Dear <insert MLA/Councillor name>

We are writing to express our deep concern regarding recent correspondence received from the Department of Education indicating that financial support for the *Bright Start* fund is likely to cease at the end of June 2023.

As one of 49 play-based School Age Childcare settings in receipt of *Bright Start* funding, this decision to terminate funding for a key service will have a devastating impact on children, young people and families.

The continuation of *Bright Start* funding is crucial to the sustainability of our organisation, and its cessation will result not only in the closure of the after-school service but will impact on:

* Children and young people who will lose access to quality, play-based childcare which supports their development, learning and well-being
* Parents/carers who will lose access to quality childcare, potentially affecting their ability to remain in employment, and
* Staff who will face job uncertainty due to the loss of funding.

As an elected official for our area we would ask for your support as we seek to overturn this decision which will see the end of a service that not only provides parents/carers with access to essential childcare but also supports the health and well-being, social, cognitive and physical development of our children and young people.

Whilst we appreciate that the budgetary pressures facing departments are significant, continuation funding for *Bright Start* and continued investment in School Age Childcare provision is essential if we are to support children, young people and families. I am calling on you to do all that you can to intervene in this situation and to advocate for the continuation of *Bright Start* funding.

Yours sincerely

(signed on behalf of the organisation)