



# Guide to meeting your MP

You can find your Member of Parliament online at [writetothem.com](http://writetothem.com)

Members of Parliament offer regular days to meet constituents. Their constituency office can help you make an appointment.

It's best to use your own words why this matters to you, but you might want to use some of these suggestions.

## What can I say?

On January 18th the Department for Education will start to collect one of eight reasons for transfer of each child who moves from mainstream school to Alternative Provision. These include mental and physical health, pregnancy, and young offender.

The Department did not carry out any privacy impact assessment, before the new law was introduced, despite recommendations from the Information Commissioner and GDPR, and the type, national scope and sensitive data involved of children who "merit specific protections".

Children and families must be told, but no one appears to want to be accountable for making clear to families how, when and why their children's confidential data will be sent to the Department for Education to be added to a named national pupil database forever. Current privacy notices do not reach parents and pupils at all. The Department makes no real effort to tell parents and children about third-party use.

It's a risk to children's privacy when data released to third parties. Data are not anonymous, but identifying and sensitive at individual level. Parents and children are not asked for consent before data are released, even for commercial re-use or to journalists.

Children should know who has their personal confidential data and why. Children's rights to privacy are a human right and need protection.

# Writing to your MP

You can find your Member of Parliament online at [writetothem.com](http://writetothem.com)

You can call, write to them, or send an email. Written letters can be sent to the Houses of Parliament, Parliament Square, London SW1A 0AA.

[Date]

Dear [title and name of your MP]

I am concerned about children's privacy in a new national government data collection in England.

The Department for Education will start to collect highly sensitive indicators from school children who transfer out of mainstream education into Alternative Provision for one of eight reasons, including pregnancy, young offender, and health.

Pupils and parents will not be asked for consent. There is no option to refuse. Article 12 of the UNCRC says that children and young people have the human right to be involved in decisions about them. The government should pause the expansion of the Alternative Provision Census before its collection starting on January 18, 2018, unless safeguards are put in place to protect:

- children's confidentiality and safeguarding
- security of the data
- and the stigmatising effects and harm it could have on children for life

Representative from over 20 leading charities and child rights advocates, including ALLFIE, Mencap, the NEU (NUT), the Teenage Pregnancy Knowledge Exchange, and Trailblazers young offender mentoring, have written to Justine Greening with these concerns.

- The information are stored forever in the National Pupil Database, now of over 23 m people.
- Identifying, pupil-level data are given out to third-parties including for commercial re-use, to charities, think tanks, and to journalists.
- Data handed out to researchers own location can include pupil name and address, date of birth, special educational needs, attainment and exclusions across a child's education.

Ofsted's Report on Local area SEND inspections and a recent report by think Tank IPPR Making the Difference show the importance of understanding these information. But that should not be at the expense of the lifetime privacy of the children affected.

If the Department of Education cannot stop the distribution of identifying data for re-use, and commit to children's confidentiality; we believe the government should not collect the data at all.

Thank you for your time and I hope you will ask questions, and call for the changes that need made.

**For more information on the Alternative Provision census changes, visit our timeline: <http://defenddigitalme.com/timeline-alternative-provision/>**

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