

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Outrage over Beech Hall Nursery Closure Leaving Families and Staff in Crisis. Local couple calls on MP for urgent Government intervention

Macclesfield, Thursday 20th March – Parents and staff at Beech Hall Nursery in Macclesfield have been left devastated by the recent decision to close the ‘Outstanding’ rated nursery, impacting 65 children and 13 staff members. Families were informed of the closure via email, and no prior consultation with parents took place. The lack of communication and the absence of a search for solutions with families regarding the decision has caused significant concern among the community.

For David and Nicole Schofield, this marks the second time they have faced a nursery closure in Macclesfield in just over a year. Based on their repeated experience, they are now advocating for government policy changes to prevent similar situations for other families in the future. "We simply cannot stand by and watch this happen again and again," said David Schofield. "The lack of consideration for families is appalling, and urgent action is needed to stop this from happening to others."

Over 70 parents who have children at Beech Hall have signed the open letter to Outcomes First Group CEO, David Leatherbarrow, highlighting their distress and pointing out the lack of alternative nursery placements in the area and lack of any sort of consultation. Many local nurseries are fully booked until 2026, leaving families with no immediate childcare options. "This decision is completely irresponsible," said one concerned parent. "There has been no consideration for how this will affect our children, and we have been given no viable alternatives or support."

The nursery, which recently received an outstanding rating, has been a cornerstone of early years education in the community, providing exceptional care and education to its young pupils. Parents have expressed deep disappointment at the lack of consultation, citing significant concerns over their children's welfare and the staff's future.

Despite Beech Hall stating that they are supporting parents and staff, it appears that nothing has been done to assist those affected. The school's website proudly claims to be 'a family school with pupils at its centre' and to 'work in close partnership with parents,' yet this decision contradicts these values. In correspondence received on Wednesday 19th March, Headteacher James Allen stated, 'This decision has been made after very careful consideration of how the school can best serve its community now and in the future.' One parent responded, 'How can you claim it best serves the community when you are letting down the youngest members of it?'

This closure is part of a growing national crisis. Research by NDNA reveals that 199 nurseries were forced to close between September 2023 to the start of this academic year, on top of the 216 closures recorded in the previous academic year. This would have affected an average of 50 children per setting, impacting more than 10,000 children in total.

The decision places significant strain on nursery staff, some of which have worked there for 27 years who now face employment uncertainty with limited local recruitment opportunities. Parents are also facing an impossible situation with local nurseries at full capacity until 2026, forcing many to make difficult choices about their employment.

Parents are urgently calling on Outcomes First Group to reconsider and engage in full consultation before proceeding. They have contacted their MP, Tim Roca, urging for government intervention to prevent this closure and implement measures that will protect other young children from similar disruptions in the future.

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Attachments

1 x Save Our Nursery Photo

1 x Copy of Open Letter to CEO of OFG