Template letter for parents writing about UC Credit childcare payments

Dear (You can find you MP and how to contact them by entering your postcode [here](https://www.writetothem.com/))

I am contacting you because I believe the Government is unfairly taking support away from parents like me who get childcare payments as part of Universal Credit.

Universal Credit Childcare payments exist to help parents and carers like me with the reasonable costs of childcare to help us work. However, I have now been told that the costs of meals and snacks will not be included in my childcare payments.

The DWP have decided that these are ‘optional’ extras - but they are an essential part of my child’s place at nursery. The DWP believes that some of the meal and consumables costs on top of funded childcare hours should not be included in my payments.

The childcare payments are already capped at 85% of the overall cost of a place but due to new guidance from the Department for Education I am being told that my payments are being reduced again.

This decision is making it harder for me to cover my childcare costs. [you may want to add specific examples of the reduction in payments or the increase in costs you are facing.]

The funded childcare hours explicitly exclude the costs of meals and snacks so if I cannot use Universal Credit payments to help with this, I will have to find that cost myself or make food at home to send to nursery. Having a meal at nursery means my child is sharing in the experience with their friends, which is important for their development and social skills. It is also better value and makes life easier than buying and preparing lunches myself.

I understand that parents who get Tax Free Childcare can still use the money that the Government contributes to them to help meet the costs of meals and snacks with a nursery place. This is an unfair situation that provides more support to some families than those claiming Universal Credit.

Please raise this situation with Ministers at the DWP and DfE so they can review the unfair impact this is having and reverse this decision. I believe that the Government should return families on Universal Credit to the position before this change was applied. Please ask that they issue back-payments for the amounts that have been deducted from children and families as a result of this unfair policy.

Yours sincerely,