



**Craig Whittaker MP**

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## **Replacing the Childcare Voucher Scheme**

Thank you for contacting me about the Childcare Vouchers Scheme and Tax-Free Childcare.

As a Government Whip I cannot, by convention, sign Early Day Motions. I do, of course, appreciate how important this issue is to millions of people across the UK.

I share the belief that childcare is a vital provision that helps children and families across this country. I am glad that the Government is investing more in childcare than ever before.

Tax-Free Childcare will be available to over 2 million households to help with the cost of childcare. Working parents will be able to apply via an online childcare account, and access up to £2,000 per child, or £4,000 for disabled children. Everyone who earns at least £120 per week on average, but doesn't exceed £100,000 per annum, can apply for the scheme, which is fairer and better targeted than vouchers.

The childcare voucher scheme is only offered by a minority of employers and self-employed parents are unable to access them. Therefore Tax-Free Childcare is fairer and more accessible to parents. Additionally, support will be paid per child rather than per parent, so lone parent households will now get as much support as those with more than one parent.

Parents cannot receive support from Tax-Free Childcare where they are in receipt of tax credits or Universal Credit. This is because there is separate provision for childcare support within these systems. Families who are eligible for both will have the freedom to choose which scheme best meets their needs.

In addition to Tax-Free Childcare, 30 hours of free childcare per week is available for working parents of three and four year olds in England. There is also now more generous support available for parents who receive support under Universal Credit instead, who are able to claim up to 85 per cent of childcare costs.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP