is not convenient for me to drop two children off at different schools at the same time when I am not working.

Please do get in touch if you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Stagg