
From:
Sent: 08 August 2022 11:22
To:
Subject: FW: Heads up - confidential

Fyi

Kind regards,

Executive Director - Education & Children's Services
East Lothian Council
John Muir House
Haddington
EH41 3HA

g you this email at a time that suits me but I do not expect you to reply outwith your normal working hours.



**Keep using
Covid sense**



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From:
Sent: 08 August 2022 11:05
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE: Heads up - confidential

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Hi

Thanks very much for alerting me to the issues that you're having with the new owners of the Pear Tree Group and the withdrawal of support for children with additional support needs. This is very concerning and as you say potentially in breach of legislative obligations as well as the National Standard. I'm really sorry that nobody got back to you while I was on leave (just returned today).

Have the new owners agreed to meet with you today? We'd be very happy to have a follow up conversation with you if that would be at all helpful, and to support in any way we can.

I've copied this email to _____ as Deputy Director for ELC and _____ who heads up our 0-5 ELC Unit and has taken on responsibility for the National Standard, for awareness and for their support with any follow up.

Kind regards

Director, Early Learning and Childcare
Scottish Government

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From:
Sent: 01 August 2022 13:14
To:
Subject: RE: Heads up - confidential

Good afternoon

I know that you are currently on annual leave but wanted to ensure that you had the updated position in respect of the challenges we are experiencing with Bright Stars group. You will see that they have today, written to all parents to advise that they cannot support children with ASN and also asserting that we have withdrawn funding. The latter point is completely inaccurate and we are writing to them immediately to ask that they retract that statement with parents. I have asked to meet them next Monday afternoon in Haddington to discuss the contract. I will keep you posted.

Kind regards,

Executive Director - Education & Children's Services
East Lothian Council
John Muir House
Haddington
EH41 3HA



**Keep using
Covid sense**



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From:

Sent: 26 July 2022 08:29

To:

Subject: Heads up - confidential

Morning

Hope this finds you well and that you have / are managing to get a break over the summer. I wanted to give you a heads up on an issue we currently have with a funded provider in the assumption that you will become aware of it (if you are not already sighted). The Pear Tree Nursery group has recently changed hands to a group from south of the border (Cresswell / Bright Sparks). They have taken over the three Pear Tree Nurseries and also Pumpkin Patch in North Berwick. The Pear Tree West Road nursery is a particular issue for us just now as the standards there have slipped considerably with issues around staff recruitment and poor quality. The Care Inspectorate have just inspected and they have weak evaluations across the board. My team is spending a huge amount of time in the nursery trying to support them but with poor staff this is a hiding to nothing and progress is limited. Anyway, the reason I am giving you the heads up is that I have just returned from leave to find that the new owners have 'expelled' _____ and have served notice on the _____ to terminate their contract. They are also saying publicly that they will no longer accept children with additional support needs. Clearly this is a red line for us in terms of both the legislation and our contract but importantly in the way that _____ children and their families are being supported. The Care Inspectorate as also now involved and I am calling an urgent meeting with the owners where I will be very clear on the non-negotiables. I will, of course, give them the set period to improve however I may need to take a much firmer line if they refuse children which would be in contravention of both the Equalities and ASN legislation . I understand that one of our local MSPs _____ is now involved so reckoned it will be heading your way soon. I also believe the group have bought a number of other nurseries across Scotland in recent months so this may become an issue elsewhere.

Happy to chat through with you if helpful.

Kind regards,

**Executive Director - Education & Children's Services
East Lothian Council
John Muir House
Haddington
EH41 3HA**