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The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson MP
Secretary of State for Education
& Michelle Donelan MP
Minister of State for Universities
Department for Education
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CC Rt Hon Therese Coffey MP, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions,
Baroness Barran MBE, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Minister for Civil Society and DCMS

Friday 29 May 2020

How young people can be supported during and after the global Covid-19 pandemic

Dear Secretary of State and Minister of State,

As the UK gradually eases the lockdown, it is becoming increasingly clear that the impact on young people's employment and education is particularly acute.

We appreciate that these concerns are fully shared within Government, and on the basis of providing constructive ideas to help overcome the challenges from this crisis, today the UPP Foundation in partnership with a coalition of charities is writing an open letter to you, with details of a programme of action to support young people.

We are calling upon the Government, universities, FE colleges, schools and charities to take a collective and co-ordinated approach to ensure that:

- Young people are supported to overcome the employment and educational barriers that arise from the crisis.
- The agenda for widening participation to higher education is not disrupted or reversed.
- Students who do go to higher education are able to stay in it, and to succeed.
- Civic activity is strengthened to support communities in need.

In order to support these goals, the UPP Foundation makes four calls to action:

- 1. We propose that the Government create a 'Community Leadership Academy' worth around £500m a year.** This programme would support a civic army of 75,000 paid young people who would be employed by coalitions of charities, universities and other bodies to work on a full or part-time basis for up to six months delivering local civic projects. As part of the programme, participants would be supported on their journey to enter, or remain in, higher education, as well as support for their future employability.

This would be available for:

- a. Any young person formerly eligible for pupil premium who is under the age of 25 and not engaged in any other form of education, employment or training.
- b. Any current university students – from undergraduate through to postgraduate – with priority given to those qualifying for maximum government support.

The Community Leadership Academy builds on our nation's renewed civic endeavour to provide three connected benefits, which are: a) full-time paid job opportunities for unemployed young people, b) paid part-time jobs for poorer students who rely on these opportunities to see them through their studies and c) support for key projects/issues within local communities.

2. Throughout the next school year (September 2020 – July 2021), the Government should provide a temporary uplift of the Pupil Premium and a temporary extension to post-16 eligibility. This time limited fund would be used to support ongoing additional interventions for this group and others in schools and colleges to prevent a reversal in widening participation progress. Specifically, this should be aimed at creating wrap-around academic and pastoral services, provided either by the schools and colleges or other charities and third parties, for those who have likely been disadvantaged by learning loss and less likely to have the wider networks in order to ameliorate it themselves.

3. The Government should fund a relevant (or small coalition of relevant) sector body[ies] to co-ordinate and design a 'covid support programme' that all universities and colleges are encouraged to offer.

This programme will provide good practice guidelines to support incoming first year higher education students, recognising the disruption they have faced.

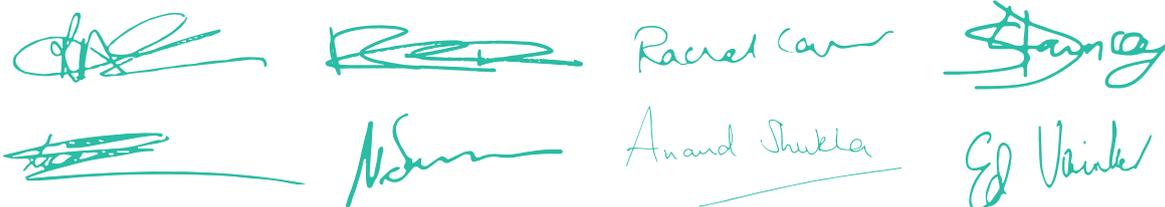
4. Building on the outstanding progress already made to move open days online, universities and colleges should commit to running 'fully open and accessible' virtual open days for all students in the Autumn term of 2020.

Details are included in the attached report.

Everyday thousands of people are going above and beyond the call of duty to support the NHS, vulnerable individuals and local communities. Together, the government, universities, FE colleges, schools and civil society should utilise this renewed civic endeavour to empower young people. By creating a 'civic army' we can ameliorate the educational and employment challenges, while supporting local communities to get back on their feet. Levelling-up disadvantaged young people and communities alike.

We would be delighted to discuss our ideas further with you.

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Boomer-Clark, Director of Secondary, Ark
Richard Brabner, Director, UPP Foundation
Dr Rachel Carr OBE, Chief Executive and Co-Founder, IntoUniversity
Dr Sarah Dauncey, Head of Policy, The Bridge Group
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