



Anne Rabbitte TD
A STRONG VOICE FOR GALWAY

Minister Katherine Zappone, TD,
Department of Children and Youth Affairs,
Block 1,
Miesian Plaza,
50-58 Baggot Street Lower,
Dublin 2,
D02 XW14

Thursday 11th December, 2019

Dear Minister Zappone,

As you are aware, I hosted a meeting in Leinster House yesterday evening with parents whose children are currently placed in the Hyde and Seek crèche in Glasnevin. As you are also aware, this crèche, and its three other branches, are being shut down by Tusla on December 31st, 2019, which will leave parents without childcare after Christmas.

I can confidently say that the parents I met are a solution focused group and I, on behalf of the concerned parents, am now calling on you to facilitate talks between Tusla, parents, and Hyde and Seek owners, to consider the proposal to install an interim management team at the crèche. This would at least give parents time to find an alternative childcare provider, or indeed for new owners to take over the crèche on a more permanent basis.

It is envisioned that a new management structure could involve representatives of the crèche management, staff, parents and the Dublin City Childcare Committee. This Board of Management style approach could provide robust assurances to Tusla that the crèche is being operated to an acceptable standard, and thus prevent the crèches closing on December 31st.

The crèche closures were announced without adequate supports or alternatives in place and the parents feel they've been failed miserably, not just by the crèche but also Tusla and your Department.

Parents say there's been a complete lack of communication from stakeholders and they have been left to find alternative childcare themselves, but there are simply no spaces available in the area, or even surrounding areas. The truth of it is that parents need these crèches to stay open out of necessity. The alternative for some of these parents is to quit their jobs and, as I'm sure you agree, that's simply not fair.

Minister, I hope you will strongly consider this proposal. I would add, however, that if you deem it unacceptable, could you please offer an alternative, so these parents aren't left scrambling to find a place for their children on January 1st?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

